Does Coaching Make a Difference?

A Comparative Study on How Students Perceive Their English Learning

Degree Project in English, Advanced Level
Jörgen Anders

School of Education, Culture and Communication
Supervisor: Elias Schwieler

Mälardalen University
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Abstract

In the 1830s, students at Oxford University began using the word *coach* as a slang expression for a tutor who carried a student through an exam (Coach, 2011). Nowadays, the word is seen as a metaphor for a person supporting another person to achieve an imagined goal (Johansson & Wahlund, 2009). Hilmarsson (2006) says that everyone acts as a coach from time to time, and Strandberg (2009) argues students in Sweden today want to be coached. However, it is hard to find schools where they claim they practice coaching. Because the word *coach* is ubiquitously used, many who today work with coaching are in fact inappropriately trained (Grant, 2010; Williams, 2008). Thus, by using a questionnaire as well as interviewing two students and a coach, I wanted to investigate whether coaching made any difference to how students perceived their English learning. 63 students and one coaching teacher participated in this study, where the findings demonstrated that there were other aspects which had a higher impact on students’ perceptions of their English learning than the terminology used to describe the educational method practiced in their particular school.

*Keywords: coaching, comparative study, mentoring, students’ perceptions of English learning*
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1 Introduction

During my time in the private business sector I participated in two coaching courses, but I also attended a couple of such when I was a coach in athletics. Historically, however, the word coach (Coach, 2011) initially described tutors who carried students through exams. Nevertheless, looking for literature on coaching, it was surprisingly hard to find any that dealt with coaching within education, although I found tons of books dealing with it within management and sports. The most common practice in Swedish schools today is mentoring; it is hard to find schools where teachers claim they coach students. However, Strandberg (2009:23) maintains that students today want to be coached. Coaching also corresponds well with the Swedish education system; the curricula for the compulsory school system (Lpo94, 2006) and for the non-compulsory upper secondary school system (Lpf94, 2006) both state that students should e.g. learn to control and take responsibility for their own learning and development.

As I told teachers in an upper secondary school that I was going to make a study on coaching and how students were affected by it, they all thought it was an interesting topic. “How do you define coaching, though?” most of them asked, “and what is the difference between coaching and mentoring?” According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (2008) a mentor is “a person who gives another person help and advice over a period of time and often also teaches them how to do their job,” and the verb mentor means “to help and give advice to someone who has less experience than you, especially in your job” (p. 893); coach is “someone whose job is to teach people to improve at a sport, skill, or school subject,” or, as a verb, “to give special classes in sports or a school subject, especially privately, to one person or a small group” (p. 260). The differences between the two might seem negligible: the question is whether students who are explicitly coached perceive their English learning any differently than their non-coached peers.

1.1 Hypothesis

Swedish students today want to be coached, Strandberg (2009) points out, and my hypothesis is that students who are explicitly coached in school perceive their English learning in a distinctly more confident and positive way than their non-coached peers.

1.2 Research question

Does coaching make any difference to students’ perceptions of their English learning?
2 Previous research

2.1 History of coaching

Coach (Coach, 2011) is an English form of the Hungarian word ‘kocsi’. It originally means ‘a large kind of carriage of the village Kocs,’ where these carriages were first made. In the 16th century the word described something that carried people from where they were to a place where they wanted to go (Lätt, 2009).

In the 1830s, students at Oxford University began using the word coach as a slang expression for a tutor who carried a student through an exam (Coach, 2011). As from that point on, the word coach was seen as a metaphor for a person supporting another person to achieve an imagined goal (Johansson & Wahlund, 2009). A few years later, the concept was transferred into the sports arena, where the coach’s task was to facilitate and make it possible for athletes to improve their performances and results.

The transfer of coaching from sports into management took place in the 1980s. At first it primarily dealt with mentoring activities, but later coaching developed into counseling (Lätt, 2009). As from the mid-1990s, almost all forms of conversation, training, courses, and education in Sweden were called coaching. In 1995, the International Coach Federation (ICF, 2011) was established in order to create a worldwide ethical standard and a high professional level among professional coaches.

Today, Johansson and Wahlund (2009) claim, the coaching concept might seem worn and watered out, but as a matter of fact it has contributed to the development of many businesses and organizations throughout the world.

2.2 Defining coach and coaching

Miller (2010) states that the traditions of coaching stretch back hundreds or perhaps even thousands of years:

The image of the wise teacher, guiding the student through a series of learning experiences, combining encouragement with analysis and reflection, has formed the basis of legends. The journey from ignorance to knowledge, from doubt to confidence and from inexperience to achievement [sic!] (xvii).

Many consider Socrates to be the world’s first coach (Gjerde, 2004). The so-called Socratic dialogue makes people aware of the knowledge they already possess, elicits new ideas and beliefs, and teaches the interlocutors to learn by reflecting and contradicting themselves (Pihlgren, 2008). According to Rusz (2007:47), the Socratic dialogue is a
coaching technique that has survived; Socrates wanted to coach people by questioning and developing their own independent thinking. His method is still in use today within cognitive psychology, where it helps people to get rid of their old thoughts and ideas; through this kind of dialogue one realizes that there are still many alternative solutions to discover and new opinions to consider that one probably never thought of before. This kind of questioning furthermore aims to make people control and take responsibility for their own actions.

Rusz (2007) also claims our parents are supposed to be our first coaches, as we all depend on coaching from birth and onwards. Hilmarsson (2006) believes that because everyone is in need of coaching sometimes in life, everybody acts as a coach once in a while – it does not matter if you have an official title or not.

The problem with the word coach today is that coaching is seen as an industry instead of a profession (Grant, 2010); anyone can claim to be a ‘Master Coach.’ Hence, Grant continues, it is not surprising that concerns have been expressed that “inappropriately trained coaches tend to conduct atheoretical one-size-fits-all coaching interventions” (p. 26). Furthermore, “the use of the word coaching has become ubiquitous and is often used by those who are not specifically trained in coaching techniques” (Williams, 2008:292). Thus, Williams emphasizes, it is “imperative to get proper and respected training or education from a high-quality recognized school” (ibid.) if one claims to work as a professional coach.

The International Coach Federation, ICF (2011), educates professional coaches\(^1\), and defines the word coaching as “partnering with clients\(^2\) in a thought-provoking and creative process that inspires them to maximize their personal and professional potential.” Whitworth says a coach presupposes that everyone has the resources to solve one’s own problems (Hilmarsson, 2006). Coaches help their clients by creating a supportive and cooperative relationship. However, Grant (2010) stresses that the definitions of coaching vary considerably. Palmer and Whybrow (2010) list different definitions of coaching, where both Whitmore and Downing define it as “a facilitating approach”, but Parsloe claims that coaching “is directly concerned with the immediate improvement of performance and development of skills by a form of tutoring or instruction – an instructional approach” (p. 2).

McMahon (2008) says that although coaching, counseling, and mentoring share some of the same skills, they differ in terms of strategies and what they aim to achieve.

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\(^1\) However, according to the ICF Sweden Board of Directors, “the word coach in Sweden is not a protected title, meaning that everyone can write ‘coach’ on their business card. ICF’s certifications are personal, i.e. a company as a whole cannot obtain one from ICF” (personal communication, May 30, 2011).

\(^2\) The word client refers to the one being coached (ICF, 2011).
Williams (2008) adds therapy as a relative of coaching, but informs that “[c]oaching deals more with a person’s present and seeks to guide him/her to a more desired future … and the focus is on developing the client’s future” (p. 287). Lätt (2009) distinguishes the four as follows:

A person who wants to learn to swim can ask for help from a therapist, a counselor, a mentor, or a coach. The therapist will encourage you to talk about your fears of learning to swim. The counselor will explain what to do while you are swimming. The mentor will show you how to swim while you are doing it. The coach will encourage you to swim and then stands beside the pool until you have learned it (p. 23, my own translation).

Lätt (2009) also adds that the foundation of the coaching method is that the coach listens actively and asks powerful and relevant questions. Nonetheless, she continues, there is a difference between coaching individuals and coaching groups; coaching a group entails looking at what is best for the group as a whole, although there are individual members within it. However, because the group often conceives of itself as infallible, “group-think” (p. 59) frequently arises. This means that the group steers clear of examination, as any critique aimed at it is seen as a threat.

2.3 Coaching in professional life and sports

The massive interest in coaching in recent years is mirrored in the production of literature in the area. Hilmarsson (2006) and Palmer & Whybrow (2010) are just some of the authors who claim that coaching is about letting clients become more autonomous. The thought is that the clients’ own personal progress will also result in them taking more responsibility for their work. Both Lätt (2009) and Hilmarsson (2006) mention different coaching models. What they all have in common is that they are looking for a change in their clients’ attitudes and behavior, thereby solving problems and reaching a goal, whether it is personal, professional, or group based. Hence the coaches’ profession is to discuss with their clients in a way that will activate them and make them use their inner talents (Hudson, 1998). The coach has to listen attentively to the clients; this way they feel appreciated for who they are (Kilburg, 2000).

There are a large number of books dealing with coaching and sports, and trainers are even referred to as coaches. Martens (2004) emphasizes that coaches have to live as they teach to become successful. To achieve this, they have to disclose themselves to their athletes, because without a trusting relationship between them, the athletes will never share
their thoughts and feelings with their coaches. He furthermore argues that “[g]ood coaching is good teaching and good teaching involves the right philosophy, good communication skills, understanding athletes’ motivation, and skillful management of their behavior” (p. 165).

Thompson (2009) mentions how coaches have to motivate their athletes as every athlete once in a while lacks motivation. Pep-talk is one of the solutions, but Martens (2004) also stresses that it is of the utmost importance that coaches know when and how to use it, as it can either increase the athletes’ motivation or create anxiety if they are pushed beyond their optimal arousal level. He adds the necessity of coaches having the skills to provide their athletes with adequate instructions so their adepts really get to understand the sport. This enables the athletes to control and take greater responsibility for their own learning. Thereby they are provided with insight in order to make intelligent decisions, which should encourage self-reflection, self-confidence and increased autonomy.

Mindless drills are also highlighted by Martens (2004). He claims that athletes learn the basic skills through drills, but often find it difficult to apply these technical skills into practice. Experience has shown that “athletes often do not automatically see the relevance of a drill and are unable to apply the learning from drills in the game setting” (p. 173). Athletes learn better if put in game-like situations during their training, too, he argues.

2.4 Coaching in schools

Although the metaphorical use of the word coach first occurred in the educational area (Coach, 2011; Johansson & Wahlund, 2009), not much is written about coaching in schools. However, Hilmarsson (2006:147-148) gives an example where a teacher, using a coaching attitude, quickly guides a discussion towards what her pupil needs by engaging him in a constructive dialogue. The key to success, Hilmarsson claims, is to just shortly visit what he calls the ‘problem-room,’ and then move on to solving the problem, where what was first seen as something negative instead is transformed into a positive goal.

What characterizes coaching teachers is that they are curious and listen attentively so their pupils feel that they are seen and acknowledged for the ones they really are (Johansson & Wahlund, 2009). Furthermore, coaching teachers inspire their pupils to think in new ways, to see things from different angles, and to get diverse perspectives of the subject. New technology – and especially the introduction of the Internet – has created an education where the classroom is no longer isolated from the rest of the world (Smith, 2002). Teachers are no longer the experts in the classroom, and therefore their job has shifted into facilitating and guiding “students through the process of gathering information, testing its validity or
applicability, and creating meaningful conclusions or solutions” (p. 40). Smith stresses that knowledge now is constructed and no longer dished out by the students’ professors. Learning today has become active or interactive, and accordingly the teaching is akin to coaching.

Although mentoring is the most common approach in Swedish schools today, Strandberg (2009) argues that coaching is part of a mentor’s assignment; pupils “look forward to … meeting a coach who really wants to help them to make progress” (p. 23, my own translation). Coaching also seems to correspond well with the curricula of the Swedish educational systems. Amongst other things, Lpo94 (2006) states that the Swedish school shall strive to ensure that all pupils develop both the ability and self-confidence to assess their results themselves, and to ensure that all students develop a responsibility for their own studies. Lpf94 (2006) informs that teachers shall not only reinforce pupils’ self-confidence and willingness to learn and to take responsibility for their learning, but also shall stimulate pupils to use their ability to achieve knowledge.

2.5 Previous studies on coaching
In his literature survey, Grant (2010) found that up until 2006 only 79 empirical studies on coaching had been conducted. Clearly, he argues, more empirical studies within the coaching area have to be made. However, the benefits of coaching are hard to measure in terms of productivity and results, as coaching mostly deals with feelings and subjective interpretations (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2010). One way to measure and evaluate coaching is to see if “[s]pecific behavioral learning objectives … are developed for each individual” (Peterson, 1993:5). Nevertheless, McMahon (2008) argues that no one has yet been able to provide a globally agreed model for evaluating the return on investment (ROI) that coaching brings. Hilmarsson (2006), on the other hand, claims that a study showed that the productivity in companies where the staff had been coached increased by 20%, and that a follow-up to their coaching augmented the production by up to 90%.

Grant and Zackon (2004) found that 15.7 per cent of 2,529 professional coaches once had been teachers. Two studies show that coaching has had positive effects on teachers, too (Oskarsson, 2007; Ross, 1992); Ross concludes that teachers’ interaction with their coaches even generates higher achievements among their students, and Oskarsson (2007) hypothesizes that teachers who use a coaching approach make students more focused and motivated. However, neither of the reports mentions how coaching affects students if students are directly coached by coaches.
3 Method

First of all, I wanted to get an understanding of how coaching in theory could be applied to students. Therefore I developed a hypothetical process chart of how coaching works according to my own comprehension of the literature in this field, which was thereafter validated by a professional coach. Together we came to the conclusion that six main features of the coaching teacher’s commitments and tasks as well as seven features of the coached student’s responsibilities and acts could be pointed out:

![Coaching Process Chart](image)

**Figure 1: Coaching Process Chart**

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3 Margaretha Lostelius is an educated coach who works for Eductus. She did, however, not agree with me that coaches should give instructions, but rather guide their clients. I still thought the term ‘instructions’ to be appropriate, as Parsloe (Palmer & Whybrow, 2010:2) defined coaching as ‘an instructional approach’. Also, Lostelius mentioned the importance of the follow-up of coaching, which I simply presupposed should be a natural element in the school system.
After some initial setbacks concerning the scope and design of the study\(^4\), I finally chose to conduct a comparative study, as this method should provide “a basis on which one can say that a treatment had an effect” (Krathwohl & Smith, 2005:95). Furthermore, a comparison and contrast study serves the purpose of “noting attributes and changes and protecting against alternative explanations” (ibid.). I chose to focus on investigating coaching from a student’s perspective, as I found that research had not yet covered this aspect. Because it has proven hard to measure the benefits of coaching in terms of concrete achievements (Fillery-Travis & Lane, 2010), I disregarded students’ performances in the form of grades, results, etc., and instead concentrated on examining whether coaching made any difference to students’ perception of their English learning.

No coaching was explicitly practiced in the Swedish compulsory school in the Central Swedish city where this study took place. Hence the students who were coached and participated in this study must have come in contact with coaching in their education for the very first time in their first year in upper secondary school. The Swedish school year commences in late August, and it was now the month of May. As the benefits of coaching are reportedly best measured between six to nine months after it has been implemented (Peterson, 1993), the timing was perfect to realize a comparative study by comparing students who were coached to others who were not.

To evaluate and get as much insight into the topic as possible, I carried out both interviews and used questionnaires on a limited number of persons. Although the results of this study may still be affected by how I interpreted the respondents’ answers, interviews and questionnaires combined strengthen the validity and reliability of a study (Stukát, 2005).

*The Swedish Research of Council* (Vetenskapsrådet, 2002) states that, unless their parents have approved their participation, all respondents participating in a Swedish research have to be over 15 years of age. However, all 64 participants who took part in this study were aged 16 or older. The requirements of information, consent, utilization, and confidentiality were also taken into consideration (see Appendix A\(^5\)).

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\(^4\) I came in contact with a headmaster who gave a short presentation on coaching in schools. She invited me to conduct my study in her school, and we agreed on my interviewing several students and coaches, and observing a few English classes. I also sent a mail to an English coach in the same school, whose student I came in contact with through a friend of mine. When I later contacted the headmaster and the English coach, they responded that right then was a bad time; they had to prepare for the national exams. Thus no coaching was practiced during English classes at that moment. I had to change my strategy all together, hence abandoning the thought of thoroughly examining coaching in schools.

\(^5\) The missive was never translated into English, but appendices B, C, and D were.
3.1 Interviews

Because Denscombe (2009) says interviews should provide the researcher with a general view of what is studied, I found it imperative to also get a teacher’s perspective of how coaching worked in this part of the study. Therefore, apart from two students, I chose to consult a coaching teacher and to include the information thus obtained. Semi-structured interviews give respondents an opportunity to develop their own opinions in connection with certain questions, and they also provide the researcher with details which facilitate the explanation of a result without losing sight of the purpose of the interview. Hence I arranged three such interviews.

From this section and onwards, the following false names\(^6\) are used:

Charlotte: a student in an upper secondary school who had a coach.

Martin: a student who attended an upper secondary school where mentoring was practiced.

Camilla: one of the coaches who provided information about the method of working in Charlotte’s school company. Camilla was not a coach in Charlotte’s specific school, though.

The first interview took place with one of the students in the upper secondary school where they did coach. A friend introduced me to Charlotte, a first grade ‘social science’ student, who was interviewed in her free time as I did not want to disturb the school more than necessary; Charlotte’s headmaster had already explained that there was no time for conducting my study on coaching during English lessons.

As I wanted to compare Charlotte’s answers to those of one of her peers, it was essential that the second interview, too, included a ‘social science’ student, but this time with a student who was not coached. I contacted a headmaster in an upper secondary school who confirmed that they did not use any form of coaching on students in her school, but instead practiced mentoring. The headmaster passed me on to a Swedish teacher who was the mentor of a first grade ‘social science’ class. She, in her turn, gave me permission to interview whomever I wanted in her class. One student, Martin, accepted my interviewing him during his lunch break. He answered the same questions as Charlotte (see Appendix B) with one exception: his questions focused on mentoring, whereas Charlotte’s were about coaching.

\(^6\) The first letter of the false names corresponds with the category to which the respondents belong: ‘Coaching’ (Charlotte and Camilla) and ‘Mentoring’ (Martin).
As already mentioned, I did not want to disturb the coaches in Charlotte’s school. Therefore the third interview was conducted via telephone. Camilla worked as a coach who informed the public how they practice coaching in Charlotte’s school company. Although Camilla was neither part of Charlotte’s school nor taught English but other subjects, she agreed to participate in my study by answering my questions (see Appendix C).

Inspired by Kvale’s (1997) method of “focusing on meaning” (my own translation) – where the interviews are summarized by presenting the results in different themes or sections – I decided to divide the outcome of the interviews into three headings which were of special interest to me: (i) ‘Coaching as an educational method;’ (ii) ‘Coaching compared to mentoring;’ and (iii) ‘The two students’ perception of their own progress in their English learning.’

All three interviews were recorded with a dictaphone and lasted around 15-20 minutes. To make everyone more comfortable and to let the informants elaborate more on their answers, all interviews were held in Swedish. They were later transcribed and translated into English; therefore all the quotes in the subsections of section 4.1 are my own translations.

3.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaires leave less room for subjective interpretations (Stukát, 2005). Therefore I combined the interviews with a questionnaire (see Appendix D). My aim with the questionnaire was to see how well students’ perception of their English learning corresponded to the Coaching Process Chart (see Figure 1).

The urge to eliminate alternative explanations of whether coaching de facto had an impact on students’ perception of their English learning led to the decision to compare the answers of the ‘social science’ students in the upper secondary school classes to those of a non-coached ninth grade – i.e. the last grade in the Swedish compulsory school – in this part of the study. This way, I reasoned, it would be easier to control that visible distinctions had to do with the focal relationship of whether coaching was practiced. Consequently, I asked an English teacher in the compulsory school where I trained as a teacher for permission to let her students answer my questionnaire. 20 ninth-grade students participated; approximately half of them had their English teacher as their personal mentor. This class is called Compulsory School Class in section 4.2.

Martin’s mentor gave me permission to let the students in her class answer my questionnaire during a Swedish class of hers. In section 4.2, the responses from these students

\[^7\] Meningskoncentrering” in Swedish.
go under the name *Mentoring Class*. None of them had their English teacher as their personal mentor.

As Charlotte’s headmaster finally informed me that they chose not to participate in my study, I had to find another school where teachers claimed to coach their students. Eventually I found a school where they did. It has to be emphasized, though, that there were no ‘coaches’ in this school, but ‘tutors;’ still, on the school’s homepage, it was explicitly pointed out that each student got 15 minutes of coaching every week. This way of working moreover perfectly corresponds to how coaching was historically practiced (cf. Coach, 2011). One of the school’s female tutors, who also taught English, let 20 students fill out my questionnaire. In section 4.2 they are called the *Coaching Class*, and approximately half of them had her as their personal tutor who coached them.

Even though I informed Charlotte of her headmaster’s decision to refrain from this study, she still gave me permission to use her interview answers. Furthermore, she was kind enough to participate in the questionnaire part. After some thought, I decided that the results of this study would become more valid if I counted in her responses in this part of the study, too, because she was the only student who was explicitly coached by a *coach*. That is how a single person could become a category in the analysis of the questionnaire. Charlotte’s responses are referred to as *CR* (i.e. Charlotte’s Response) in section 4.2.

A total of 63 questionnaires were answered. In the ninth-grade students’ case, the last question was changed from ‘I think my English learning has improved a lot since having commenced upper secondary school’ to ‘… since seventh grade.’

### 4 Results and discussion

Below, both the results of this study and the discussions of these are combined in order to facilitate the analysis of them.

#### 4.1 Results and discussion of the interviews

The interviews gave me an insight into how coaching in school works, and how and whether this approach and that of mentoring differed. The informants also contributed to the comprehension of how important the relationship between students and a personal coach or mentor is in Swedish schools today.

In the interviews with Martin and Charlotte, I asked them to think about their English learning specifically (see Appendix B). Charlotte had the English teacher as her personal coach, whereas Martin did not have his as a personal mentor, which led to my having
to remind him to focus on his English classes and teacher from time to time.

As Camilla was not an English coach, the third interview instead focused on how they worked in general in the schools where she was a coach (see Appendix C).

4.1.1 Coaching as an educational method

Camilla told me all teachers in their schools were properly educated to coach. Although no teacher in Charlotte’s school had a certificate through the ICF, the ICF Sweden Board of Directors averred that the teachers in Camilla’s schools were still entitled to name themselves coaches, because the word is not a protected title in Sweden (personal communication, May 30, 2011). When I asked Camilla what coaching was to her, she answered:

It’s about making the students find the answers themselves … and to contemplate and reflect on their learning. Therefore it is important that our students get the tranquility they need to learn … and that’s also why we ask the ones who disturb to leave the classroom.

There is a difference between individual coaching and coaching groups (Lätt, 2009), as coaching groups implies focusing on what is best for the group as a whole rather than looking at each individual’s needs. Whether this involves asking the ones who disturb to leave the classroom remains unanswered, though, because it is not explicitly mentioned in the literature. As Charlotte’s headmaster had given a presentation of coaching in school, my first impression was that their coaches conducted coaching all the time. However, the same headmaster later indicated this was not the case; while preparing for the national exams, no coaching was practiced during English classes. Although this in itself is baffling, as the word coach historically signified carrying students through exams (Coach, 2011), both Charlotte and Camilla confirmed that not much coaching was performed during lessons. As a matter of fact, Charlotte could not really explain how coaching worked in English classes. Instead she offered the following view:

Coaching to me means that we’ve got special [one-on-one] sessions to discuss the subjects every now and then … to discuss our own progress. We call them ‘coach-time’ … and we have them every two-three weeks, something like that. But if we need to talk to our coach earlier, we can do that, of course. … The coach has all the information I need about all my subjects. … My personal coach is very pedagogic when she informs me of my progress. If I have any questions regarding my learning she gives me advice on that.
Hilmarsson’s (2006) example of how coaching is used in schools also only includes the teacher and her one student, and Lätt (2009) does not mention how to coach groups in schools. Nonetheless Camilla fully agreed with my ‘Coaching Process Chart’ (see Figure 1) and assured me that coaching “permeate[d] the way [they] work[ed], in every subject.”

Overlooking the questionable fact that coaching was not practiced while preparing for the national exams (cf. Coach, 2011), what Camilla and Charlotte expressed was in accordance with how coaching is described in the literature: Camilla’s statement that students have to find the answers themselves corresponds well to how Whitworth defines coaching (Hilmarsson, 2006) and how Hudson (1998) describes the profession of coaching. In addition, Charlotte mentioned how her coach gave her advice on how to improve her studies, which meant her coach supported her (cf. Johansson & Wahlund, 2009) as well as facilitated her progress (cf. Palmer & Whybrow, 2010; Smith, 2002).

4.1.2 Coaching compared to mentoring

While Martin explained that the whole class had ‘mentor-time’ with its two mentors each week mixed with individual sessions with their personal mentor, Charlotte, as already mentioned, said that coaching was individually conducted during ‘coach-time.’ The ICF (2011) states that coaches need to partner with their clients; Martin bonded more with his personal mentor than with his other teachers, and he could also discuss personal feelings and ideas with her (cf. Kilburg, 2000; Martens, 2004): “It is easier to talk with one’s mentor than with any other teacher” he said. Charlotte, too, thought she and her personal coach, moreover her English teacher, had a “special bond,” which was “not really the case with [her] other teachers.”

Charlotte continuously discussed her progress with her coach, and she expressed how stimulating it now was to achieve her goals set for each subject. Her coach was very cooperative and made “herself available” whenever she needed time with her (cf. Hilmarsson, 2006). She also added that her English teacher took her work seriously, which was good, because Charlotte, too, was “very serious when it [came] to [her] own studies.”

Martin, on the other hand, did not have his English teacher as a mentor, which meant he did not even find there should be this special connection between them. Instead, he claimed, he had that special relationship with his personal mentor. However, he found the English teacher was personal enough with him: “She has disclosed herself in the way she wants us to get to know her” (cf. Martens, 2004).
The biggest difference between the two school-systems was that they in Charlotte’s school worked intensively with the subjects in ‘blocks,’ which they did not in Martin’s class. Charlotte said: “I think it’s good that way, one gets to concentrate more on just a few subjects at a time, [which means] one digs deeper into, and gets a deeper understanding of, each subject.” This way of working probably optimized Charlotte’s potential (cf. ICF, 2011), as she claimed it enabled her to reflect more on her own learning (cf. Martens, 2004; Palmer & Whybrow, 2010; Pihlgren, 2008; Rusz, 2007).

Moreover, Charlotte pointed out she did not have English classes this particular semester, which puzzled me, because the national exams were held in the spring. However, Camilla gave me the following explanation:

_Skolverket_ gave us permission to hold the English exams in December, but then we only give students the opportunity to take them if they have completed their English course by then. This is vital to us … and the students. Otherwise they have to do it in May, like the rest of Sweden. It really depends on the students’ progress in the subject. We have high demands on our students.

Nonetheless, the interviews confirm that coaching and mentoring are indeed related to each other (McMahon, 2008); the responses given by Martin merely accentuate that the relationship the students had with their English teacher really had an impact regarding how they perceived their English learning.

4.1.3 The two students’ perception of their own progress in their English learning

The biggest difference compared to compulsory school that Martin had experienced was that he now worked more independently (cf. Miller, 2010; Rusz, 2007), and that he now had to take more responsibility (cf. Martens, 2004; Rusz, 2007). “This is my future”, he said, “I really have to pull myself together now.” Charlotte’s thoughts were of a similar character:

It’s like now I do get acknowledged when I do well, not like before, when those who disturbed classes got all the attention, really. … It’s another type of school now. We’ve got to take more responsibility for our own learning, and we have to keep a better order of things now. In the ninth grade I got more help with that. Maybe it doesn’t suit everyone, but for me it works, I learn to get more independent this way.

_Skolverket_ is the Swedish National Agency for Education.
However, somewhat contradictorily, Charlotte added it was now her personal coach who controlled her progress in all her subjects, and it was also her personal coach who was responsible for the coaching sessions. “This way it’s no longer like it was in compulsory school, where one had to ‘hunt’ separate teachers to speak to them about one’s thoughts,” Charlotte answered.

When I asked Martin if he thought his English teacher made her students active (cf. Rusz, 2007), he said: “My English teacher is too good-hearted, too kind to us. She should demand more from us and make us more disciplined.” To activate Martin during classes, she should make learning more fun: “She should vary the learning; we could have debates, written essays, discussions … so that we constantly stay alert to English learning,” which Martin pointed out was missing in his English classes. Charlotte’s coach, on the other hand, motivated her when it came to learning English (cf. Johansson & Wahlund, 2009; Martens, 2004; Oskarsson, 2007; Thompson, 2009). “Now it is stimulating to achieve your goals … and to get good grades,” which she claimed was not the case in primary school.

Charlotte also thought that she could concentrate more now, which had led to her having improved her confidence when it came to learning English (cf. Lpf94, 2006; Martens, 2004; Miller, 2010). Although Martin first claimed he had not consciously noticed his English teacher having increased his self-confidence, it later turned out she did just what Hilmarsson (2006) says a coaching teacher should do, i.e. turning something that first seems as something negative into something positive, because Martin added:

If you tell her that you have a problem, then maybe she will take action, but if everything works smoothly, she does not care … except when it comes to giving presentations or before exams, then she will encourage you. She will say like “it will work out just fine, it will be okay.” In this respect she increases my self-confidence, but it is not like she does that all the time.

Finally, both Charlotte and Martin answered that justified feedback was given to them. Martin stated it was “very detailed and adequate.” Thus Martin found that the English teacher indeed made it easy for him to improve his learning in the subject (cf. Johansson & Wahlund, 2009; Palmer & Whybrow, 2010; Smith, 2002). Charlotte claimed her coach always provided her with “adequate and honest feedback after every project, every presentation, every work, and every course-block we have accomplished.” Charlotte reasoned

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9 See Figure 3 in section 4.2, showing that Charlotte (CR) decided to circle a 5 instead of a 6 on a scale of 1-6 when it came to the English teacher motivating her. Charlotte only circled a 5 four times, in all other cases she chose to ‘strongly agree’ by marking a 6.
she could control her own learning better that way (cf. Martens, 2004; Rusz, 2007).

Once again, the two students’ answers were quite alike, except for the fact that Charlotte’s English teacher was also her personal coach, whereas Martin’s was not his personal mentor, which really had an impact on how they responded.

4.2 Results and discussion of the questionnaire
(See Appendix D for more detailed figures.)

63 questionnaires were answered by four groups:

1. Compulsory School Class (=ninth grade): 20 pupils attending the ninth grade in the compulsory school system who had a mentor.

2. Mentoring Class (=tenth grade): 22 pupils attending the first year in secondary school who had a mentor.

3. Coaching Class (=tenth grade): 20 pupils attending the first year in secondary school who were explicitly coached 15 minutes every week by their personal tutor.


During the interviews, it became clear what significant role the special connection between the students and their contact with their English teacher in school constituted. Having scrutinized the results of the Compulsory School Class, where approximately half of the respondents had the English teacher as their ‘personal mentor,’ and those of the Mentoring Class, where none of them had the English teacher as theirs, it was discernible that this also affected the results of the questionnaire. Therefore I contacted the tutor of the Coaching Class, who confirmed that approximately half of the respondents in this class had her as their personal tutor. She, too, anticipated that this aspect would be important as well as visible when evaluating the results of her class (personal conversation, May 18, 2011).

Although the Coaching Class only had 15 minutes of coaching each week, I reasoned that the outcome of this part of the study would still be valid because Camilla had assured me that their way of working was imbued with coaching even though mainly
conducted in short one-on-one sessions during ‘mentor-time’ (see section 4.1.1). Moreover, the same conditions prevailed in the Compulsory School Class as in the Coaching Class, where more or less half of the students had their English teacher as their personal mentor and tutor respectively. Therefore I concluded that if any salient differences of how the students perceived their English learning became apparent, the cause of whether it had to do with coaching could be narrowed down, owing to the decision to include the Compulsory School Class.

To avoid perfectly neutral opinions, the statements in the questionnaire had to be rated on a scale of 1-6, where 1 corresponded to ‘strongly disagree’ and 6 to ‘strongly agree.’ Hence the students had to take a standpoint, either at least slightly agreeing or disagreeing with the statements. Thereafter a calculation of how the students had estimated the statements on average for each group was effected (for more detailed information on how they answered, see Appendix D). CR, however, only includes Charlotte’s own single answer for each statement. Unanswered statements were disregarded in the calculations. Thus Figures 2-19 below show how well the classes on average, and Charlotte (CR) as a single person, thought the statements corresponded to their English learning:

![Bar chart showing the average responses of different classes and CR on a scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree.](image)

*Figure 2: I have a personal goal that I focus on when it comes to my learning English.*

To focus on an imagined goal is essential in coaching, whether the goal is a personal, professional, or a group-based one (Lätt, 2009; Hilmarsson, 2006). The goal could also concern striving to pass certain exams, for example (Coach, 2011). “[T]he focus is on developing the client’s future” (Williams, 2008:287). However, both the result of the Compulsory School Class and the Mentoring Class surpass that of the Coaching Class. Looking at individual responses, though, Charlotte (CR) as well as 35% of the Coaching Class ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement (see Appendix D, statement 1).
One of the tasks in coaching is to motivate and inspire the client (ICF, 2011; Johansson & Wahlund, 2009; Martens, 2004; Thompson, 2009). In this particular aspect, coaching might first seem to be slightly more successful compared to a mentoring, just as Oskarsson (2007) hypothesizes; however, the result of the Compulsory School Class reduces the relevance of this assumption. The results could also imply that it comprised the significance of whether the English teacher was the students’ personal contact or not, had it not been for the fact that Charlotte (CR) ‘only’ circled a 5 in this statement, which then diminishes the strength of this presumption, too. In this case, it is therefore hard to draw any conclusions other than that it merely reflected the individual teacher’s commitment to the task of motivating and stimulating her students to achieve knowledge (cf. Lpf94, 2006) irrespective of which methodology was used.

A coach presupposes that we all have the resources to solve our own problems (Hilmarsson, 2006). Coaching should be “a thought-provoking and creative process”
(ICF, 2011). Hudson (1998) argues that coaches make clients use their inner talents. Nonetheless, in this respect there were no distinct differences between the classes. Maybe this had to do with the fact that they had tutors in the Coaching Class rather than out-and-out coaches, as in Charlotte’s (CR) case. On the other hand, because of the equality of the high results, one could also conclude that the teachers in the non-coaching classes unconsciously coached their students, just as Hilmarsson (2006) points out everyone does from time to time.

![Figure 5: My English teacher listens attentively to what I have to say.](image)

Good coaches are curious and listen actively and attentively to what their clients have to say (Johansson & Wahlund, 2009; Kilburg, 2000; Lätt, 2009). Regardless of whether she named herself coach, tutor, mentor, or simply teacher, most students seemed to agree that their particular English teacher was a good listener.

![Figure 6: My English teacher understands me and appreciates me for who I am.](image)

Kilburg (2000) stresses the importance of coaches appreciating their clients for who they are. Most of the students also thought their English teacher understood and appreciated them, which I furthermore presuppose helps to create a cooperative relationship (cf. Hilmarsson, 2006; ICF, 2011).
Figure 7: My English teacher asks me relevant questions and provides me with adequate instructions so that I can reach my goals and learn English even better.

The foundation of coaching is that the coach asks powerful and relevant questions (Lätt, 2009); Martens (2004) points out the necessity of coaches having the skills to provide their clients with adequate instructions so they really get to understand the subject. Although the answers were more scattered in the Mentoring Class than in the other classes most students in all categories still agreed with the statement: only seven out of 62 somehow disagreed, and one respondent chose not to answer.

Figure 8: My English teacher supports me and facilitates my learning English.

Historically, the coaches’ task was to facilitate athletes’ progress in sports (Johansson & Wahlund, 2009). Whitmore and Downing advocate the ‘facilitating approach’ (Palmer & Whybrow, 2010), and Smith (2002) says that the teachers’ job has shifted into facilitating and guiding their students; whether they were coached or not, the results confirm that most students participating in this study thought their English teachers supported them.
Miller (2010) describes coaching as a “journey from … doubt to confidence” (xvii), which corresponds well with the curricula of the Swedish school systems: Lpo94 (2006) and Lpf94 (2006) state that the schools should help their pupils to develop their self-confidence. Furthermore, coaching seeks to help people develop their own independent thinking (Rusz, 2007). Half of the Coaching Class strongly agreed with this statement. However, none of the respondents, coached or not, strongly disagreed here, but most of them at least slightly agreed. The impression is that the results reflect whether the English teacher was the students’ personal coach, mentor, or tutor; both Martin and Charlotte emphasized the importance of having a special bond with the teacher they confided in when discussing their own progress or even personal issues.

Coaches combine encouragement with analysis and reflection (Miller, 2010). Martens (2004) claims that good coaching encourages self-reflection, and Pihlgren (2008) says the Socratic dialogue makes people learn by reflecting. Although there is
a difference in results between the Coaching Class and the Mentoring Class, the answers of the Compulsory School Class once more indicate that the disparities could not simply be explained by the influence of coaching, but again probably rather by the meaning of whether the students’ English teacher was their personal contact or not: the findings in the questionnaire part repeatedly point in that direction. Furthermore, in Charlotte’s (CR) case, consideration has to be taken that she already knew she had passed the national exams (cf. section 4.1.2).

![Bar chart showing responses to a question about English teacher's influence on learning.]

**Figure 11**: My English teacher elicits new ideas and beliefs, makes me think in different ways, and makes me aware of the knowledge I already possess.

This statement is a reference to the Socratic dialogue, which elicits new ideas and makes people aware of what they already know (Pihlgren, 2008). Furthermore, Rusz (2007) adds that this kind of dialogue provokes new ways of thinking. Once more, the column of the Mentoring Class cannot support the idea of coaching being of relevance, as the bar of the Compulsory School Class almost tallies with the one of the Coaching Class. Nonetheless, although I asked each class if any question was hard to understand – which each class assured me was not the case –, the scattered answers (see Appendix D, statement 10) still indicate that this particular statement was awkwardly formulated with a lot of ‘options.’
Smith (2002) says that learning has to be active or interactive, and therefore teaching is akin to coaching. Coaching is also about letting people take more responsibility for their work (Palmer & Whybrow, 2010). One student in the Coaching Class added a comment, saying “I can plan when I’m going to do things, but not what [I want to]” in connection with statement 11 (see Appendix D). Although Charlotte (CR) did not strongly agree with this statement, 13 out of 62 students did: three in the Compulsory School Class, and five each in the Mentoring Class and Coaching Class. Considering curricula having to be followed, the overall high rated results are remarkable.

Rusz (2007) argues that coaching aims to make people become more autonomous as they begin to control their own actions and development; Martens (2004) claims that if properly practiced, it enables people to control their own learning. Here only seven of the 63 respondents slightly disagreed, whereas eleven strongly agreed. On average, the results once again were very equal. However, the

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10 Although I wanted to stay clear from perfectly neutral answers, one of the respondents in the Coaching Class circled both 3 and 4, which is why its columns contain half a score respectively.
question is whether students perceived that they controlled their own development more if only the teacher in her role as a personal contact provided information regarding their progress in the subject (cf. Charlotte’s comment in section 4.1.3).

Successful coaches disclose themselves to their clients, because without a trusting relationship, the clients will never share their thoughts and feelings with them (Martens, 2004). My assumption is that the reason for the scattered answers (see Appendix D, statement 13) – especially in the Mentoring Class, where no student had the English teacher as their personal mentor – is that the students did not discuss tête-à-tête with their English teacher in thought-provoking dialogues unless their English teacher was their personal contact: the outcome of this statement is perhaps where the significance of the nature of the relationship the students had with their English teacher is most perceptible. 14 out of the 22 students in the Mentoring Class circled a 2 or 3 in this statement. Noteworthy is also the fact that the only student who strongly disagreed belonged to the Coaching Class, who therefore presumably did not have the English teacher as his or her personal tutor, although this supposition can neither be confirmed nor denied due to anonymity.

Figure 14: I share my thoughts and feelings with my English teacher.

Successful coaches disclose themselves to their clients, because without a trusting relationship, the clients will never share their thoughts and feelings with them (Martens, 2004). My assumption is that the reason for the scattered answers (see Appendix D, statement 13) – especially in the Mentoring Class, where no student had the English teacher as their personal mentor – is that the students did not discuss tête-à-tête with their English teacher in thought-provoking dialogues unless their English teacher was their personal contact: the outcome of this statement is perhaps where the significance of the nature of the relationship the students had with their English teacher is most perceptible. 14 out of the 22 students in the Mentoring Class circled a 2 or 3 in this statement. Noteworthy is also the fact that the only student who strongly disagreed belonged to the Coaching Class, who therefore presumably did not have the English teacher as his or her personal tutor, although this supposition can neither be confirmed nor denied due to anonymity.
Taking responsibility is repeatedly highlighted in the literature of coaching; Martens (2004) states that adequate instructions lead to clients’ enablement to take responsibility for their own learning. Rusz (2007) advocates thought-provoking questioning in order to make people responsible for their actions. Curiously, the average result of the Compulsory School Class almost tallies with those of the upper secondary school classes, although Martin and Charlotte both said they had to take more responsibility for their learning in the upper secondary school compared to the compulsory school. However, only two respondents in the Compulsory School Class circled a 3, as did one respondent of the Coaching Class. No one marked a 1 or 2.

Coaches make people develop their own independent thinking (Rusz, 2007). Good coaching generates increased autonomy (Palmer & Whybrow, 2010). The answers of the Compulsory School Class corresponded well with those of the students in the upper secondary schools. Here, Charlotte (CR) again circled a 5. Only nine of 63 students somehow disagreed with the statement.
Figure 17: I never feel stress or anxiety when it comes to achieving my goals in English.

Too much pep-talk can lead to anxiety (Martens, 2004), hence it is important that coaches know when and how to motivate their clients. Although only six out of the 22 students in the **Mentoring Class** slightly disagreed with this statement, Martin thought his English teacher should have higher demands on her students; maybe the answers given by Martin’s classmates instead reflected their thinking that their English teacher did not maximize their personal potential (cf. ICF, 2011), but instead expected too little from them. In all, however, 21 respondents felt some anxiety when striving to achieve their goals in English, of which eight belonged to the **Coaching Class**.

Figure 18: I perfectly understand why I have to learn the things taught in English. I see why it is relevant knowledge, i.e. I think my English classes provide me with the adequate experiences I need and prepare me to use English outside school.

Experience has shown that athletes do not automatically see the relevance of what is been taught, and are therefore unable to apply the learning from drills into practice (cf. Martens, 2004). A more positive outcome is visible here compared to the previous statement: only one respondent, namely one of the students in the **Mentoring Class**, slightly disagreed by circling a 3, and only six circled a 4. The rest of the
participants concurred with the statement to a higher degree; eight in the Compulsory School Class, ten in the Mentoring Class, and 15 in the Coaching Class even circled a 6. The results furthermore indicate that the English subject as such was well-established in all the classes included in this study.

Figure 19: I think my English learning has improved a lot since seventh grade/since having commenced upper secondary school.

The effects of coaching are best evaluated between six and nine months after coaching has been implemented (Peterson, 1993). Thus I thought it interesting to see if any noticeable differences between a coaching and a mentoring approach could be distinguished by adding this statement in the questionnaire. The results, however, suggests that students improving their knowledge in the English subject takes more time than sensing the perceptions of coaching, as the bar of the Compulsory School Class surpasses the ones of the other groups, including Charlotte’s (CR) column: the teacher of the Compulsory School Class had had two years extra to develop her students’ English learning compared to the rest of the respondents’ teachers.
Figure 20: Average for statements in Figures 2-19.

Although Charlotte’s (CR) bar shows the highest agreement with the statements in the questionnaire on average, it should be taken into account that Charlotte, in the interview part, claimed she took her studies very seriously. Furthermore, she as a single student represents a group of her own; hence individual answers in the remaining 62 questionnaires were scrutinized in order to evaluate the results in as fair a manner as possible. The findings revealed that the answers of two students in the Coaching Class and one in the Compulsory School Class even surpassed Charlotte’s result. However, no answers from a single student in the Mentoring Class did so, which, as already stated, is probably related to the fact that none of the students in this class had the English teacher as their personal mentor.

To the Mentoring Class teacher’s defense, it must also be stressed that her headmaster had assured that no coaching was consciously practiced in her school; thus, considering the notably high results of this class, I think it is safe to say that the summary merely mirrors Hilmarsson’s (2006) statement that everyone coaches from time to time. The average result of the Compulsory School Class – where ‘mentoring’ was practiced, too – even emphasizes this assertion more distinctly. Thus the outcome of the two non-coached classes demonstrates that most of these students sensed they were supported and challenged as described in the literature of coaching.

In summary, the questionnaire part does not yield any clear conclusions as to whether coaching makes any difference for how students perceive their English learning. The disparity between the columns of the two ‘mentoring’ classes and the Coaching Class are simply too minute to allow a strong claim in this respect. The circumstance that one respondent’s result in the Compulsory School Class surpassed Charlotte’s result verifies that not even the column of CR can call this in question. Consequently, apart from the fact that discrepancies in answers within a group probably mirrored the personal attitude students had towards their English education, the questionnaire simply attests to the statement that the
methodology used in the schools did not affect the participating students’ perception of their English learning. Hence, what the outcome reflects is rather the individual teacher’s commitment to the task of supporting her students in a coaching manner, the importance of the relationship the students have with their teacher, and perhaps even the teachers’ devotion to apply the curricula (cf. Lpf94, 2006; Lpo94, 2006) to their teaching.

5 Conclusion

My hypothesis was that students who are explicitly coached in school would perceive their English learning in a distinctly more confident and positive way than their non-coached peers. However, this could not be confirmed. What complicated the evaluation of the findings, though, was not only the fact that the directions formulated in the curricula (cf. Lpf94, 2006; Lpo94, 2006) in many parts are compatible with coaching, but also that the literature de facto demonstrates that the expertise in the area does not even fully agree on a uniform definition of what the word coach comprises (cf. Grant, 2010; Palmer & Whybrow, 2010). Grant (2010) even states anyone can claim to be a ‘Master Coach,’ and the ICF Sweden Board of Directors confirms that the word coach is not a protected title in Sweden (personal conversation, May 30, 2011). Hence the interpretation of coaching in this study and the evaluation of it may be questioned, too.

Nevertheless, the establishment of the ICF (2011) calls for caution whether one calls oneself a coach, although Strandberg (2009) insists students in Sweden today want to be coached. Even though Camilla had assured that all her colleagues had the proper education to call themselves coaches, maybe it was diffidence about whether this study would yield any favorable results or might even group-think – meaning the group evades being criticized (Lätt, 2009) – that in the end provoked Charlotte’s headmaster to refrain from participating in this study. Williams (2008) also emphasizes that professional coaches should “get proper and respected training or education from a high-quality recognized school” (p. 292), which perhaps elucidates why it is so difficult to find schools where teachers admit they practice coaching.

On the other hand, Hilmarsson (2006) claims that we all act as coaches occasionally, and Grant and Zackon (2004) state that many of the professional coaches have once been teachers, which is also mirrored in the outcome of this study. As the results rendered no remarkable distinctions between a coaching and non-coaching approach, the findings merely demonstrate that coaching and mentoring are indeed related to each other (McMahon, 2008) and that teaching today akin to coaching (Smith, 2002). Furthermore, as
interviews were combined with a questionnaire, which strengthens the validity and reliability of a research (Stukát, 2005), it can also be affirmed that any disparities between the classes that participated in this study instead reflected the character of the students’ relationship with their teacher, i.e. whether the English teacher was their personal coach, mentor, or tutor. When it comes to the crunch, I therefore argue that these particular aspects have a higher impact on how students perceive their English education, thus concluding that coaching does actually not make a difference to student’s perception of their English learning.

6 Further research

Grant (2010) points out there has to be more research conducted in this field. As demonstrated in the literature, the definition of coaching is neither transparent nor clear, and there seem to be many ways of interpreting the meaning of coaching. This is why I first intended to explore how coaching on students works in reality. This could easily be done by carrying out observations. Furthermore, one could evaluate the results of out-and-out coached students’ achievements and compare them to those of their non-coached peers. This way, I think, a ‘return on investment’ (cf. McMahon, 2008) could possibly be measurable. Yet another approach could be to investigate how and if their coaching in school has helped former students later on in their professional life.
References


Missivbrev

Hej!

Jag heter Jörgen Anders och går lärarutbildningen på Mälardalens Högskola. I skrivande stund gör jag mitt examensarbete i moderna språk, och i min forskning har jag valt att skriva om coachning i skolan.


'Mismatching' är ett nytt modeord, vilket betyder att företag har svårt att hitta arbetskraft som uppfyller de krav de har på sin personal. Jag tror därför att coachning i skolan kan ses som en merit för nyutexamnderade gymnasieelever, då arbetsgivare letar efter arbetskraft som skall vara innovativ och autonom. Elever som blivit coachade i skolan torde därför enligt min mening vara väldigt intressanta att anställa. Samtidigt anser jag att coachning stämmer väl överens med läroplanernas sätt att se på kunskapsinlärningen.

Genom att låta elever i tre klasser besvara enkäter – av vilka två är gymnasieklasser där en klass har en lärare som coachar och en inte har det, och en klass är en grundskoleklass år 9 – hoppas jag få svar på om elevernas uppfattning om den egna engelskinlärningen skiljer sig åt huruvida eleverna coachas eller inte. Genom att intervjua en coach, en elev som coachas och en elev som har mentor hoppas jag dessutom få en kompletterande bild av verksamheten i de olika skolformerna. Därför skulle jag vara oerhört tacksam om Du vill hjälpa mig i mitt arbete.


Om Du har några frågor är Du alltid välkommen att kontakta mig.

Med vänlig hälsning

Jörgen Anders

Mobilnummer: xxx-xxxxxx
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO STUDENTS

1. How does coaching/mentoring work? What is it to you? Please explain in short terms.
   *Hur fungerar coaching/mentorskap? Vad betyder det för Dig? Var vänlig förklara i korta ordalag.*

2. What are the main benefits of this way of working?
   *Vilka är de största fördelarna med att arbeta på detta sätt?*

3. What are the biggest disadvantages?
   *Vilka är de största nackdelarna?*

4. In what way has your English learning in upper secondary school changed compared to your English learning in primary school?
   *På vilket sätt har engelskundervisningen förändrats i gymnasiet jämfört med högstadiet?*

5. Have you started thinking in different ways to solve problems since entering secondary school?
   *Har Du börjat tänka i andra banor för att lösa problem sedan Du börjat gymnasiet?*

6. Do you feel that your English teacher encourages you to be active during English classes?
   *Känner Du att Din engelsklärrare uppmuntrar Dig till att vara aktiv under engelsklesktionerna?*

7. Do you feel that your teacher helps you to perform your best when it really matters, e.g. when you are having exams?
   *Känner Du att Du får hjälp med att prestera som bäst när det verkligen gäller, t ex vid provsituater?*

8. Does what you learn in English seem relevant to you?
   *Känns det Du lär Dig i engelska relevant för Dig?*

9. Do you think your teacher has disclosed herself to you?
   *Känner Du att Din lärare har öppnat sig för Er i klassen?*

10. Does your English teacher actively work on increasing your self-confidence and self-esteem, do you think? Does she make you ‘mature and grow’ as a person? Has your attitude changed when it comes to knowledge and learning?
    *Anser Du att Din engelsklärrare aktivt arbetar för att öka Ditt självförtroende och Din självkänsla? Får hon Dig att växa som person? Har Din attityd förändrats vad gäller kunskap och lärande?*

11. Does your teacher provide you with adequate and honest feedback about how you can improve your English; where you are and what you have to do to achieve your goals? Does your English teacher help you to get a better understanding of, and better control over, your English learning?
    *Ger Din lärare Dig ändamålsenlig feedback över hur Du kan förbättra Din engelska, var Du befinner Dig och vad Du måste göra för att uppnå Dina mål? Hjälper engelsklärraren Dig att få en bättre förståelse för och kontroll över Ditt lärande i engelska?*
Appendix C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS TO COACHING TEACHER

1. From where did you obtain your coaching education?
   Varifrån fick Du Din utbildning inom coachning?

2. How does coaching work? What is it to you? Please explain in short terms.
   Hur fungerar coachning? Vad betyder det för Dig? Var vänlig förklara i korta ordalag.

3. Do you agree with the way your student describes how you work with coaching?
   Håller Du med Din student vad gäller studentens beskrivning av hur Ni arbetar med coachning?

4. Does my coaching chart correspond with how you would interpret how you work with coaching?
   Överensstämmer mitt coachningschema med hur Du tolkar Ert coachningsarbetssätt?

5. To what extent do you work with coaching?
   I vilken utsträckning arbetar Ni med coachning?

6. Do you think your students feel that they are being coached adequately and appropriately, e.g. when you are having exams?
   Tror Du att Dina elever känner att de får adekvat och passande coachning, t ex vid provsituationer?

7. Do you actively work on increasing your students’ self-confidence and self-esteem?
   Arbetar Ni aktivt för att öka Era elevers självförtroende och självkänsla?

8. Do you provide your students with adequate and honest feed-back about how they can improve their English?
   Ger Ni Era elever ändamålsenlig feedback över hur de kan förbättra sin engelska?
Appendix D

Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions by rating them on a scale of 1-6; use 1 to indicate that you ‘strongly disagree’ with the statement, and 6 to indicate that you ‘strongly agree’ with it. Please circle or underline the answer that most corresponds to your own thoughts. It is your own subjective opinions that are of interest to me, so please note that there is no ‘true or false’ here!

If you are unable to answer one of the questions, simply skip it and please continue to the next. Please also note that you are allowed to interrupt the questionnaire at any time, although I of course would appreciate it very much if you would complete it.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Var vänlig svara på följande frågor genom att värdera dem på en skala från 1-6. Använd 1 för att markera att Du anser att Du ’inte alls instämmer’ med påståendet och 6 för att markera att du ’instämmer helt’. Gör en cirkel runt eller stryk under det som stämmer mest överens med Dina egna tankar. Det finns alltså inget ’rätt eller fel’ här. Det är Dina egna upplevda uppfattningar som är intressanta!

Om Du inte kan svara på en av frågorna, var vänlig fortsätt till nästa. När som helst under enkätns gång kan Du avbryta denna, men jag skulle självklart uppskatta om Du fullbordar den.

Tack för Din hjälp!
# QUESTIONNAIRE

1. I have a personal goal that I focus on when it comes to my learning English:

   *Jag har ett personligt mål som jag fokuserar på vad gäller engelskinlärning:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart showing number of responses and averages for different classes]

2. My English teacher motivates me to learn more English and makes studying English interesting:

   *Min engelsklärare motiverar mig att lära mig mer engelska och gör engelskundervisningen intressant:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![Bar chart showing number of responses and averages for different classes]
3. My English teacher makes me solve problems myself without providing me with pre-designed answers:

Min engelsklärare får mig att lösa problem själv utan att tillhandahålla redan på förhand givna svar:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. My English teacher listens attentively to what I have to say:

Min engelsklärare lyssnar uppmärksamt på det jag har att säga:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. My English teacher understands me and appreciates me for who I am:

*Min engelsklärare förstår mig och uppskattar mig för den jag är:*

**Strongly disagree**  
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  

**Strongly agree**

![Bar chart showing responses for statement 5.](chart)

6. My English teacher asks me relevant questions and provides me with adequate instructions so that I can reach my goals and learn English even better:

*Min engelsklärare ställer relevanta frågor till mig och ger mig bra och tydliga instruktioner så att jag kan nå målen och lära mig engelska ännu bättre:*

**Strongly disagree**

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6

**Strongly agree**

![Bar chart showing responses for statement 6.](chart)
7. My English teacher supports me and facilitates my learning English:

*Min engelsklärare stödjer mig och underlättar mitt lärande i engelska:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. My English teacher gives me confidence to be active during classes, and to express my own independent thoughts:

*Min lärare ger mig självförtroende att vara aktiv under lektionerna och att uttrycka mina egna självständiga tankar:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses

- Compulsory school class (average 4.7)
- Mentoring class (average 4.5)
- Coaching class (average 5.2)
- CR (6)
9. My English teacher encourages me to analyze and reflect on my own learning:

Min engelsklärare uppmuntrar mig till att analysera och reflektera över mitt eget lärande:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. My English teacher elicits new ideas and beliefs, makes me think in different ways, and makes me aware of the knowledge I already possess:

Min lärare lockar fram nya idéer och övertygelser, får mig att tänka i nya banor och gör mig medveten om den kunskap som jag redan besitter:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. I actively participate in the planning of the English studies:
   
   Jag deltar aktivt i planeringen av engelskundervisningen:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   ![Bar chart with responses]

   Compulsory school class (average 4.4)
   Mentoring class (average 4.19)
   Coaching class (average 4.38)
   CR (5)

12. I feel that I control the development of my learning English:
   
   Jag känner att kontrollerar utvecklingen av min egen engelskinlärning:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   ![Bar chart with responses]

   Compulsory school class (average 4.6)
   Mentoring class (average 4.5)
   Coaching class (average 4.65)
   CR (6)
13. I share my thoughts and feelings with my English teacher:
   *Jag delar mina tankar och känslor med min engelsklärare:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses:
- Compulsory school class (average 4.25)
- Mentoring class (average 3.23)
- Coaching class (average 4.45)
- CR (6)

14. I think that I am responsible for my own learning and development when it comes to English:
   *Jag anser att jag själv är ansvarig för mitt lärande och min egen utveckling i engelska:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses:
- Compulsory school class (average 4.85)
- Mentoring class (average 5.14)
- Coaching class (average 5.25)
- CR (6)
15. I have developed an independent thinking of how to learn English the best way:
   Jag har utvecklat ett självständigt tänkande över hur jag lär mig engelska på bästa sätt:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory school class (average 4.75)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring class (average 4.59)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching class (average 4.65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR (5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16. I never feel stress or anxiety when it comes to achieving my goals in English:
   Jag känner aldrig oro eller stress när det gäller att uppnå mina mål i engelska:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compulsory school class (average 4.15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentoring class (average 4.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching class (average 3.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CR (6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. I perfectly understand why I have to learn the things taught in English. I see why it is relevant knowledge, i.e. I think my English classes provide me with the adequate experiences I need and prepare me to use English outside school:

*Jag förstår varför jag måste lära mig det som lärs ut i engelska. Jag förstår varför det relevant kunskap, dvs jag anser att engelskundervisningen ger mig användbara erfarenheter och förbereder mig för att använda mig av engelska utanför skolan:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

18. I think my English learning has improved a lot since seventh grade/since having commenced upper secondary school:

*Jag känner att min engelskinlärning har förbättrats mycket sedan sjunde klass/sedan jag börjat gymnasiet:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
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</tbody>
</table>

Number of responses

- Compulsory school class (average 5.3)
- Mentoring class (average 5.23)
- Coaching class (average 5.7)
- CR (6)