When Cultures Crash
– On Immigrant Stories in English Textbooks
Produced for Swedish Schools.

Av: Roar Birkelund Sörli
Handledare: Liz Kella
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1 Introduction

1.1 Background: Immigrants in Textbooks and Minds

In our modern and highly global world, immigrants can be found everywhere. The reasons for moving from one country to another may vary greatly from wanting to find a job, moving for love or fleeing from a problematic life with political or religious persecution. All immigrants, however, are bound together by one single fact. They set up a new life in countries where they did not live to begin with.

Immigrants can be found anywhere, including at Swedish schools. In this project, I look at how immigrants are portrayed in Swedish-produced textbooks for English B classes in upper secondary school, and look at what functions the immigrants and the immigrant stories have in the textbooks. Although immigrants in English textbooks tend to be immigrants to Anglophone countries such as England or Canada, the immigrants in Swedish classrooms still have experiences of immigration to and in Sweden, and it is very likely that they will compare themselves to the immigrants in the textbooks that they are presented with. They will also be aware of the way the authors of these textbooks write about the mentioned immigrants. Of equal importance are non-immigrant students, since they “learn” how to interpret and “read” an immigrant, and his/her stories. I will look further into these interpretations in the presentation of my theoretical framework. Since immigration is a phenomenon that exists in Sweden as well, and since the textbooks I will be looking at are meant for students in Sweden, the immigration stories in these textbooks matter, and are part of the discourse of immigration.

I am aware that my research project has some complexities from an analytical point of view, mainly because the immigrant stories presented in the textbooks for Swedish children do not take place in Sweden. However, I claim that since the books process the phenomenon of immigration, and this phenomenon is present in Sweden, this project is relevant to the understanding of students' views on immigration, and to understanding what role the texts may play in this view. Furthermore, as will be apparent later in the text, the stories of immigration and the phenomenon of immigration are related to Sweden and to the students’ own experiences of immigration.

1.2 Aim and Research Questions: Immigrant Representation

Immigrants from other countries belong to other cultures. By reading the textbooks, students encounter other cultures, and they are presented with strategies for meeting other cultures through the meetings that take place in the immigrant stories. In the course syllabus for English B, there are two aims that are of special interest in relation to this essay. The aims are as follows: 1) “ha
kunskaper om samtidsförhållanden, historia och kulturer i länder där engelska talas” (Kursplan för EN1202 - Engelska B) and 2) “kunna presentera aspekter av den egna kulturen och det egna landet med tanke på personer med en annan kulturell bakgrund” (Kursplan för EN1202 - Engelska B). Translated, the first aim states that the student should obtain knowledge about social conditions, history and culture in countries where English is spoken. The second aim states that the student should be able to present aspects of his/her culture and his/her own country with people from other cultures in mind.

The second point about presenting one's own culture is especially interesting in that it is open enough to be interpreted in at least two ways. On the one hand one could see it as expressing an understanding of culture as a fixed, binary formation that works as a backdrop for defining the students’ “own” culture. On the other hand, using an intercultural approach, one could interpret this aim as a way to look at culture not as fixed, but as a changeable phenomenon that is open to different interpretations, and that can be influenced and changed in contact with other cultures. In this case, other cultures are encountered through different sorts of “text”. In that way, the description of both one’s own and the “other” cultures should not be based on stereotypes.

As a teacher student at Södertörn University I have been introduced to and firmly believe in the value of intercultural didactics. Lahdenperä observes that intercultural didactics has been sanctioned by the Swedish parliament since 1985, and that it should therefore be evident in teaching throughout the school system (11). Therefore and in relation to the mentioned course plan, it is of utmost importance to study what is actually written in the textbooks, and to see if these texts invite an intercultural approach. I aim to see if there are any similarities in these portrayals of meetings between different cultures, to see if there are examples of intercultural meetings in these immigrant stories. Thus, my questions are as follows:

1. How are immigrants represented in Swedish-produced English textbooks for B students?
2. What functions do immigrant stories/immigrant characters have in English-language teaching?
3. Are the immigrant stories intercultural, or do they present the reader with intercultural strategies?

As a future teacher I then will be better equipped to observe and analyze the immigrant narratives that are presented in these books, and I will be better equipped to discuss these matters with the students who need this knowledge in their future cultural meetings.
1.3 Method: Qualitative Survey of Seven Textbooks
My research is qualitative. I analyse textbooks and teacher compendiums from different publishers meant for students of English at the B level. I analyse both texts in textbooks and teacher compendiums, tasks connected to the texts, and any pictures that are presented in the different chapters. I have decided to look at seven textbooks published between 2003 and 2009. Five publishers are presented, namely Bonniers, Studentlitteratur, Almquist & Wiksell, Natur & Kultur, Liber. I have two books from Bonniers and two books from Studentlitteratur. No individual writer has participated in writing more than one book. The titles of the books are: “Core English 2”, “Progress Gold B”, “Master Plan 2”, “Blueprint: Version 2.0.”, “Quest B” “Solid Ground B” and “Read and Proceed”. I have made the relatively large selection of books because I want a relatively wide and contemporary survey.

I have scanned the textbooks for examples of immigrant stories, and analysed these individual stories in themselves. The number of immigrant stories vary from textbook to textbook, but usually there are between one and three in each of them.

1.4 Disposition: From Analysis to Comparison
I have analyzed the different chapters in the books one by one, but for reasons of time I have not been able to analyze each book as a whole. I present my analysis chapter by chapter to make the analysis clear and easy to follow. For each chapter, I have (at least) two chapters and I have systematically analyzed the different chapters in the same way, so as to give my research and analysis better coherence.

In the end, I compare the analysis of the immigrant stories in the different textbooks in a separate chapter. In that chapter, I look at similarities and differences between the chapters, and take into consideration the different contexts for the immigrant stories.

1.5 Theoretical Background and Definitions: Discourse, Representation and Interculturality
My research primarily falls under the category of discourse analysis and representation. Since these are broad fields of theory, I will define the theoretical point of departure for each of them in this section. I will also connect my findings to intercultural didactics, a central theme at the teacher program education at Södertörn University.

Representation is a concept discussed and explained by the cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall. In his own words, representation is in short about, “[p]roduction of the meaning of the
concepts in our minds through language” (Hall 17). In order to understand this, one must first understand Hall’s outlook on what he calls “systems of representation.”

First of all there is the system of representation in our minds, i.e. our “mental representations” (Hall 17) of actual things in the actual world. These are divided into “clusters of representations” (Hall 17-18), that map all of these mental representations in relations to other things. As children, we are introduced into a specific way of mapping, so that we are made to see things in the same way as other people of the culture in which we are brought up.

Then there is language, with which the mental representations are conveyed to other people. However, language is an incomplete tool for this task. For most people, language is something natural, and it is a tool that correctly conveys our mental representations to other speakers of the same language. Hall, on the other hand, points out that there is an actual unbridgeable gap between mental map and an assigned word that makes meaning arbitrary. In this way meaning is not constant; rather it is produced, and it is changeable. Thereby, to belong to a culture means to share these representational maps, both conceptually, but also through language.

The control over and repetition of representation is closely connected to power. Since power can be explained in different ways, I will here explain the definition I will use in my essay. Power is by Teun A. van Dijk, a scholar specialized in discourse analysis and Critical Discourse Analysis, simply explained as control over the material world, but also over the minds of other groups than those in power. In other words, power has different manifestation in the world (van Dijk ”Critical Discourse Analysis.” 355). Material power in this case means power over e.g resources and production. Power over minds in this case means the power to reinforce certain ways of thinking. So, material power in relation to my essay is control over the production of the textbooks, whereas power over the mind means power over the things that are written in the textbooks, and in extension, how this might affect the readers of the textbooks. Therefore, I will talk about the power over minds or ideological power rather than material power (directly). Van Dijk does not mention that power encompasses everyone, even those in power. In this meeting between representation and power, discourse analysis becomes relevant.

Discourse analysis is an extremely wide field of research. I am, however, mainly concerned with the theories of historian and social theorist Michel Foucault, supplemented with examples from van Dijk. Michel Foucault is concerned with so called “discursive formations.” According to Foucault, a discursive formation occurs when texts or statements “[refer] to one and the same object” (The archaeology of knowledge 35) and share “[form] and type of connection” (The archaeology of knowledge 36), thereby creating a feeling of unity and meaning that supports a particular way of thinking about the object described. In my case, immigrant stories in textbooks
could belong to one such discursive formation. Immigrants, immigrant stories, and texts concerning immigrants exist on many levels in society. They occur, amongst other places, in political texts, legal texts, in the media and also in textbooks. So, the texts in English textbooks are not a discursive formation in themselves, but they are a part of a larger whole that is the discursive formation of immigrants in Sweden. I am unable to grasp the entire discursive formation of immigrants in Sweden in the time span I have chosen by looking at the textbooks alone; however, I will be able to see how the immigrant stories in the textbooks relate to the discursive formation as a whole by reading other research done in this field.

A discourse, in short, is a way of talking about a certain subject. It is, in another word: knowledge (Hall 44). Certain ways of thinking are encouraged in discourses, and certain ways of thinking are non-existent, or strongly discouraged. Often this sort of encouraging/discouraging is connected to power, and thereby, power and knowledge are mutually supportive, as Foucault says:

”[power] and knowledge directly imply one another […] there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations […] power-knowledge, the process and struggles that traverse it and of which it is made up […] determines the forms and possible domains of knowledge.” (Foucault Discipline and Punish : The Birth of the Prison 27-28)

In the case of my survey, power is performed in the form of knowledge (i.e. over the mind), as knowledge is produced about those that are not in power, and a particular conceptual map is taught to us through a specific discourse formation. As Stuart Hall points out, discourse analysis is always done in the text’s context (6), meaning that discourses must be understood in connection to the historical period that they were produced.

As I mentioned earlier I firmly believe in the value of intercultural didactics, and that this didactics should be evident in teaching. Therefore it is of great importance to see if the discourse of immigration in the textbooks I look at encourage the students to think in an intercultural way, and encourages intercultural approaches. Teaching the students an intercultural viewpoint will make them better equipped both in their meeting with other people and in the way they think about immigrants.

Before I go on describing intercultural didactics, the definition of culture used in this essay must be clarified, since it is important in my description and use of intercultural didactics. As Hall mentions, members of a culture share mental maps (18). Members of one culture have a similar view on the world and the things in it. These world views can be expressed through and detected in, among other things, artefacts, traditions, beliefs and norms (Lahdenperä 13). Culture can be
analyzed on many different levels, but according to Lahdenperä, intercultural meetings can be between cultures in the form of language, religion and ethnicity, among other things (18). In this essay, the cultural meetings will, however, be primarily between persons of different ethnicities and religions.

The aim of intercultural didactics is to teach the students an intercultural approach that should be evident in every subject. In a cultural meeting, which very well may occur through texts that the students read in textbooks (Lahdenperä 24), the student needs to distance him/her self from his/her own culture in order to meet representatives from other cultures and to be aware of, and critical of his/her own ethnocentrism, and this can, among other things, be achieved through the way we look at cultures. As Lorentz and Bergstedt point out, our modern society has taught us to think about cultures as dichotomies (28), something that makes an intercultural meeting impossible since other cultures become irrevocably different from one’s own culture, and therefore impossible to meet on equal terms. Often in these dichotomous descriptions, the “other” culture is portrayed negatively, and gets negative qualities. Furthermore, in these descriptions, one’s own culture becomes the norm. This insight is important to my research, since I need to see if the textbooks talk about cultures and portray cultural meetings as meetings between dichotomous entities, or if the different cultures are shown as meetable equals. Lastly, intercultural didactics demands the discussion of segregation and integration. (Lorentz & Bergstedt 29) Since this essay will deal with immigration, it will be interesting to see if the textbooks discuss these aspects. Also, because these aspects are important to intercultural didactics, they are important to my analysis, since I will be studying if the textbooks present the reader with intercultural strategies.

By learning an intercultural approach, students broaden their cultural horizons Lahndenperä claims, and the possibilities of understanding and even identifying with a different culture occur (19).

1.6. Previous Research: Sweden and Abroad
My essay contributes to the research field of immigrant stories in English textbooks. There is some research in this field, it is, but it has not been extensive.

In his article “Immigrant Success Stories in ESL Textbooks”, Trevor Gulliver deals with the representation of immigrants in what he calls “immigrant success stories” (725) in Canadian textbooks for English students with English as a second language. Gulliver found that all of these immigrant stories have similar narrative forms. In these narratives immigrants are shown to come to Canada with either financial or emotional hardship, but through hard work and perseverance they
conquer their problems. In this process, Canada as a nation is portrayed as a “[...] redeemer of immigrant others” (Gulliver 733). In the textbooks, Gulliver observed what he calls “positive self representation/negative other-representation” (725), where Canada is seen as a positive force, whereas the countries the immigrants left are seen as negative.

In “Knowledge and Discourse in Secondary School Social Science Textbooks” (2011), Teuen A. van Dijk and Encarna Atienza look at how the discourse of migration and immigration is produced in one Spanish secondary school book. Even if this article does not deal with English textbooks, it is still relevant because it gives insights into how two scholars research the discourse of immigration, and it gives me insights into how I can analyse my findings. The authors find that the discourse of immigration is built on “old” knowledge that the youths are expected to have learned from, among other things, the media. “Old” knowledge in this case means familiar stereotypes about immigrants that the media reproduces. The “new” knowledge of immigration that they are taught in the textbook, however, does not seem to differ greatly from the “old” knowledge. Thereby old stereotypes are repeated and reinforced. The authors discover that the discourse produces a dichotomous relationship between immigrant and non-immigrant, where “we” (in this case the Spanish) possess all the “good” qualities, whereas “they” (the immigrants) posses the “bad” ones. Furthermore, western involvement in the foreign countries that the immigrants come from (involvement such as wars, trade embargoes etc) that have led to “their” migration and immigration are not mentioned.

In “Elitdiskurser och institutionell rasism,” Teun A. van Dijk looks at how institutions like the school system produce and reproduce racism in Europe. He observes that racism today is subtle and hard to detect. According to him, discourse analysis is needed to unveil it (van Dijk “Elitdiskurser och institutionell rasism,” 117). Van Dijk observes a specific European racism that also encompasses white settler communities like North and South America and Australia. He sees racism of today as primarily cultural. This means that the biological racism of old is toned down and differences and problems in today's society is blamed primarily on cultural differences. According to van Dijk, the most apparent example of this form of cultural racism can be found in relation to Islam, and especially in relation to Muslim fundamentalists (120). This fear of Islam is evident even in Scandinavian countries that claim tolerance towards other cultures (van Dijk “Elitdiskurser och institutionell rasism,” 121). The representation of other cultures, and (non-white settler area) immigrants in particular, is limited to certain topics that van Dijk sees as stereotypical. Such topics are “illegal immigration, problems with cultural immigration, crime, drugs and deviant behaviour” (123).

In Sweden, a certain focus on the question of integration (and indeed, the failure of
successful, meaningful integration) has been raised. In the article “På väg mot en diversifierad normalitet,” (Towards a Diversified Normality) René León explores the discourse of immigrants in Swedish schools. He claims that a binary opposition between “Swede” and “immigrant” exists, and in this binary pair, the “immigrant” is seen in a negative light. In addition, the “immigrant” is seen as standing outside the Swedish community. Furthermore, León claims that immigrant students are seldom seen as individuals in the same way as Swedes. More often they are seen as representatives of their culture/country of origin, and their actions are interpreted accordingly. Their loyalty to other categories (such as i.e. synth-rocker, scout, etc.) is not taken into consideration. Therefore they are seen solely as products of their culture, and not individuals.

In “Det sagda och det tänkta” (The said and the taught), Amanda Peralta has written more precisely about the discourse of immigrants in Sweden both historically and today. Peralta traces what she calls “ontological metaphors” throughout history. By “ontological metaphors”, she means that immigration has been spoken about in almost hereditary terms. Not only are the actual immigrants defined as such, but the children of these immigrants are given tags that connect them to immigration, and thereby certain problems that have to do with immigration (188). Some examples of these “ontological metaphors” are “invandrarbarn” (187), which means “immigrant children” in English and “andragenerationsinvandrare” (199) which can be translated into “second generation immigrant”. The last metaphor is still used today, and this shows that the ontological metaphor is still alive. Even if the terms that are used about immigrants have changed, the meaning behind them have not changed. As one example, Peralta shows how “integration” today is still quite close to the older term “assimilation”. That is, integration means that the immigrants are integrated in our society through them becoming almost like us. Peralta arrives at the conclusion that a multicultural society has become a reality in Sweden, but that the social, political and economic structures still presupposes a mono cultural, homogeneous society (200). Even if there have been some changes among academics and politicians in this respect, the system is slow in changing.

2 Results

In this section, I present both the texts about immigrants, and my analysis of those texts. I process each immigrant story in the same way, and in two sections. In the first section, I present and explain the text as well as the pictures that accompany the text. I will then follow up with an analysis of the given texts and pictures under the same heading. In the second section I present the tasks and extra information/encouragements to the teacher in the teacher compendium. I then follow up with an
analysis of that material under the same heading.

2.1 **Quest B**

The textbook *Quest B* was published in 2008 by Natur & Kultur. The textbook contains 57 texts, of these two immigrant stories, “It really is psychological torture” and “My real name.”

2.1.1 **“It really is psychological torture” : Text and pictures**

This story actually occurred in real life. However, this does not make it less interesting to analyze, since it has been chosen by the Swedish authors to represent immigrants. The story is about Rizwanaa Sabir, a student at Nottingham University. For research purposes, Sabir opens and views a document from an al-Quaida web page. His friend Hisham Yezza helps him print out the document at a school printer. For these actions, the pair is detained for suspicion of terrorist activity. Sabir is released, but he feels that he will never be safe or un-afraid ever again. When the story ends, Yezza is awaiting deportation to Algeria.

Since this is a true story, I focus less on the content in the story, and more on the follow-up questions to the text. Some points, I do, however, wish to make on some aspects of the text, mainly because the text is chosen instead of other potential texts, but also since the text is not produced by Sabir himself.

First of all, both Yezza and Sabir are made passive and victimized in this story. After some research, I discovered that both the real life Yezza and Sabir appeared in the media, criticizing the treatment that they underwent. Yezza wanted to go to court with his case, and other students (both immigrants and non-immigrants) backed both of them in protests (*The Guardian, BBC News, Al-Jazeera*). In other words, neither Yezza nor Sabir was passive. They were victims of injustice, for sure, but they also acted. None of this is featured in the text. Rather, Sabir is said to be: “[...] Concerned about what he calls the climate of fear” (Ljungberg, Wallberg and Ward 37). Observe the rather moderate word “concerned” used in this sentence, rather than a word like i.e. “angered” or the more active word “criticise.”

Sabir does not live a segregated life, and this is very clear in the text. Neither is he only seen as a child of an immigrant. He is a successful student with a lot of interests. Thereby, he is not just portrayed as an immigrant, but also as a person with other agendas. However, the problems that Sabir faces in the story occur due to the fact that he is considered an immigrant.

The reader, does not get to know if Sabir is himself an immigrant or if his parents are
immigrants. One is, however, made to think about him as an immigrant through the text and through the tasks. Even if he is a child of immigrants, this story can still be viewed in the light of the discourse of immigration because of two factors.

Firstly, one of the police officers that interrogated Sabir’s tutor at school said that “[if] this had been a young, blond, Swedish PhD student, then this would never have happened” (Ljungberg, Wallberg and Ward 36). Obviously, then, the Police officer does not see him as a Brit, nor does he see him as a Swede. By extension, we as readers are made to think of Sabir in terms of difference - he differs from Swedes, and he differs from Brits. Furthermore, this statement signals to the reader that within the text the two factors “Muslim” and “Swede” do not go together, at least not for that policeman.

Secondly, Peralta points out, as mentioned above, that immigration in Sweden is often talked about in “ontological metaphors”, meaning that children of immigrants are often viewed as immigrants - even if they are born in Sweden. These people are called “andragenerationsinvandrare”, or “second-generation-immigrant.” In the light of the discourse of immigration in Sweden then, this story can be viewed as an immigration story, and therefore it is interesting to analyze as an immigration story. This argument goes for all of the following immigrant stories that are about children of immigrants.

There are two pictures connected to this chapter. One picture is of barbed wire. The other picture shows the interior of a cell, seen from the outside through a hole. The pictures invoke thoughts of Sabir's imprisonment, and thereby they help to enforce the view of Sabir as a victim.

“*It Really is Psychological Torture*”: Tasks
As I mentioned in the text, there is little focus on what Sabir “thinks”, but rather what he feels about the situation. This tendency is repeated in the question section. There are no questions about what Sabir actually does or thinks, on the other hand, there are questions about his feelings. Question 4 in the section “Understanding the text” states: “What different emotions does Rizwanaa Sabir talk about, in relation to his detention?” (Ljungberg, Wallberg and Ward 37). Yet again, no questions about Sabir’s possible thoughts are posed, the students are only to focus on his feelings. In this way, Sabir is denied reasoning qualities. He is denied rational counter-arguments to the unjust treatment that he was put under. We pity him and the situation he has been put into, but we do not hear his arguments. The rest of the questions in this section are about details in the text, such as why the police became suspicious of Sabir.

There is another section called “What about you?” that contains questions of an argumentative nature. One task asks the student to discuss the methods used by the police. A
second question encourages the student to discuss whether a suspected terrorist should be treated differently than other suspects. One question asks the student about the “war on terror”. These questions are interesting, but have little to do with Sabir, and especially about his role as an immigrant. Question 4 in this section is very interesting in this aspect. It asks: “‘Current laws on terrorism are essentially racist.’ What is your viewpoint on this statement?” (Ljungberg, Wallberg and Ward 37). Getting the students to discuss racism or the exclusion of certain groups in society is, according to Lorentz and Bergstedt, fruitful from an intercultural perspective (29), so the question is both didactic sound, but also answers to intercultural didactics.

2.1.2 “My Real Name”: Text and Pictures

This is the second immigrant story in Quest B. In this story we meet Jamie, whose real name is Jamilah Towfeek. She is ashamed of her real name and of the fact that her parents are immigrants from Lebanon and that they are Muslim. She does not want her friends to think that she “drives planes into buildings as a hobby” (Ljungberg, Wallberg and Ward 61). She has “anglicized” her name, dyed her hair blond, and she wears blue contact lenses to avoid being associated with people from the middle-east. Jamie does not want to get too close to her friends because she fears that they will discover her secrets. Jamie thinks that, “[i]t takes guts to command that respect and deal with people’s judgement” (Ljungberg, Wallberg and Ward 63). In the story, we also meet Ahmed, a Lebanese boy who is proud of his Lebanese background. He spoke out against Australian racists at a rally, but got hit for doing so. When he tells his friend about the events, Peter, a very popular boy, lashes out and says that it is his own fault, and adds that Lebanese people never will integrate into Australian society. When Ahmed claims that he is an Aussie, Peter rejects the idea, saying that people like Ahmed will never integrate. Sam, a friend of Peter, says that to be Australian, one must first abandon one’s “foreign” culture. Indeed, in the story, Jamie and Ahmed represent two positions for non-European immigrants.

There are three pictures connected to this story. One shows a white man with a banner surrounded by four policemen. In the foreground we see the Australian flag. The man is outnumbered, and it looks as if he is being punished for his wrongdoings. Put in context, the readers understand that the white man in the picture must be one of the Australians who demonstrated against the Lebanese on the beaches (or at least, this is probably what the authors believe that we will interpret.). The second picture is of a girl running on a beach wearing a burkini. Read in the context that it appears context, this is one of the Lebanese “reclaiming” the beaches after the riots. However, it is also meaningful in another way in the context that it is in. The main character of the
story, Jamie, is very much ashamed of her cultural background, and goes to great lengths to hide it. The girl on the picture, however, is not ashamed of wearing a burkini (which clearly signals religious or cultural affiliations), but seems happy judging by her smile. This means that the text of the picture partially clashes with the surrounding text. The girl in the picture has managed to claim her cultural difference and at the same time be satisfied with herself. The third picture shows three youths in cowboy hats looking into either the sunset or the sunrise. The picture seems to have little to do with the text. It is possible that it is supposed to function as an Australian “backdrop” to the story, since they seem to be in the dusty outback of Australia.

There are European immigrants (i.e. from Italy) close to Jamie, but these are deemed all right by their fellow students. They have none of the problems that the non-European immigrants suffer. Neither do they cause the same problems as the non-European immigrants. In this text, two possible positions for immigrants of non-European origin are presented to the reader. On the one hand, there is Ahmed, who is proud to show his cultural background. For this, he is criticised by his friends and co-students. On the other hand, we have Jamie, who hides the fact that she has a different background, who is terrified that her friends will find out, but who also experiences a deep anxiety about what she is doing. When she speaks of Ahmed, she admires him for dealing with other peoples' judgement of him. Other people judge him for being Lebanese and being proud of this fact. Therefore, if you are an non-European immigrant and proud of your cultural heritage, you have to be prepared to be scrutinized and judged by other people. So, in short the choice for non-European immigrants is simple: Either defend your cultural standpoint, or accept assimilation.

Both Ahmed’s and Jamie’s problems and anxieties are there mainly because they are immigrants. Even if Jamie indeed has other interests and agendas, the main focus in the story is on her as an immigrant.

“My Real Name”: Tasks
The tasks for this chapter are divided into two sections, one concerning textual understanding, and one concerning discussions among the students. In the section about textual understanding, the authors make the students think about Jamie's background, and the problems that she suffers. Also, the students are made to think about why certain characters in the text (such as Jamie) are plagued by racism and stereotypes, whereas others (non-immigrant) characters are not. All in all, this section comes a long way in making the student think about racism, and the consequences of it.

In the discussion section, the students are to think about what issues the text brings up. Also, it asks the students to discuss “What things do young people usually hate about themselves?”
(Ljungberg et. al. 65). One question found in this section is particularly interesting to my survey. It asks: “What advice would you give Jamie in order to make her more gutsy?” (Ljungberg et. al. 65). The question is not produced in such a way that it directly presupposes that the students would know better than Jamie. They are not asked what they would do in her place, but rather they are asked to think about what “advice” they would give her.1 Related to the text, and to the two possible positions for immigrants, the text could be suggesting that Jamie should choose to show her cultural heritage, since this demands being gutsy, according to her. This does not, however, change the fact that she has to struggle with other peoples' judgement of her.

2.2 Blueprint V. 2.0

The textbook *Blueprint V 2.0* was published in 2008 by Liber. The textbook contains 6 chapters with a total of 34 texts. Of these, two are about immigration. One is “When cultures clash”, that is a general background to colonialism. The other story is “Curled or straight” which is about a girl of both Jamaican and English heritage.

2.2.1 “When Cultures Clash”: Text and Teachers Compendium

The authors of *Blueprint V 2.0* are evidently observant of postcolonial theory. In the chapter “When cultures clash” Chris Anderson gives the students a historical background to colonialism, and the well known postcolonial critic Edward Said and his theories are mentioned. However, the insights in postcolonial thought are portrayed as history, as the chapter looks now; the thoughts of Said seem to have little to do with contemporary times. Furthermore, the pictures in this chapter show foreigners in foreign countries, in traditional clothing, doing foreign things. There are four photographs all in all. The text itself, as well as the pictures is then related to foreigners in other countries, and seems to have little to do with immigrants to Europe, or to people who lived in the places where the immigrants moved to.

In the teacher’s compendium, the authors write that the aim of this particular chapter is to show the culture clashes in post-colonial society. The use of the phrase “Culture clash” is interesting. As Amanda Peralta mentioned, talks about culture clashes has been a part of the general discourse of immigration. In this discourse, cultures are seen as hard objects that crash against each other (195). This model of meeting between different cultures presupposes that different cultures

1 It could certainly be discussed if giving “advice” in this way would suggest that the students are presupposed to know better than Jamie. However, the way the question is presented suggests, to me, that it does not necessarily presuppose that the students have superior knowledge in this particular case.
are dichotomous entities that have little to do with each other, and that when two cultures meet, a “crash” is inevitable. In short, such a view of culture directly contradicts that view endorsed by intercultural didactics, since a founding principle within intercultural didactics is that cultures are ever shifting.

Also, in this way the textbook and the teacher compendium focus on the problems with immigration rather than on the possibilities of living in a society with many cultures. Thereby, we get the feeling that a postcolonial society, and thereby the immigrants that come with it, bring with them only problems.

2.2.2 “Curled or Straight?”: Text and Pictures
This story is based on the novel White Teeth by Zadie Smith. In this story, we meet Irie, who has a Jamaican father and an English mother. She is in love with Milat, a boy of unknown age from India that has a soft spot for the “English” look. She goes to a “black hairdresser” (Lundfall et al. Blueprint version 2.0. 136) to straighten out her hair, which is curly. Evidently the treatment is far from comfortable, and she is in a lot of pain. However, she feels that all the pain is worth it as long as her hair becomes straight. The hair straightening fails horribly, and she is sent to Roshi’s salon, an Indian hairdresser, to get Indian hair (which is almost as good as English hair according to Milat). The Indian hairdresser sees it as natural that Irie comes there, since everyone wants Indian hair. A black woman behind Irie is angered by the fact that Irie is buying Indian hair, and that she does not want to show off her own hair. Irie’s friends react with disgust, claiming that she had beautiful hair, saying “But that’s not your hair, for fuck’s sake, that’s some poor oppressed Pakistani woman (sic!) who needs the cash for her kids.” (Lundfall et al. Blueprint version 2.0. 145).

The story in itself shows a clearly segregated society. People of different backgrounds do not socialize with each other, least of all English people, which are not present in this story at all, except as a unreachable ideal in Irie’s head. Even though Irie indeed has an English mother, she is not perceived as English. All her identity is bound up in her Jamaican ancestry, both by herself and by her friends. Even the immigrants are segregated from each other. This is shown both through the text, and through the pictures used in connection to the text. As an example of this, there is a picture in the textbook that represents the Indian quarter where Irie buys her Indian hair. The text that describes the picture states that it is from a segregated community of Indians and Pakistan people in England.

According to the Royal Geographical Society, segregation is indeed an existing problem in
the UK. However, the phenomenon of enclaves is not increasing (Royal Geographical Society with IBG 17). Also the level of segregation is different in different groups. “Bangladeshi, the most recently arrived of the South Asian groups, show the highest levels of separation from other groups, followed by the Pakistanis, while Indian rates are relatively modest” (Royal Geographical Society with IBG 17). Furthermore, the survey claims that black communities are the least segregated of the groups studied. This shows that the view of immigrant enclaves in England is initially correct. However, Irie is part of a black community, that according to the mentioned survey is not segregated. Thereby the text can give the students a false impression of segregation in the UK. On the other hand, the students will only be presented with the text and not the given data about enclaves, so this will not matter to the students' understanding of the text.

When the different immigrant groups meet, it is in the form of “culture clashes”, since the Indian woman pities Irie because Irie does not have the beautiful hair of an Indian woman. There is a sense of unresolvability in the situation; Irie trespassed her “racial” barrier, and was put in place by her peers. The idea of cultures as separate entities is upheld. There is a sense of desperation and hopelessness. Also, Irie is portrayed as a victim of oppression, and her attempts to break free of this victimization are futile. It seems impossible for anyone to attempt to meet other cultures in new ways, all attempts do not just fail, but are also punished by social exclusion within the group where they “belong”. Irie’s problems have arisen due to the fact that she is a child of an immigrant.

“Curled or straight?”: Tasks

Questions one and two focus on the meaning of certain words and clauses, and have little to do with my study questions. Question three makes the student think about why Irie disrespects her “African curls” (Lundfall et al. Blueprint version 2.0. 146). The teachers book has a suggestion for an answer that suggests that “[maybe] she has ‘internalized’ the ideals of the empire that once colonized her own culture” (Lundfall et al. Blueprint version 2.0. - Lärarhandledning 41). It is clear that her problems and her anxieties are focused on the properties she has inherited from her Jamaican father. The authors take it for granted that Irie’s only cultural identity is bound to her non-English connection. The fact that Irie has an English mother is not discussed, thereby making it unimportant to consider, or rather the students are encouraged not to think about it. This is simply because the two cultural identities seem unmixable, both in the framework that the textbook has laid out, the text itself and the question. Therefore, Irie cannot be both Jamaican and English at the same time, even if she is born this way. Readers are made to see Irie as different.

Question four asks the students to discuss how hair transaction can be political. Actually,
there is a clear focus on hair in this text, and in the questions. According to Dianne Johnson, hair is very loaded in books for African American children. Hair is not just aesthetically important, but it is also given importance in “cultural politics” (339). To have naturally curly hair is to be proud of one’s cultural heritage, and to straighten it is to show shame. These observations are certainly correct in accordance to the text “Curled or straight?” since the very plot circles around Irie’s hair and her hate of it.

On the whole, the attempt of taking the dilemmas (by the authors called “problems”) is notable. However, the authors still seem trapped in their own views of cultures as separate entities, and the clear segregation tendencies in the text are not questioned. Thus, the text does not provide the student with intercultural strategies, or ways of discussion segregation. As a matter of fact, Lorentz and Bergstedt claims that intercultural didactics demands that segregation and integration is discussed (29). In that sense, the authors of the textbook have failed to provide texts and tasks that supports intercultural didactics.

2.3 Master Plan 2

The textbook Master Plan 2 was published by Almqvist & Wiksell in 2005. It contains three texts that in some way relate to immigration. There is “Is language for sale?” which deals with Indian phone operators, “Brick Lane” which is about an immigrant couple from Bangladesh, and “Who am I?” which is a listening exercise about a Pakistani boy who has immigrated to England.

2.3.1 “Is Language for Sale?”: Text

In this book, there is one section that deals with English as a world language. In this chapter, they deal with, among other things, call centre staff that are stationed in a call centre in India. Strictly speaking, this story is not about immigration in the narrow sense. However, it does make some important presuppositions about culture and culture meetings, presuppositions that I will compare to the texts that are about immigration in this textbook. The operators stationed in India are expected to speak English with an American accent. According to the author, this is not unproblematic, he sees the situation as follows: “[...] operators are expected to produce American English - a language totally unconnected to their day-to-day life in India.” (Larsson and Norrby Master plan 2: Engelska B 118) This reasoning goes against the facts that the authors have produced in the same section - namely that English is a language that is widely used in India, and that English is indeed used in
their day-to-day life. Furthermore, the author claims that the workers are forced to “[...] give up their real - or authentic - Indian identity and adopt a false American one” (Larsson and Norrby Master plan 2: Engelska B 118).

There is more to these statements than first meets the eyes. There are certain latent presuppositions that back up this sort of reasoning that have to be scrutinized. First of all, the Indian phone operators in the story are made passive. They are portrayed as unable to choose for themselves, they are forced to speak American English. The author does not take into consideration (and possibly does not know) what the workers themselves may want or not want, or what they think and feel about their language use.

Secondly, there is the question of the role that language is given in this segment. As is evident in the second quote, the phone operators are presupposed to do two things. One: they are expected to have an Indian identity (and nothing else). They are expected to abandon this Indian identity when speaking a language that is not “traditionally” Indian. Two: the operators, seemingly magically, adopt a false American Identity through the sole means of language. Observe that the two identities, American and Indian, do not seem to have anything with each other to do, rather they seem to be two separate, binary entities. Certainly, as fast as the Indian in the author’s mental eye adopts this “American” identity, the same Indian abandons his or her “real” identity. Indians cannot have two identities at once. That English and American-English are two separate things matters little in this discussion, since the author still operates with binary oppositions.

2.3.2 “Brick Lane”: Text and Picture

In this story, based on Monica Ali's novel, we are introduced to Nazneen, a woman who grew up in Bangladesh. Nazneen has been through an arranged marriage with “a man old enough to be her father” (Larsson and Norrby Master plan 2: Engelska B 99) before migrating to England and Brick Lane. We see an ice-skating show on the TV through Nazneen’s eyes, and that she clearly has never seen ice skating before we understand from her descriptions of it. Nazneen desperately wants to learn English, and we “hear” her practise. However, in this she is unsuccessful. Chanu, her husband, evidently masters the language, and corrects Nazneen. He tells her to relax, but also tells her that she is “[unlikely] to need these words in any case” (Larsson and Norrby Master plan 2: Engelska B 100). “These words” in this citation refers to ice-skating. Furthermore, he does not seem too interested in Nazneen learning English, as he says “Where’s the need anyway?” (Larsen & Norrby Master plan 2: Engelska B 100) There is one picture connected to this text. On the picture, we see a rickshaw from the behind. Painted on the rickshaw are three dancing women on a theatre stage.
There is a foreign registration plate on the rickshaw.

In this story, there are two immigrants who are quite different, even if they live in the same household. Chanu, the man, seems to have a lot of contact with society outside the home. Nazneen, on the other hand, seems almost totally cut off from the outside world. Actually, the only connection to England as a whole is through the television, and through Nazneen’s observation of ice-skating. Interestingly enough, Nazneen does not understand ice skating, or at least, she does not understand it as an Englishman or a Swede would understand it. In this way, Nazneen is in England, but at the same time she is outside it. The relationship between Nazneen and Chanu is not equal. Chanu is very dominating, also he is in control by owning something Nazneen wants, namely the English language.

The comments that Chanu makes to Nazneen are interesting. As mentioned, Chanu does not think that Nazneen will ever need the word ice-skating, nor does he think that there is a point to her learning English. This would suggest that Nazneen will (in Chanu’s eyes) continue to live a segregated life (possibly in contrast to him, since he already knows the word, and masters English), separated from other Brits. In that way, she does not need to speak English (since she can communicate with her husband and other people from Bangladesh without it), and she does not need to talk about ice skating, since only the English care for that sort of thing. Nazneen has language problems and segregation problems because of the fact that she is an immigrant.

The picture does not seem to represent any of the characters in the text. The text, then, can be a way for the authors to signal cultural distance between the students and the text.

“Brick Lane”: Tasks

There are two sections of questions. The first section deals with textual understanding. Questions one and two in this section are about the way that Nazneen describes ice-skating. Here, the students are to explain why Nazneen sees ice-skating differently than them. Thereby the question is underscoring the difference between Nazneen and the students. Question three and five deal with Nazneen's English teaching and are of little interest for my aim. The questions make the student reflect on language learning more as a general phenomenon, and they do not have any presuppositions about immigrants that I have found. Question four focuses on Chanu's comment that suggests that Nazneen does not need to learn English. This could make the students think about the possible segregation in the text, but it does not ask the students to question it or discuss its background. Question seven asks the student whether Chanu and Nazneen would learn English if they stayed in Bangladesh.
The second section contains writing assignments. This section contains two tasks. The first task encourages the students to pretend to be Nazneen, and write a letter home to Bangladesh about her life in England. This is interesting, since it opens for the possibility of students identifying with the immigrant character. However, even if the question opens for this possibility, it is not guaranteed that students will identify with them.

In the second writing tasks, the students are to write an argumentative text (Larsen & Norrby Master plan 2: Engelska B 101), choosing one of the following statements to back up: “‘If migrants learn the language they will fit in and feel more at home’ or ‘many migrants have no need for the new language - don’t force classes on them!”’ (Larsen & Norrby Master plan 2: Engelska B 102) This question is provocative, and forces the student to side with one of two opposite options, limiting the ways the students are encouraged to think about immigrants and language. I will now analyse the two statements in detail, in order to see what each question presupposes about immigrants, and about the thoughts and goals that the immigrants are believed to have.

The first statement contains two presuppositions which are important for my discussion. Firstly, the immigrants are supposed to be the ones who are doing the “fitting”, i.e. they are the ones who have to do all the work to “fit in”, since they are the ones who have the erroneous qualities.

Secondly, the sentence as a whole presupposes that if an immigrant learns a language he/she will “magically” fit into society and feel at home. This is problematic, since it ignores other cultural aspects that can make cultural meetings a bit more complex and challenging. Also, this reduces immigrant identity to just that - immigrant. In other words - an immigrant is presupposed to want to fit in and be accepted by the community. It is unimportant to stress that wanting to fit into society can be an individual choice. Thus, an immigrant who does not want to fit into society is an impossibility, even if there may be immigrants that do not, for one reason or another want to fit into society. The reasons for this can be many, certain non-immigrants, such as e.g. nihilists have feelings of not fitting into society, and there is nothing that says that immigrants cannot feel the same. The result is that the representation of the immigrant is bereft of individuality.

The second statement contains two presuppositions about immigrants. Firstly, it presupposes that many immigrants live a segregated life, and that they can do fine speaking their own language, since they will mainly socialize with members of their own community. Secondly, it presupposes that many immigrants do not want to have language lessons - read against the first statement, they do not wish to fit in, since fitting in is done by learning the language.

The presuppositions in both statements are equally important, since the authors open for two ways of thinking about immigrants, and thereby exclude other ways of thinking about immigrants. In the frame of this task, and this text, these are the only presented ways of thinking about
immigrants, and therefore they become important. Also, this question relates to the students’ thoughts and feelings, and thereby they relate to Sweden. As Hall explains it, representation is not just about what is there, representation is as much about what is left out (59). In the case of this task, then, it is important that other means of representation than the two that are presented through the questions is left out, it is important that they do not get any room, because they are not the way we are supposed to think about immigrants. None of these options really encourages intercultural approaches.

However, even if this question does not encourage intercultural approaches, it is a sound didactical question. The question is provoking, and forces the students to take sides, and defend that side. In other words, this is an excellent setup for an argumentative essay, and could possibly arouse great enthusiasm among the students, and make them write good essays. Nevertheless, the difficulties described above are too great to overlook, and the question is too problematic as it appears now.

2.3.3 “Who am I?” Text

This is a listening exercise, and there are no pictures or tasks connected to it. In this text we meet Chanu Rai, a boy that has moved from Pakistan to England with his family. He says: “I think of myself as both Pakistani and English” (Larsson and Norrby Master plan. 2 : Engelska B. Teachers’s book 140). He is not living a segregated life, but has English friends as well as Pakistani friends. His parents are described by Chanu as “[pretty] Pakistani in their ways” (Larsson and Norrby Master plan. 2: Engelska B. Teachers’s book 140). Chanu says that the English have a hard time understanding arranged marriages, which is part of his Pakistani culture. He does not share their views, since he trusts his parents to find a suitable match for him. All in all, he is quite proud of his culture. He says:

Because of my Pakistani culture and background I am different from them, but that is not bad. There is less pressure. Nobody expects me to take girls out or drink alcohol to prove myself. It’s kind of nice that you don’t have to prove yourself like that. (Larsson and Norrby Master plan. 2 : Engelska B. Teachers’s book 141)

This text stands out in many aspects. The immigrant character is not “passing”, neither is he ashamed of the culture that he comes from, but rather seems quite proud of the fact that he is from Pakistan. His English friends seem to accept his cultural difference. The only thing they seem to
have problem with is the fact that Chanu is a Muslim. He also seems proud to be a member of the English society, especially when England plays soccer, when he “[really] feel(s) English” (Larsson and Norrby Master plan. 2 : Engelska B. Teachers's book 140).

The text is intercultural, since Chanu can have both an English and a Pakistani identity at the same time. The two cultures are thereby not dichotomous, but rather Chanu can move in and out of both on his own accord.

2.4 Core 2

The textbook Core 2 was published in 2009, and is thereby the newest textbook in my survey. It was published by Bonniers. The book contains six thematic chapters with 24 texts in all. There is one immigrant story in the book, and it is called “Refugee boy”. The text is written by the author Benjamin Zephaniah, who is of “Afro-Caribbean origin” (Gustafsson, Hjorth and Kinrade Core English 2 82).

2.4.1 “Refugee Boy”: Text and Pictures

The story “Refugee Boy” is about Alem, a boy from Ethiopia and his father Mr. Kelo. They have just arrived in England, and are, as the title would suggest, refugees. They are questioned by the immigrant officers about their reasons for coming to England. They lie, saying that they have come for a holiday. When asked what they will do in England, Mr. Kelo answers that they will go to “Oxford Road and Piccadilly Circle” (Gustafsson, Hjorth and Kinrade Core English 2 - Teacher’s Guide 167). The immigrant officer corrects him, and points out that it is called Oxford Street and Piccadilly Circus. They are finally let through by the immigrant officers, but Alem and Mr. Kelo feel badly treated.

There are other matters of language in the story. Alem speaks in Amharic, a language spoken in Ethiopia, to his father, but his father says “From now on you must try to speak English, you must practice your English - all right young man?” (Gustafsson, Hjorth and Kinrade Core English 2 - Teacher’s Guide 166).

The story shows the problems of someone coming to England, someone who is being met with suspicion. We get to know from the introduction text in the student’s textbook that Alem comes to England due to “tragic circumstances” (Gustafsson, Hjorth and Kinrade Core English 2 82). According to the text in the teacher compendium, not everyone in England treats Alem and his father with the same suspicion as the immigrant officers. Some treat him as a “normal” human being. This fact is, however, not included in the student’s texts, where they are only treated with
suspicion. The situation seems almost hopeless. In other words - the text as a whole show examples of successful (and possibly intercultural) meetings between people of different cultural backgrounds, but the authors have chosen the parts of the text that show Alem as secluded from the society he wants to live in. The problems that Alem and Mr. Kelo experience are certainly due to the fact that they are immigrants.

The text is accompanied by one photography. In the photograph, we see the author of “Refugee Boy”, Benjamin Zephaniah. It does not affect the way that the text is interpreted, since the person in the picture cannot be related to any of the characters in the text.

“Refugee Boy”: Tasks
Most of the tasks in the student’s book have to do with immigration, and all deal with the problems that Alem and people in his situation face. In the oral exercises there are four questions, but I will discuss only two of them here. The reason I have chosen them will be apparent as my analysis continues. For clarity's sake, I will enclose the entire questions here. The questions are as follows:

- Alem had to leave his home and country to settle in Britain. Perhaps you have moved in your life too, to try and start a new life in a new country? When, where and why did you move? What cultural problems did you face in your new country?

- Perhaps you would like to move and start a new life elsewhere? Perhaps somewhere else in your own country, or perhaps in a foreign country? Where would you like to go? What could be advantages and disadvantages? How do you think you would cope in a new place? (Gustafsson, Hjorth and Kinrade Core English 2 83)

There are two things to point out, and to have in mind about the discussion questions, before we continue our analysis. In the first task, the students are only asked to share the problems that they experienced. In addition, the book’s authors presuppose that the problems that occurred had to do with culture - and thereby cultural encounters. By doing this, the author is not encouraging the students to think about other possible reasons for problems in such a meeting. These could, for example, be difference in class, gender, sexuality, age or even education. Also, note that the students are to think about the cultural meeting only in relation to the problems that might occur - certainly, as the question is constructed, the student is told that he/she can expect to run into problems. The word “problem”, furthermore, is very negative, invoking connotations of hostility. A
word like “complexities” would be far better, since it is more open for solutions. In the second question, observe that the students are supposed to share both problems and advantages.

The two questions are clearly targeted to different groups of students. This can be concluded because of the way the questions are constructed. In the second question, the author presupposes that the students move to a different country because they want to: “Perhaps you would like to move [...]” (Gustafsson, Hjorth and Kinrade *Core English 2* 83). The way the question is asked leaves no doubt about the student’s relation to Sweden, because it asks the student if he/she would like to move elsewhere in his/her own country. Since the book is for English students in Swedish schools, the “own” country could be no other country than Sweden (since this is the country the students have to depart from).

The recipient of the first question is clearly connected to Alem (Alem is not mentioned in the second question). As opposed to the second question, the recipient has to have made a journey from an old country to a new one. Since the recipient is in Sweden, this would suggest that the “new” country they have moved to is Sweden. We can assume that the question is meant for immigrants primarily. Of course this does not exclude non-immigrant Swedes, but makes it somewhat unlikely.

So, the questions are targeted at different groups of students, and the content of the questions are also different. In question one, the students are expected to have “cultural problems” since the question does not say “Did you have any cultural problems?” but rather “What cultural problems did you face?” In contrast, the second question does not ask anything about cultural problems. The focus in this question is on “advantages and disadvantages” for the traveler in the new country.

There are two other questions in the oral section. One of the questions encourages the students to think about the role of the family in order to feel at home in a different country. In the second question, the students are asked to prepare a presentation of a country, focusing on why other students should go there.

Attached to this chapter are also two writing assignments. In one, the students are to pretend that they are Alem, and that they are to write a letter home about his experiences in England. The students are encouraged to focus on the following: “What positive and negative experiences do you think Alem faces, what prejudices could he meet, and what problems could there be for him to fit in?” (Gustafsson, Hjorth and Kinrade *Core English 2* 84). Here, the authors presuppose that Alem will have problems fitting in. Note that it is Alem that is supposed to be doing the “fitting”. The question could have been constructed in a way that would suggest that Alem’s surroundings have problems giving Alem room. As the question appears now, it is Alem that “owns” the problems of
fitting in (it is his problem that he does not fit in), not the surrounding society.

2.5 Solid Ground 2

The textbook *Solid Ground* was published by Bonnier in 2005. The book is divided into three main chapters that contain 17 text in all. Each chapter is divided into themes, such as “Family Matters,” “Perfect Worlds,” and so on. In this textbook, I have found three immigrant stories. One of the stories is called “Señor Payroll”, and it is about Mexican immigrants working in the USA. Another immigrant is called “Just below the surface”, and it is about Indian immigrants in England. The last, “Bracley and the Bed” is about a man from Tobago who lives in London. “Brackley and the Bed” was written by Samuel Selvon from Trinidad. The story “Just below the surface” was written by the English author Kate Nivison (Nilsson and Svedberg *Solid Ground 2 - Teacher’s File* 2:18). It has proven difficult to get information about the author Kate Nivison. However, it is clear that she is not an immigrant.

2.5.1 “Just Below the Surface”: Text and Pictures

This story is about Indrai, an Indian woman, and Kumar, her husband. They have immigrated to England, and used to live in Brick Lane before they got “[horrible] things through the letter box” (Nilsson and Svedberg *Solid Ground 2 : engelska kurs B* 194). Now they live in Wanstead, an area that is seen as posher. One day, Indrai wakes up and discovers rats in their house, something she does not inform her husband about. She does not tell her neighbours, because they would think that she was “[dirty] or something” (Nilsson and Svedberg *Solid Ground 2 : engelska kurs B* 196). She buys mousetraps in an attempt to get rid of the mice, but her attempt fails. Indrai and Kumar (who now knows about the problem) are forced to call an exterminator to take care of the vermin. The story ends with the exterminator making a poorly masked racist comment while they are discussing the rats. There is one picture in this chapter. On the picture we see a woman in a pink sari-like dress, covering her face from the eyes down. She has a bindi on her forehead.

Judging by the comments that Kumar and Indrai get, Indian immigrants are not very common in Wanstead, the area Kumar and Indrani have just moved to. When Indrai talks to a shopkeeper and reveals where she lives, she imagines that the shopkeeper is thinking, “What are Asians doing in nice houses like those? Turning them into slums by the sound of it.” (Nilsson and Svedberg *Solid Ground 2 : engelska kurs B* 198).

Indrai’s problems certainly hail from the fact that she is an immigrant. She is expected by
her surroundings (both her husband and the society at large) to behave in a certain way, and to do
certain things. Thereby she is also expected to *not* do some things, such as wearing trainers with her
sari, or try to solve a problem on her own accord. When she transgresses these boundaries, she is
quickly put into place. When she goes into town to buy mousetraps, she buys some new trainers,
because they are more comfortable than the sandals she usually wears with her sari. She hides the
trainers from her husband, but he finds them. Kumar comments that Indrāi “[would] soon be
wearing trousers and eating roast beef.” (Nilsson and Svedberg *Solid Ground 2: engelska kurs B*
199) signalling that he thinks that anything else than Indian clothing will make Indrani lose her
identity, or automatically adopt another culture with “trousers” and “roast beef”.

Combined with the text, it is probable that the picture is supposed to represent Indrāi in the
story, both since she is an Indian woman and because her sari is pink. The authors have thereby
shown Indrani in “traditional” clothing. Interestingly enough, the authors have not chosen to show a
picture of Indrani when she is testing and transgressing the borders that are set up for her by
wearing trainers with her sari. This would encourage the students to think of how Indrani challenges
the homogeneity of culture. As it looks now, it reinforces the distance of Indrani from English
culture.

**“Just Below the Surface”: Tasks**

There are a lot of tasks that relate to details in the text and translation. These tasks are not relevant
in this survey, but I will analyse two questions that allow for the students to discuss the text. In task
A, the students are supposed to discuss the story, and to think about “What would you have done in
Indrani’s position?” (Nilsson and Svedberg *Solid Ground 2: engelska kurs B* 206). On the one hand,
the question allows the student to relate to the immigrant character in the text. On the other hand,
the question *may* contain certain pitfalls, since it opens for the possibility that the student can sort
out the problems that the immigrant has, problems that the immigrant cannot sort herself, and
problems that, as my text analysis shows, is due to the fact that Indrani is an immigrant, and that she
is of a different culture. This would in extension indicate that the student “knows better” than the
immigrant, and is better equipped to solve her problems.

The second question asks the students to “Discuss the relation between Indrani and Kumar”
(Nilsson and Svedberg *Solid Ground 2: engelska kurs B* 206). They are aided by a number of
quotes from the short story. In the quotes, Kumar comes across as dominant, whereas Indrani is
portrayed as submissive. The analysis is important, since the relationship between Kumar and
Indrani is clearly uneven. However, the authors could with preferrably make the students be
aware/discuss whether the pair represent a typical Indian couple. The danger with that is that Kumar and Indrani become proof of stereotypes of Indian men and women.

The students are asked to “Discuss with a classmate what is below the surface in this story. Use the phrases below as a starting-point.” (Nilsson and Svedberg Solid Ground 2 : engelska kurs B 206) The students are given comments that can easily be interpreted as poorly masked racism. Through this task, the students are able to distance themselves from racist comments, and it gives the students a possibility to sympathize with Indrani. The students are however never asked to discuss the segregation that is very evident in the text.

### 2.5.2 “Señor Payroll”: Text and Pictures

This text is about immigrant Mexican workers on an oilfield in the USA. There is a dispute between the oil company and the immigrant workers. The employees on the field receive their payment “only” twice a month as opposed to once a week. The company used to pay wages once a week, but has stopped that. The wages can be paid out in special cases - if a member of the employee’s family is sick. The immigrants are not happy with this: “To a Mexican this was absurd. What man with money will make it last fifteen days?” (Nilsson and Svedberg Solid Ground 2 : engelska kurs B 24)

Soon, however, the immigrants take advantage of the loophole, and everyone has a sick family member, and they get their payment as they want. The company soon understands that the Mexicans are lying, and changes the wages policy. Yet again, the Mexican-Americans find and take advantage of a loophole, and yet again the company changes the policy. This circle is repeated until the company decides that it is easier to just give the wages to the immigrants in the way that they want it - once per week.

There are two pictures accompanying this text. One is of a man in an orange suit and a hardhat, completely covered in oil. He smiles into the camera. The other picture is of two hands covered in oil held forth as if begging for money. There is a dirty and crumpled dollar bill in the outstretched hands.

The immigrant characters in this story are not individuals. They are more like a homogeneous group. As a group they are quite active, clever and resourceful, even if they trick and manipulate the company for their own needs. The immigrants do encounter problems. One can interpret the source of their problems being the fact that they are immigrants. Their ideas of when they should get paid do not match the American company’s idea of waging. However, the problems are not unsolvable, and the immigrants solve it on their own accord.

The pictures are clearly supposed to represent the Mexican immigrants in the text, but as they look, there is a chance that they alter the perception of the immigrant workers. The effect of the
dirty, grinning worker and the begging hands awakens a feeling of subordination and begging, as opposed to the image of the clever and resourceful workers presented in the text.

“Señor Payroll”: Tasks
There are three questions that open for discussion connected to this text. Question A encourages the students to share what he/she thought about the story, and is of no interest to my study question. Question B asks how the Mexican-Americans reacted to the rules of the company, and is also of little interest to my study question. There is one question of special interest in the task section. It looks like this:

Work in pairs. Take turns to explain (in chronological order) how the stokers bent the rules. Then discuss if the Company gave in too easily. Could there have been other solutions? (Nilsson and Svedberg Solid Ground 2 : Engelska kurs B 30)

In the question, the “stokers” are the Mexican immigrants. The question is a valid one, and discussing ways of communication between the company and the immigrants is always interesting. The solution that came to be only fulfilled the goals of the Mexican immigrants, and counteracted the aims of the company. This does not show an intercultural meeting, because only one side’s interests was taken into consideration, even if it was the immigrants’ side. Then again, there can be discussed whether or not the solution was very harmful to the company.

Also, the Mexican-Americans only took into consideration their own needs among the workers, and not the possible needs of the other workers at the oilfield. In fact, the immigrant workers did not seem to have any contact with other workers than themselves. Thus, the story does not present us with any meaningful interaction between immigrants and non-immigrants. The relationship between the Stokers and the oil company is coloured by the underlying conflict about wages. Furthermore, it is a purely professional relationship with few openings for cultural exchange on any meaningful level. Also, the ones with which the Mexican-American workers could have a meaningful relationship, namely the non-immigrant workers, are hardly evident in the story.

2.5.3 ”Brackley and the Bed”: Text and Pictures
The text ”Brackley and the Bed” was written by Samuel Selvon, an author from Trinidad. The story is about Brackley, a man from Tobago. He has moved to London to work, and to get away from his
distant cousin Teena, who intends to marry him. One day Teena moves to London to be with Brackley. She starts controlling Brackley's life. Amongst other things, she "steals" Brackley's bed. In the end he cannot stand the discomfort of lying on the floor, and asks Teena if she wants to marry him, so that he can sleep in his own bed again. They marry, but his Aunt comes for a visit the same day, so Brackley has to sleep on the floor. There are two pictures in this chapter. One is of an alarm clock and the other is of a man with dreadlocks looking into the camera.

The story is written in Caribbean English, something that sets this story apart from the other immigrant stories. This is an interesting choice of text from the authors' side, since it would be a bit more difficult for the students to read it. On the other hand, this would be an excellent opportunity to discuss the many forms that English has taken around the world.

In the story, we meet only immigrant characters. Non-immigrants are not written into the story. This is, however, not evidence of segregation in the text. It is simply that the author has chosen not to include any non-immigrants in the story. Brackley certainly has problems. However, he does not have them because of the fact that he is an immigrant. The picture of the man is clearly meant to represent Brackley. I can find nothing to criticise in the way that Brackley has been represented in this picture.

"Brackley and the Bed": Tasks
There are a lot of questions concerning the text. Most of them are about words, about understanding the text, and about phrasal verbs. There is one question that discusses Brackley. The question is: "Work in pairs and discuss. Do you pity Brackley? Is Teena too hard on him? Or is someone like Teena just what he needs? Give examples from the text to show what you mean." (Nilsson and Svedberg Solid ground : engelska kurs B 216). This question has nothing to do with the fact that he is an immigrant. There are, in other words no questions that can be related to this fact, so the author has chosen to not focus on this aspect of the story. This does not, however, mean that the students do not "see" Brackley as an immigrant. The fact that he is an immigrant is very clear because of the way he talks.

2.6 Progress Gold B
The textbook Progress Gold B was published by Stundentlitteratur in 2003. It contains nine thematic chapters. In contrast to all the other textbooks that I have looked at, there is not a chapter dedicated to the role of English as a world language in this book. There is one text in this textbook that deals with immigration and immigration. The name of the text is “Barriers to Cross”. This story is actually from the essay collection “Me talk pretty some day” by David Sedaris, and the original
title for this short story is interestingly enough not “Barriers to cross” as it appears in the textbook, but “Jesus Shaves.”

2.6.1 “Barriers to Cross”: Text and Pictures

In “Barriers to Cross” we witness a French language class with students from England, Italy, Poland and Morocco. The students in the story discuss Easter with great difficulty, since every nationality seems to have different traditions concerning Easter. The discussion was initiated by the Moroccan student, who claimed to know nothing about Easter. After trying very hard to make the Moroccan student understand, but failing miserably, since every description differed somewhat from each other, the class gave up. Connected to this chapter there is one picture of a girl in a hijab among a crowd of people that do not wear hijab. Those among the crowd who are visible wear western garments.

The text in itself is quite interesting from an intercultural perspective, since it questions the solidity and unity of Christianity and European culture. The narrator feels that it is no wonder that the Moroccan student does not understand their description of Christianity, since it is “[an] idea that sounds pretty far-fetched to begin with” (Hedencrona et. al. 114). The narrator questions his/her own viewpoint by claiming that her/his idea of an Easter rabbit is a bit absurd. However, it seems to make more sense in the person's head than the French Easter bell, which, according to the author is “[fucked] up” (Hedencrona et. al. 114).

The result is that all of the immigrants are on the same page. Both European and Moroccan immigrants have difficulties understanding the French cultural framework. They all experience the same hardships in their meeting with different cultures, and they make a joint effort to grasp them.

The immigrants’ problems are due to the fact that they are immigrants, certainly. However, there are many immigrants, and many European immigrants, which sets this immigrant story apart from the other immigrant stories I have studied. It is hard to decide if the immigrants in this story are segregated or not, since we are only presented to their life as students, and we get to know nothing about how they live outside of school.

“Barriers to Cross”: Questions

There are two discussion tasks connected to this chapter. In the first question, the authors write that: “The class had difficulty in describing ‘Easter’ to a non-Christian. How would you explain the following things to a non-Swede?” (Hedencrona et. al. 272). The question is then followed up with
items/cultural happenings that are considered “typically” Swedish, such as Midsummer Eve, the word “Lagom”, the concept of Jantelag and so on.

The first statement “The class had difficulty in describing ‘Easter’ to a non-Christian” (Hedencrona et. al. 272) is actually incorrect, since the Europeans had equal difficulties in describing Easter traditions to each other. This misinformation mixed with the picture that is included in the chapter somewhat counteracts the intercultural opening that the text had. The result is that the immigrants are put into two clear-cut categories, namely European Christians on the one side, and the Muslim Moroccan immigrants on the other. Thereby, the differences that were evident among the Europeans are made to be seen as less important than the difference between the Europeans and the Muslim, which is to be seen as significant. The second question concerns the difficulties of learning another language, and does not enter into my discussion.

2.7 Read and Proceed

The textbook Read and Proceed was published in 2004 by Studentlitteratur. The book is divided into seven thematic chapters. In the chapter “Global English,” the authors write about the role of English as a global language. In this chapter, the story “Marital Freedom” can be found. The story is in itself an excerpt from the novel “(Un)arranged Marriage” written by Bali Rai. The students are presented with a summary of the plot in this novel.

2.7.1 “Marital Freedom” : Text and pictures

In the story “Marital Freedom” we meet Manny, a 17-year-old boy who is the son of two Indian immigrants. He lives in England, and has fallen in love with Lisa, who is English. Manny’s parents do not approve of the relationship, since they have already promised Manny to another girl in an arranged marriage. Lisa wants Manny to stand up to his parents, but Manny does not feel that she understands his problems. Manny gets a lift home with Lisa’s mother, but he makes them let him off on the bottom of his street, because his father wouldn’t understand it if he was to be dropped off at his house by two women.

The main immigrant character in this story has meaningful relationships with non-immigrants. In fact, he has an intimate relationship with an English girl. He and his surroundings are well aware of his cultural background. In other words, he is not passing. The problems that Manny experiences certainly are caused by the fact that he is a child of immigrants. In the span of the text, there is not a single thing that Manny feels proud of concerning his different cultural
background. The only thing that comes up that is connected with his parents’ land of departure is arranged marriage.

Manny feels that he has to sacrifice his individuality in order to please his parents. Also, Manny feels that he cannot combine the two. He has to make a choice between his own wishes or sacrificing his relationship with his family. In his own words: “And how was I supposed to explain that to Lisa who was never going to have to choose between what she wanted out of life and her family?” (Plith et. al. 59).

There is more than one immigrant character involved in the story, however. His parents are present throughout Manny’s narrative, and they are present in the way that they affect the actions in the story. As opposed to Manny, the parents have made the journey from India to England to make a new life for themselves. As they are presented in the story, they are extreme traditionalists, and seem only to care about their own values.

“Marital Freedom”: Tasks
The text is followed by two tasks. In one, the students are supposed to see if statements about the text are true or false. Since this task gives little room for interpretation and opinions from the students, I will focus instead on the second task, a discussion question:

Manny’s father has very strict views on how his son should be brought up. Old Indian family traditions have to be passed on to the next generation. Do you think immigrant parents in general are too hard on their sons and daughters? (Plith et. al. 61)

The question is generalizing in at least two ways. First of all, the authors make a connection between the traditions in the text and Indian traditions in general without first pointing out that India is a country with many traditions.

Furthermore, the authors make presumptions about immigrant parents. The students are supposed to discuss if immigrant parents in general are too strict with their children. There are a lot of immigrants in Sweden today, hailing from numerous countries and numerous cultures. These cultures do not necessarily need to be similar to each other, and to make an assumption that all of them are strict is simplifying reality.

To ask a student to make generalizing assumptions about immigrants as a group that may or may not have similarities in upbringing is extremely problematic, since the students then are being
taught to look at immigrants as a group rather than different groups or individuals.

### 2.8 Comparisons Between the Textbooks

Throughout my survey, I have looked at immigrant stories of many different sorts. The only initial factor that united them was that they fell into the discourse of immigration in Sweden. Therefore, I have analyzed immigrant stories about both newly arrived immigrants, and children of immigrants. I have also analyzed stories of immigrants from a wide variety of countries. It is important to acknowledge that the real-life experiences of immigration can be highly individual, and that the experiences shown in the textbooks are diverse as well. Nevertheless, I compare these stories for both similarities and differences.

Most of the immigration stories have one thing in common. The immigrants in focus do not come from Europe. One exception can be found in the text “Barriers to cross,” where there are several immigrants from Poland, England and Italy. However, distinction was made between the European and the Moroccan immigrants through pictures and tasks.

There is a difference in the countries that the immigrants come to. There are eleven immigration stories in total. Eight of these take place in England, one in Australia, one in France and one in the USA. This does not seem to matter for the layout of the narrative, however, since the character seems to undergo similar hardships.

There is also a difference in the countries of “origin” among the immigrants. In the cases where the characters are children of immigrants, their parents’ countries of origins are made important. There are actually nine countries of origin where the different immigrants come from. There is one each from Lebanon, Tobago, Morocco, Jamaica, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Mexico and Pakistan. Two immigrant stories have their origins in India. One story does not have a country of origin, but we understand from the context that it is outside Europe. There are differences in culture, and in what the immigrants “bring” from the country they come from, but their grievances are similar, since most of them are about their dealings with the majority culture that does not integrate them.

There is a difference in the stories, depending on whether the immigrants have arrived to the new country themselves, or whether their parents have arrived there. Seven of the stories, namely “Señor Payroll,” “Brackley and the Bed,” “Brick Lane,” “Refugee Boy,” “Just Below the Surface,” “Who am I?” and “Barriers to cross” are about immigrants that have immigrated. The rest of the immigrant stories are about children of immigrants, i.e. those characters have not immigrated. There is a certain difference between these two categories of immigrant stories. In the stories about
the immigrant children, there is a higher level of uncertainty among the immigrant characters about their identity, especially concerning the connection to the country and the culture that the parents came from. There is also a certain level of dislike and rejection of the culture of their parents. A clear exception from this tendency is the story “It Really is Psychological Torture” in *Quest B*, where none of this is evident.

There is one theme connected to immigration that is brought up that is evident in several immigration stories, and that is arranged marriage. This comes up as a main theme in “Who am I?” and “Marital Freedom”. The theme is also present (but not central) in “Brick Lane”. “Who am I” and “Marital Freedom” have totally different viewpoints on the theme, but the students are not encouraged to discuss arranged marriages exclusively in either of the stories.

3 Conclusion and discussion

3.1 Letting the immigrants speak?

Some of the short stories in the textbooks that I have analyzed are written by authors that have experiences of immigration themselves. Among these are excerpts from “Brick Lane” written by Monica Ali who is a Bangladeshi immigrant in England, and “Refugee Boy”, which is written by Benjamin Zephaniah, of Afro-Caribbean origin. This effort of incorporating immigrant voices into the textbooks is notable. A narrative of a person who has experienced immigration him/herself is important, since the person writing at least knows how it was for him/herself as an immigrant. Also it is important to show the students that immigrants indeed do have a voice. This in turn will help students see immigrants not as passive victims but as creative and active subjects.

However, even if the choice is sound, and even if the immigrants certainly get a voice through the texts, and thus represent themselves instead of being represented by someone that is not an immigrant, it is still my duty to analyse the effect that is produced around these texts as they appear in the textbooks. The immigrant authors are, as shown, involved in the writing of some of the stories. However, they are not involved in the process that the texts go through afterwards. Firstly, the textbook authors have no possibility of including the texts in their entirety. This means that the authors have to choose which parts to include, and by extension which parts not to include. Secondly, the immigrant authors are not included in the choice of pictures that accompany the text, which constitutes an important context for the text. As has been shown in this survey, an illustration can have implications for the reading and interpretation of a text. Thirdly and lastly, the immigrants have not been included in the work of choosing the questions and tasks to the texts. The
questions can, like the pictures, have a great impact on how students and teachers read and think about the texts.

### 3.2 Discussion

Portraying and discussing cultural difference is a difficult thing. One approach to cultural difference is to claim that cultural differences do not matter, or to downplay the differences between different cultures. (This is a naive and counterproductive approach.) With an intercultural approach, and within intercultural didactics, downplaying cultural differences is discouraged because of that very reason (Mahoney and Schamber 311). Therefore, having an intercultural approach, one should not portray cultural differences in this way.

Another approach is to acknowledge cultural differences. This acknowledgement can easily be used as support for segregated living if different cultures are seen as irrevocably different from each other. As I mentioned in the introduction, we live in a globalized world, and immigrants are and will be a part of the social life in Sweden. To let immigrants live in a segregated community and not trying to make room for them will lead to alienation and distance between immigrants and non-immigrants. The solution, as I see it, and that has been advocated throughout this survey, is meaningful co-existence and meaningful integration, where the immigrants (textbooks as well as in real life) are not just shown in connection to the problems they might experience by being immigrants. Furthermore, immigration and cultural meetings between immigrants and non-immigrants should be seen in relation to the possibilities that lie within such an encounter. Intercultural didactics will be an important part in this work.

If we are to show that immigrants can be a part of the Swedish community, and if we are to show that they can be a meaningful contributors to Swedish democracy - without abandoning their own cultural heritage on the way - a change in the way we perceive normality is needed. Leon calls this a diversified normality (12). By diversified normality, he means that non-Swedes have to feel that their own experiences and cultural knowledge have the same value as the “Swedes” experience and cultural knowledge. He claims that the different must be made normal (12-13).

A part of the road to accomplish this diversified normality actually is writing immigrant stories in English textbooks differently. We must show that immigrants can be part of normality, that immigrants are not the abnormal or outside normality. We may also choose to use immigrant stories that show immigrants that are segregated, and that are problematic from an intercultural

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2 I am not denying that there are complexities in cultural meetings, however it becomes problematic when immigrant stories focus solely on the problems, and nothing else.
perspective. However, if this is done, we must encourage the students to criticise and scrutinise the tendencies in the text.

It could be argued that English textbooks for B-level students have very little impact on how students perceive immigrants, since the texts in the textbooks that are about immigrants comprise such a small part of their lives. However, claiming this would be to not fully understand the nature of discourse. As Foucault describes it, discursive formations exist at different places at the same time, but talk about the same thing, and in the same way (35-36). Thereby, some of the English textbooks I have looked at stand in danger of reproducing and reinforcing problematic views of immigrants and immigration that may be part of the general discourse on immigrants. Thus, even if immigrant stories are part of a discursive whole, they are still a part of that whole. That some textbooks seem to partly go against the discourse of immigration (as described by Peralta) and towards intercultural approaches, is encouraging.

Am I in danger of reproducing and reinforcing the discourse of immigration myself throughout this C-essay, since I classify the immigration stories on the basis of the general discourse of immigration in Sweden, as it is described by Peralta? I am certainly aware of this pitfall, and acknowledge the concern. However, not to incorporate these stories (with children of immigrants) would be to not study the discourse in its entirety, and thereby leave out important parts of it. In other words - even if I use the definitions, this does not mean that I support the definitions, rather that I want to say something about its effects and properties. I use the definitions to reveal underlying presuppositions.

It would be interesting to look into how immigration stories or immigration are described in textbooks for, say, social science, and then compare the result with this one. Another thing that I found interesting, and would have liked to investigate further (if time only allowed it) is the “setup” of the immigration stories. In many textbooks, the role of English as a world language is explained, and English is described as a global language. Logically, then, the land that the immigrants come from and the land that they immigrate to would not matter a lot, since English is used all over the world. However, in all of the textbooks, we see the same pattern - non-European immigrants immigrate to European countries, where they have to adapt and “fit in”. I have found no immigration story, on the other hand, that shows an European (i.e. a Swede) emigrate to, say, Kenya, and having to adapt or “fit in” to Kenyan society.

We must not let students, be they immigrant or non-immigrant, inherit problematic outlooks on cultural differences, because doing this will only harm their own possibilities in life. Not only will they be unequipped to handle cultural differences in a healthy way, but they will also miss the opportunities of meaningful cultural exchange, since they have not been trained in it. And for this,
they will not thank us adults and teachers.

3.3 Conclusion
My initial aim was to examine textbooks for English B, and study the immigrant stories therein. I wanted to discover how immigrants were presented in these textbooks and what functions they might fulfil in English teaching. I also wanted to see if the immigration stories present the students with intercultural strategies. As shown, a great many countries and cultures are presented in the different textbooks. Nevertheless, I have managed to find certain commonalities in how immigrants are presented in most of the textbooks.

Firstly, almost all of the immigrants represented in the textbooks come from outside Europe. Secondly, almost all of the immigrants experience deep anxieties and problems. The majority of these anxieties and problems can quite easily be connected to the fact that they are immigrants. Thirdly, in the excerpts presented in the textbooks, the immigrants are to some extent made passive. This is especially clear in “My real name” in Quest B, where the immigrant character does not even tell her friends that she has an immigrant background and “It really is psychological torture” from the same book. Some exceptions are the stories “Señor Payroll” in Solid Ground 2 and “Who am I?” in Master Plan. Fourthly: There are very few examples of immigrants and non-immigrants having meaningful relationships with one another. Even in “Marital Freedom” in Read and Proceed, where the immigrant character has a non-immigrant girlfriend, their relationship is problematic mainly because he is an immigrant. In some of the immigrant stories, non-immigrant characters hardly appear, and when they do, their relationships towards the immigrant characters are difficult. In relation to the Canadian immigrant stories analysed by Gulliver, the immigrant stories in Swedish textbooks are significantly different. Both my and Gulliver’s survey show that the immigrants are put through hardships. However, in the Canadian textbooks, those hardships are solved, and the immigrants are able to live a meaningful and integrated life.

With the help of Stuart Hall, I have also been able to both analyse what I found, and what I did not find in form of significant absence. As I mentioned above there is a clear absence of meaningful relationships between immigrants and non-immigrants in all immigrant stories. Furthermore, there is an absence of the questioning of segregation. If segregation is presented in a text, it is neither commented upon, nor do the tasks encourage the student to discuss it. Also, there is an absence of presenting the reader with alternative immigrant representation, as was the case in the story “Just Below the Surface”, where the authors decided to focus on the “traditional” picture of a woman in a sari, in stead of presenting a picture where a woman transgresses these “traditional” borders. Finally, and most importantly, there is an absence of intercultural strategies. These
absences can be tied to the theories of discourse by Foucault. Because, as Foucault explains, a certain way of thinking is encouraged within a discourse, whereas other ways of thinking are non-existent. Therefore, the above mentioned factors are not a part of the discourse of immigrants or immigration, they are not ways of thinking about immigrants that the readers are encouraged to think in.

The result of this survey and analysis is that the functions immigrant characters and stories fulfil in English language teaching are that of discussing cultural difference, problems of living in another culture, and difficulties in two or more cultures. In showing difference, the immigrant character may possibly influence the way students reflect upon their own identity. Certainly, in some of the questions, the students are to explain Swedish culture as if to a foreigner.

In some cases, the immigrant stories initially do support intercultural strategies. Such is the case with, among other, the text “Barriers to cross” in Progress Gold B. However, in many cases, the intercultural initiative is not taken up by the authors of the textbooks, both through the pictures, but especially through the accompanying tasks. However, for an interculturally aware teacher, it could certainly be doable to “turn” this tendency with some of the tasks, since some of the texts certainly contain a possibility for intercultural interpretation and intercultural work.

Lastly I would like to point out that cultural differences certainly exist. Claiming anything else would make an intercultural approach impossible. However, difference in culture does not mean that it is impossible to incorporate these different cultures into normality.
Curtis, Polly, and Anthea Lipsett. “This is not the way I should have been treated in a country I love.” The Guardian 31 May 2008. Web. May 27 2011.


Lundfall, Christer, Ralf Nyström, Nadine Röhlk Cotting, and Jeanette Clayton. Blueprint :


