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Swedish secondary school language teachers' reflections on principal leadership
behaviours

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ABSTRACT

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Title:	Swedish secondary school Language teachers' reflections on principal leadership behaviours
Author:	Rachel Adlam-Knudsen
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Summary:	<p>Teachers' experiences of school leadership behaviour and the social contexts in which these have taken place interest me. I aim to identify and understand what Swedish secondary school language teachers' reflections are on what they require in terms of leadership from their principals in different contexts in order to gain personal job satisfaction. The objective is that this research can then function to inform school leaders about what their language teaching staffs' leadership needs and views are.</p> <p>This qualitative study uses semi-structured interviews to access teachers' experiences. Four teachers were interviewed in this study. All are qualified to teach languages at secondary school level and they come from a selection of schools across Sweden.</p> <p>This study reveals 5 main areas of teachers' work where they identify leadership behaviours that could enhance job satisfaction. These were classroom teaching, relationships with colleagues, relationships with school leaders, access to competence development and relationships with stakeholders.</p> <p>Concluding reflections are that the role of the teacher and the school principal are similar because they are continuously evolving and they both have a complex set of requirements that need to be met with. More could be done at both national and local levels to help both teachers and school leaders develop the skills to deal with the complexities that their new roles require. More should also be done to recruit school leaders who have teaching experience and knowledge about pedagogical processes, as this is what teachers need the most guidance on.</p> <p>Future research can focus on how school leaders see their roles this can be compared to the results of this study.</p>
Key words:	School, language teachers, school leadership motivation, job satisfaction, relationships and transparency.

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Preface

During my career as a teacher I have witnessed that the roles and responsibilities of teachers are diverse, encompassing a wide range of activities and tasks both inside and outside of the classroom. I have at first hand observed the importance of Principal leadership and the deployment of empowerment strategies for the overall performance effects and results of schools. How school leaders, school culture and teachers interact with each other has, as I see it, a direct impact on a number of issues such as: job motivation, job satisfaction, work-life balance, moral and wellbeing. Ultimately, the overall performance outcomes of both staff and pupils can be linked both positively and negatively to the performance of school leadership (Blase & Blase, 1999).

I have during my ten-year language teacher career at compulsory school level noted that there is a lack of understanding on the part of school managers for what language teachers' needs actually are in terms of principal leadership. There is in my opinion a need to identify and create an understanding of what teachers' principal leadership needs are in terms of job satisfaction. This dissertation aims to provide this understanding by enlisting the knowledge and understanding gleaned from furthering my studies in work-life education.

Acknowledgements

Writing a dissertation like this is never easy it takes time, hard graft and many sleepless nights. I would just like to thank everyone that has made this research possible. Thanks to my family especially my husband Daniel, my friends, interview candidates and my supervisor Glen who have all been of infinite help.

Introduction

This year (2011) will see the Swedish education system undergo a large period of reform. According to Skolverket, (2010) this has been prompted by the increasing concerns of stakeholders such as parents, politicians and mass media, for the poor standard of results that school leavers are attaining and worries over the quality of education provision that pupils are receiving. The aims of these national reforms are to improve the overall quality of education provided by the municipalities and consequently improve pupil achievement. The local authorities are provided with a "...framework of the guidelines adopted by Parliament and the Government in the Education Act, ordinances, curricula, syllabuses and timetables" to work from (Myndigheten för skolutveckling, 2007, p.6). Local authorities are then responsible for organising and maintaining its schools to ensure that national goals are met (ibid).

According to Myndigheten för skolutveckling (2007) local authorities delegate the responsibility of running schools to their principals by providing them with national and local frameworks to work from. Principals have to ensure that national and local objectives are achieved at their school within their assigned budget (ibid). Brante (2008) claims that this is not something that principals can do alone as schools cannot exist without their teachers and pupils. There has been a fervent debate about the fate of Swedish education recently and stakeholders have been particularly interested in the role that teachers play in the overall performance outcomes of pupils (ibid). Good results have become synonymous with good schools that have good school leaders and competent teachers (Ärlestig, 2008).

Bloger (2001) claims that teachers' voices must be heard because teachers are fundamental to the education mission. They are the key components in successful schools and they perform best and get the best results from their pupils when they feel satisfied at work (ibid). That is why it is so important to hear what teachers have to say about school leadership and what they feel they need from school leaders to be satisfied at work. Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) suggest that getting teachers to talk openly with school leaders about their needs is often a sensitive issue. They attribute this to the fact that the possibility to talk openly is something that varies from school to school and from individual to individual.

The aim of this bachelor thesis is to address the question of what teachers want from their school leaders in terms of leadership behaviours to feel job satisfaction. This will be achieved by means of a qualitative study of municipal lower secondary school (Högstadiet in Swedish) language teachers' reflections. Understanding and providing clarity on language teacher perspectives can then serve as a means for creating a dialogue between teachers and school leaders in municipal schools. A more detailed description of my research aims can be found under the heading research objectives.

Theoretical perspectives- on teaching, school leadership, school culture and teachers views

In this section an account for the research review methods is given followed by a discussion of the quality of the theoretical sources. Subsequently, the theories that have been identified as relevant for my research objective from the reflections of the teachers

in my empirical data are used to create a comprehensive picture for the areas of importance covered by this research. The themes that are covered here start with a definition of the term role used throughout this study. An account of the changing face of teaching, school leadership, school culture, and teaching from teachers' perspectives ensue. The terms school leader and school principal are used interchangeably throughout this thesis. These theoretical perspectives form the basis for my analysis conducted later in this study.

Research review

In order to complete my research review I have made use of Internet search engines accessed via hyperlinks on my course's library website. These hyperlinks provide access to academic journals, theses and previous bachelor dissertations. My aim has been to find as many up-to-date research publications as possible. Lund University Papers (LUP) and ESBCO host are the two databases that have proved to be most fruitful. ESBCO host has been particularly useful because by using the advanced search function I have been able to access articles that have been peer-reviewed and are published in academic journals.

I have a background in teaching languages at secondary school, which means that my knowledge has been a valuable resource in terms of identifying research areas to look into. I defined the parameters of my search by producing a mind map of the key terms that I associate with this research area. The fact that I have so many insights into the field of education is also beneficial when reading research articles as I can identify with many of the examples given. My knowledge can serve me well but it might also be a disadvantage at different stages of this research process in terms of bias. However, I cannot ignore the fact that my knowledge might lead me as Fejes & Thornberg (2009) suggest, to draw other deeper conclusions and interpretations than other readers who do not possess this awareness.

Quality of sources

The literature that has been used in this study has been selected according to its academic legitimacy. Apart from course literature a combination of first hand and second hand sources have been used in order to provide a comprehensive picture for the reader. The main selection of resources has primarily focused on Swedish educational research because the study is completed in the context of Swedish schools. Although some international educational research and more general theories have been used to complement the Swedish sources when deemed relevant. The use of Internet sources has been confined to publications in dictionaries, school authorities or academic journals.

Role

In sociological theory different people can occupy a role (a term originally borrowed from theatrics) but its concepts basically stay the same (Britannica, 2011). It is used to reveal, "the social expectations attached to particular social positions and analyses the workings of such expectations " (Oxford dictionary of sociology, 2011, n.pg). These expectations can encompass

"... both actions and qualities: a teacher may be expected not only to deliver lectures, assign homework, and prepare examinations but also to be dedicated, concerned, honest, and responsible. Individuals usually occupy several positions, which may or may not be compatible with one another: one person may be hus-

band, father, artist, and patient, with each role entailing certain obligations, duties, privileges, and rights vis-à-vis other persons”(Britannica, 2011, n.pg).

School principals, teachers and pupils all have different roles that they enact in schools Svedberg (2000). For people who work in public organisations like schools developing relationships is part of the role of the job. Their working roles are constructed within the different working domains of school tasks. These different roles are determined by national, local frameworks and contexts, the individual’s perception as well as the perception of the observer or interpreter of these roles (ibid). Roles are also determined by norms and as norms change roles follow suite (Brante, 2008). Schools tasks, principal responsibilities and teachers can be said to act as one unit that influence each other (Brynolf, Carlström, Svensson & Wersäll, 2009). This is demonstrated in the figure 1 below.

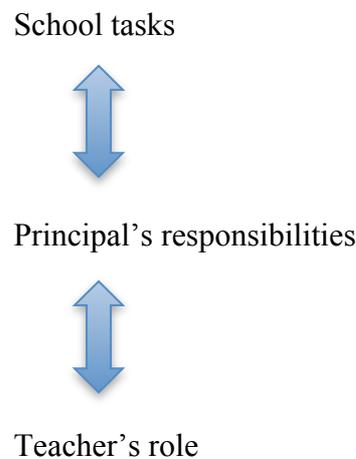


Figure 1. Schematic drawing of school tasks, principal’s responsibilities and teachers’ role from Brynolf et al., 2009, p.64

When talking about the different roles in schools the context in which they are constructed must be considered. When organisational changes are made at national or local levels this will ultimately affect the outcome of a certain role (ibid). For example changes in the nature of the responsibilities of a role can result in an increased workload and consequently a poorer performance outcome (Brante, 2008). This is why when considering the nature of teaching today it can be beneficial to understand how teaching has changed and what this means for the teachers of today.

The changing face of teaching

According to Granström (2006) over the last thirty years teachers in Sweden have seen the characteristics of their job roles change. The role of a teacher outside of the classroom has changed from one where teachers worked independently to a more teamwork-orientated role (ibid). Workplace relationships and cooperation with colleagues have therefore become more important to teachers (Rhöse, 2006).

Granström, (2006) organisational changes in the lower secondary school brought about by national and local frameworks have led to changes in the way that teachers work inside of the classroom. Teachers now work in a more individualised way and have become more of a tutor. This can be directly related to the way in which our society works today in a more individualised way in comparison to the collective behaviours of the past. The changing role of the teacher has also had implications on the role of the pupil

over the last twenty years. There has been an increase in the amount of independence with which pupils are required to work and take responsibility for their own learning (Granström, 2006).

The natures of teachers' work has become more intense, they have greater workloads, more responsibilities and are under increased performance expectations from stakeholders (Brynolf et al., 2009; Brante, 2008). Brante (2008) reveals that classroom work is no longer the most time-consuming element of a teacher's job, although it is still considered to be the most important. This intensification has implications for the well being of teachers as research shows that teachers often think about work even when they are on breaks or when they have finished for the day. It is common for teachers to have to complete several tasks at one time and their work is often considered to be multifaceted and intense (Brante, 2008, p. 203). The fact that teachers have so many different tasks to do simultaneously is problematic; multitasking affects both the quality of a finished task and adds to the amount of stress that the individual experiences when juggling tasks. According to Alexanderson et al. (2005) the amount of stress that teachers are suffering from is steadily increasing as are the number of Swedish teachers having to be placed on the sick (as cited in Brante, 2008, p.205).

School leaders have the power to influence the work tasks and loads of teachers for the better. That is why it is important for them to be able to understand the complexity of teachers' roles today and how this can be detrimental to teacher well-being in Sweden and elsewhere (Blase & Blase, 1999; Brante, 2008).

School leadership

Under this heading educational leadership theories are presented that are necessary to understand in order to discuss issues concerning leadership in the Swedish education system.

Bush (2007) reveals that that in many parts of the world there has been increased interest in quality management in schools because governments have realised that it is important for their future workforce to be well educated. He points out that there is some disagreement as to the nature of educational management as to whether it is its own discipline or its own field. "While education can learn from other settings, educational leadership and management has to be centrally concerned with the purpose or aims of education. These purposes or goals provide the crucial sense of direction to underpin school management" (Bush, 2007, p.395).

Sweden has a decentralised school system, which is seen to have contributed to a change in the nature of principal leadership that has gone from rule orientated to an objective orientated (Ärlestig, 2008). In order for a school leaders to be successful in leading and developing their school they need to conduct a democratic, learning and communicative leadership (Utbildningsdepartamentet, 2001, p.11). This has also prompted the need for principals to have a wider range of competencies to meet with the challenges of their democratic, learning and communicative leadership position (ibid).

Svedberg (2000) states that in order to be successful in their work school leaders need support from their municipalities in the form of economical resources and competence development. His research into school leaders in lower secondary schools shows that decentralisation has meant that more decisions are now in the hands of school principals. It seems that decentralisation occurs in two steps first on the national level from

state to municipality and then from the municipality to the individual school leaders (ibid).

School leaders have conflicting tasks with their administrative and pedagogical duties. "The School leader has many different functions in his management of the school and his relations to his staff" (Persson, 2002, p.253). However, the role of a principal is complex and every principal has to form their leadership in accordance with national goals and local contexts (Skolverket, 2010). How a school Principal leads, acts and works together with others is not only determined by political directives, budget, and local agreements it is even affected by their personality, maturity, level academic background competence and knowledge and way in which people are viewed by the individual school leader (Brynolf et al., 2009, p.164).

Skolverket (2010) highlights the fact that there are different leadership approaches and a school leader should be aware of what happens when he or she uses a specific approach. Some of these approaches are stipulated in both national and local frameworks these include democratic leadership pedagogical, and communicative leadership.

Transformational leadership

This is an approach to leadership that primarily aspires to nurture the competence growth and goals of individual commitment to organisational goals (Leithworth & Janti, 1999). There are "Six dimensions to transformational leadership building school vision and goals; providing intellectual stimulation; offering individualized support; symbolizing professional practises and values; demonstrating high performance expectations; and developing structure to foster participation in school decisions" (Leithworth & Janti, 1999, p.5).

According to Bush (2007) "Caldwell and Spinks (1992:49-50) argue that transformational leadership is essential for autonomous schools: Transformational leaders succeed in gaining the commitment of followers to such a degree that ... higher levels of accomplishment become virtually a moral imperative" (p.396).

Democratic leadership

In a democratic organisation like schools principals need to focus on interpretations, the exchange of ideas and information because this is what enables local interpretation of national goals to take place (Utbildningsdepartementet, 2001). A democratic leader needs to be able to encourage everyone to voice his or her opinion; he or she also needs to be able to listen to what is being said and to reflect upon it. As part of their role as a democratic leader principals are also responsible for ensuring that their school has a clear vision. They should also be able to discipline those who break school values (ibid).

Pedagogical leadership

The Swedish national curriculum stipulates that pedagogical leadership is also a role for the Swedish school Principals (Utbildningsdepartementet, 2001). This role has to be conducted in accordance with the national goals. The primary mission in pedagogical leadership according to Nestor, 1993 to "influence teachers to develop their teaching and learning in accordance with national objectives" (as cited in Ärlestig, 2008). This means that principals have to be in touch with what is going on in the classroom (ibid).

The Swedish school authorities have identified that pedagogical leadership in Swedish schools is not fulfilling its role (Skolinspektionen, 2010). There are many areas of

weakness that need to be improved upon. These include communications and interactions between teachers and principals on practical feedback and guidance about classroom instruction, the planning of teaching staff's competence development, developing an inspirational working environment through the medium of continuous dialogues (ibid). Ärlestig (2008) research shows that school principals who lead their schools towards meeting national objectives together with their teaching staff through are more successful. "For principals to be pedagogical leaders they need to be involved in students' learning and what goes on in the classroom" (Ärlestig, 2008, p.26). Lack of knowledge and lack of time have been identified as contributing factors as to why this doesn't take place (Skolinspektionen, 2010).

Ärlestig (2008) suggests that parallels can be drawn between instructional leadership and pedagogical leadership. According to Hallinger & Murphey (2003) instructional leadership can be defined as "leadership focusing on principles controlling, coordinating, supervising and developing curriculum and instruction" (as cited in Ärlestig, 2008, p.26). There are "three dimensions to instructional leadership: define mission, manage curriculum, and promote school climate" (as cited in Ärlestig, 2008, p.26).

Communicative leadership

Skolverket (2010) states that school leaders need to have a clear vision of what they want to achieve in their schools and how they want to get there. A communicative leadership uses communication to as for learning and developing their organisation and the individual skills of the workers in it (Ärlestig, 2008; Blase & Blase, 1999). Granberg, (2004) reveals that knowledge is made available through dialogue when individuals discuss issues, share their thoughts and experiences. This serves to create an increased understanding when the organisation's members reflect upon what has been said. An organisation can benefit from sharing competencies and making knowledge accessible to organisation's members (ibid). Learning at work is a continuous process that occurs in all the various settings in organisations (Johansson & Heide, 2008). Informal communication and learning go hand in hand. The more informal communication that occurs between the different members of an organisation the greater the opportunity of learning becomes (ibid).

Blase & Blase (1999) claim that in successful schools principals make more classroom visits and use communication in a dimensional way. Most importantly information and daily conversations are interchanged with affirmation and feedback to the teachers (ibid; Ärlestig, 2008). A school principal's competence and ability to communicate and what they choose to prioritise can affect the willingness of staff to develop (Brynolf et al., 2009).

School leaders are expected to be supportive to teachers through their feedback; appraisals are a way for principals to see the individual needs of teachers (Ärlestig, 2008). The main function of a performance appraisal is to create a context for communication about organisational goals between the evaluator and the worker. This can in turn serve to bring individuals up-to-date with organisational objectives and visions. "Relating everyday actions to visions should be a visible and important part of communication between principals and teachers" (Ärlestig, 2008, p.265). Dialogue enables a mutual understanding between the individual and the organisation to be formed (Mercer, Barker & Bird, 2010). Research has shown that teachers are in need of support in their role in the classroom. It is important for them to regularly be able to talk about their experienc-

es in the classroom with other teachers or superiors. The amount of time that is made available to teachers for learning varies from school to school. Some schools actively encourage teachers to share their experiences and whereas others don't and teachers are left to reflect on their own instead (Blase & Blase, 1999).

Appraisals tend to address a number of issues ranging from individual task performance to behavioural issues; they can take on both qualitative and quantitative forms. Qualitative appraisals can be problematic because even if there is some direction as to what is to be discussed their format is still relatively unstructured which can result in important areas not being discussed (Torrington, Hall & Taylor, 2008).

Summary of the significance of school leadership

Research has proven that principal leadership and teachers have impact on the end results of school leavers in both positive and negative ways (Ärlestig, 2008; Gilljam & Persson, 2010; Bolger, 2001). Principal leadership is key to providing teachers with a clear vision of what they are doing and why especially in times of organizational change. A principal's leadership skills are key factors for motivating and engaging their teaching staff. Developing an environment that promotes motivation and job satisfaction is not a simple task, as principals need to learn about leadership behaviours and strategies and how they can be deployed to empower their workforce. When teachers are satisfied at work they perform better and their work benefits because their competencies can be used to their maximum. A satisfied teacher is also more engaged which in turn affects their pupils' attainment positively (Brynolf et al., 2009).

The way in which a school leader acts has direct repercussions on the culture that his or her school exudes.

School culture

Organisational culture and communication go hand in hand they are discernible in school "norms, history, symbols, basic assumptions and shared values" (Ärlestig, 2008, p.12). School culture is revealed in the different manners in which schools work it even encompasses the invisible rules among staff and pupils. School culture varies from school to school (Brynolf et al., 2009). School culture can incorporate more than one culture (Ärlestig, 2008). In schools issues such as trust and respect can also be seen to affect school culture and the way in which communication inside the school is conducted. A principal who is distrusted and disrespected by their teachers will create a closed climate where teachers are selective with what they discuss; even the way in which information is interpreted can be affected negatively. A closed climate generates a school culture of individualists whereas an open climate enhances job satisfaction and motivation (ibid; Bolger, 2001).

Communication's role in organisations

Communication is a source of interaction both inside and outside of an organisation (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). It affects what we do and how we do things but because it is so intrinsically inbuilt into our daily routines its importance can often be overlooked (Ärlestig, 2008). The majority of communication theories focus on private rather than public organisations. As public schools are "politically governed service organisations and have their own prerequisites" the communication that takes place in them has to adhere to this fact (Ärlestig, 2008, p. 20). This means that communication in schools has to be more transparent than in other organisations and based on democratic values

(Eriksen, 2001). It also has to follow the aims and objectives of the Swedish curriculum (Ärlestig, 2008).

Over time communication theories have developed to see the term communication as more than just a simple message being sent from one person to another; a sender who sends a message via one channel to a receiver (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008). Communication theories are now more intricate where communication is considered to a process where several different factors and contexts contribute to how a message is received and interpreted (Johansson & Heide, 2008).

Organisational communication is one of the main processes in an organisation and is “closely connected to organizational structure” (Ärlestig, 2008, p.12). It is an on-going process and the basis from which social norms, groups and organisation culture are all shaped, enabling a unified picture of the organisation to be formed (Johansson & Heide 2008). According to Ärlestig (2008) communication is also the medium for interaction between various people as well as the above-mentioned means by which to receive and interpret information. What is communicated in schools and the means by which it is communicated forms the basis for a school’s shared values, actions and vision. Communication can also be used as a means to gain access to and create an understanding for what is happening in public schools (ibid).

The communication process itself consists of a number of different stages where several different factors and situations contribute to how information in a message is sent received and interpreted (Heide et al, 2005). There are different sorts of communication channels where information can be communicated verbally, in written form or even as an action or the absence of an action (Yukl, 2010). Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008 identify several different factors and circumstances that can cause communication problems to arise, these can be identified as: incorrect information, too much information, using the wrong kind of communication channel and giving the wrong information. All of which have negative implications on the communication process. An organisation’s size can even affect the amount of anticipated communication problems that might arise. Larger organisations are expected to experience more problems than small organisations due to the amount of channels that communication has to go via. When problems occur they contribute to the distortion of a message making it more difficult for the receiver to interpret in the desired way. Stress and uncertainty, which have negative repercussions for organisations in the form of demotivating employees thereby effecting performance, occur when receivers are unsure about the meaning of a message (ibid).

The results of a communication process depend on a number of variables such as how communication takes place, through which medium and whom it is conducted with (ibid). Ärlestig (2008) indicates that principals who use communication effectively can enhance the overall school performance of their schools; they can accomplish this through their communicative actions and words. Successful schools are run by principals who have a clear communication strategy where they talk about teaching, learning, school development, and results on a regular basis (ibid). It is important for teachers to be able to understand how their work can contribute to the overall result of the school (Brynolf et al., 2009).

Summary of the importance of communication

This section illustrates the importance of communication as a means by which to promote an open organisational culture that encourages transparency, reflection and learn-

ing. School principals need to be aware of the ways in which communications can be used effectively in schools to reduce the amount of stress and creating a working environment that motivates and develops employees.

Teaching from teacher's perspectives

Boström & Lidholt (2006) reveal that in general teachers in Sweden and elsewhere like their jobs and being together with their pupils. Their research has shown that there are three important perspectives to a teacher's work "the pedagogical assignment, teacher's social relationship with other agents in education which could be seen on the basis of relations between individuals, relations with and within groups, relations in the organisation and society" (Boström & Lidholt, 2006, p.12). Teachers' ambitions are to establish good relationships with their pupils, give to create a safe environment and a good learning environment (ibid).

According to Brynolf et al. (2009) teachers in Sweden and elsewhere often reveal that they think that they could do more for their pupils if they had the time. They also express concern for the lack of time that they get to speak to other adults as they now spend excessive amounts of time with their pupils, which they find draining. There are many teachers who feel that they have become more of a controller rather than a teacher. They have to check everything from the order the pupils have in their lockers to how they behave during breaks (ibid).

Brante (2008) states that when interviewed about their work situations Swedish teachers perceive that there has been a shift in the type of work that they do from teaching to administration. Brante (2008) links this shift in responsibilities that has been prompted by national and local directives as a factor that has led to the drop in standards for school leavers (p.153). He suggests that teachers are right to want to be able to return to focus more on classroom teaching, as this would ultimately improve pupil results.

Broman (2006) shows that teachers also express that they have to deal with a number of difficult social situations they haven't received the training to do. Teachers reveal that teacher training does not prepare teachers enough with how to handle conflicts between groups of pupils and unplanned incidents. Teacher training and competence development needs to take into account the nature of the different situations a teacher can encounter while doing their duties (ibid).

Teachers can be seen to be becoming more professionalised in Sweden this can be identified in their desire to have other identities outside of school leaving their work behind them at the end of the day (Brante, 2008).

Blase & Blase, (1999) reveal that teachers in general have changed their minds about how much they want their bosses to influence what is going on in the classroom. Teachers see Principals who encourage reflection via instructional leadership on teaching methods via feedback on classroom instruction and regular visits to classrooms as a source for improving motivation and job satisfaction.

"Effective feedback (a) focused on observed classroom behaviour; (b) was detailed and specific; (c) expressed caring, interest and support in non-judgmental way; (d) provided praise; (e) established a problem solving orientation based on trust and respect; (f) responded to concerns about student behaviour; (g) discussed teacher-student interaction and relation-

ships; and (h) expressed the principal's availability for follow-up talk". (Blase & Blase, 1999, p.360-361).

Brynolf et al. (2009) show that in order to maintain their enthusiasm about their work teachers need to feel like they are doing a good job by being acknowledged by pupils, parents, preferably colleagues and school leaders.

Job Motivation

Praver, & O-Baldwin (2008) researched what perceived motivators were for second language teachers. They suggested that language teachers are finding it increasingly difficult to continue to be intrinsically motivated in their classroom work due to the influence of other tasks and responsibilities that they have. Motivated second language teachers were more inspirational, dedicated and found it easier to help pupils understand the language being taught. Foreign language teachers' job motivation is influenced by six factors, which in turn is related to the levels of job satisfaction and dissatisfaction they feel.

- intrinsic motivation
- extrinsic motivation
- autonomy
- relationships
- self-realisation
- institutional support

(Praver & O-Baldwin, 2008, p.2).

Smither (1994) states that money is important to people but its power to act as a motivation catalyst has long been discussed. Motivation is what drives people to do their jobs (ibid).

"Extrinsic rewards may improve performance in the short run, but the best way to motivate workers is to provide opportunities to confirm their feelings of competence and self-determination. Conversely, motivation will suffer if workers experience situations where their feeling of competence and self-determination are discomforted" (Torrington, et al., 2008, p.226).

Brynolf et al. (2009) show that school leaders who are often thought of as doing a good job are often out amongst pupils and teachers in the schools listening and talking actively to pupils and teachers. To create a supportive psychosocial environment individual need to feel that they are important. When teachers are motivated the whole school benefits because the teachers energy and competence is then applied applicably (ibid). Among other things teachers' motivation is affected by school culture, their job tasks, and the ways in which reward systems are used in schools (Barth, 2006).

Job satisfaction

Defining the term job satisfaction is not an easy task as there are many different components that have a bearing on whether people like their jobs or not (Smither, 1994). Job satisfaction is qualified by the beliefs and anticipations of the individual worker these are formed by "...their personality and personal characteristics and life experiences, but can also change during the course of one's life" (Torrington, et al., 2008, p. 342). The amount of job satisfaction that workers' experience can vary according to how well their job matches with their individual beliefs and anticipations. The more a job fits with

an individual's beliefs and anticipations the more probable it will produce more feelings of job satisfaction (ibid).

As work can be seen as the place where people spend most of their days job satisfaction is also seen to correlate to life satisfaction that is to say that the amount of satisfaction felt in one will also be felt in the other (Smither, 1994). Job satisfaction is also seen to influence the overall organisational performance. This can also be said for teaching where teacher job satisfaction and the way in which teachers feel about their jobs can affect how well their overall performance is (Bolger, 2001). According to Rice & Schnider (1994) teachers are more satisfied with their jobs when they perceive their principal as someone who shares information and involves others in decision-making processes (as cited in Bolger, 2001, p.665). Teachers' job satisfaction stems from relationships where factors of dissatisfaction were seen to be related to structural and administrative factors (ibid).

According to Barth (2006) relationships between the adults in a school have a bearing on the overall performance outcomes of that school and the levels of job satisfaction that are felt in schools. "the relationships among the educators in a school define all relationships within that school's culture. Teachers and administrators demonstrate all too well a capacity to either enrich or diminish one another's lives and thereby enrich or diminish their schools" (Barth, 2006).

Background to research proposal

Research into job satisfaction at different educational levels is plentiful. However, there is very little qualitative research into specific groups of teachers' who teach languages and their reflections on principal actions that encourage job satisfaction in Swedish secondary schools. The research articles that address teachers' views on leadership also confirm the importance of complimentary research from a bottom-up perspective rather than a top-down perspective (Blase & Blase, 1999).

Research Objectives

Identifying and understanding what Swedish secondary school language teachers' reflections are on what they require in terms of leadership and in from their principals in order to gain personal job satisfaction.

My research will focus on describing and interpreting the teachers' views on what leadership behaviours they require from their school leaders in different social contexts in order to gain job satisfaction.

The objective is that this research can then (as I have mentioned above) function to inform school leaders about what their language teaching staffs' leadership needs and views are. There are several benefits that I envisage that can be gleaned from learning what language teachers' job satisfaction needs are. By identifying and understanding how performance outcomes in terms of job satisfaction are influenced, both positively and negatively, by workplace behaviours appropriate principal leadership strategies can then be employed to encourage and develop these changes. School leaders can then work proactively to enable positive behavioural changes to take place in schools. This knowledge can then be implemented in terms of organisational policies. This research can also serve as a frame of reference for language teachers with regard to what their principals are actually meant to deliver in terms of leadership. Creating awareness for

both teachers and principals can lead to a dialogue and reflection about the current situations in schools.

This study will specifically look into the perspectives of lower secondary school language teachers at municipal schools in Sweden.

Method

This section consists of a description of my research paradigm, my research design, motivations for my approach to data collection and my analysis procedures. A review of the roles of research literature in this research process is conducted. A reoccurring feature in this section is the discussion about how philosophies and method theories relate to the way in which my research will be conducted.

Research approach

Research paradigm and design

Hussey & Hussey (1997) describe two main paradigms: positivistic which mainly deal with quantitative data and phenomenological which mainly deal with qualitative data (these are on two different ends of the scale). The phenomenological paradigm "... is concerned with understanding human behaviour from the participant's own frame of reference" (Hussey & Hussey, 1997, p.52). My research will focus on describing and interpreting the teachers' views on what leadership behaviours they require from their school leaders in different social contexts in order to gain job satisfaction.

The focal point of study will be on language teachers working at lower secondary school level in Sweden and their lived experiences. The above description of the phenomenological paradigm matches particularly well with my aims for this research, which are to portray what the language teachers' views are on leadership. This implies that qualitative explanatory data will be the basis for my analysis.

The phenomenological paradigm has implications for both my research design and my methodology. As I understand it once a researcher has reached a decision on where they stand on the continuum of either positivism or the phenomenological paradigm their stance will provide the basic research views. Ontology, epistemology and methodology will all be governed by these choices. My approach for interpreting social reality is as I have previously identified closely related to the subjectivist approach.

Data collection methods and ethics

To select the sample for my research I have decided to use network sampling. It is important to highlight from the outset that ethics will play a large part in the choice that I make with regard to my methods and analysis. This can be attributed to the sensitive nature of my research question.

Cohen, et al. (2007) highlight the dilemmas that can derive from planning and conducting sensitive educational research concerning access and sampling. My research into what actions teachers' require from their school leaders in different social contexts to feel job satisfaction asks teachers to reveal details on workplace behaviours. This produces several dilemmas such as, how to gain access to teachers who are willing to talk about their experiences without running the risk of repercussions for the individuals concerned?

As I want to gain access to the teachers' reflections without running the risk of my research methods being restrained or compromised while looking after their teachers' best interests, I will through my network of contacts get in touch with teachers rather than go to a school. "Networking this is akin to snowball sampling, wherein one set of contacts

puts the researcher in touch with more contacts, who puts the researcher in contact with yet more contacts and so on” (Cohen, et al., 2007, p.122).

Advantages and disadvantages of networking

Networking can be a useful technique to use to gain access to teachers who might be difficult to reach if I went via the school because of access and selection issues. A possible problem that might occur when using this method is that people in my network might not want to pass on contacts. Using my network could prove to be both advantageous and problematic when it come to analysing the results of my interviews. Knowing my interview candidate or of them can make it easier to bond with my interview candidate which in turn might encourage them to yield valuable information. The fact that I know them or know of them could also be problematic if information is shared that is of a very sensitive nature, as this could put a strain on our relationship. Personal bias is also a problem as I (the researcher) might come to the wrong conclusion because of the associations I make with the subject that I’m interviewing (Cohen et al., 2007). It can also be beneficial to consider how as a researcher we are affected by our own bias when conducting research in areas that we have prior knowledge in. Failing to reflecting upon the implications of our knowledge can reduce the overall quality in our data (Sauders, Lewis & Thornhill, 1997).

Confidentiality

As I have mentioned above this research raises a number of ethical issues and these have implications for how I will treat the information shared with me by my interviewees. According to Cohen, et al. (2007) anonymity is often vital in sensitive research (which what I have ascertained my research comes under). However, as my choice of method is face-to-face interviews and I am acquainted with my interview candidates, this means anonymity is impossible. Therefore, my primary aim will be to provide confidentiality. Confidentiality ensures that the information that is provided cannot be traced to the individuals that have participated in this study (Cohen, et al., 2007).

Procedures

An account of the different procedures used to collect my empirical data and the methods with which the results were compiled and analysed follows.

Data collection

Participants

The interview candidates that have taken part in this study are all qualified to teach more than one language at lower secondary school level. They come from a selection of secondary schools from different catchment areas in Sweden three out of four interviews were conducted in Swedish and one was conducted in English. Their teaching experience differs in length as some have been teaching much longer than others. Most of the interview candidates have worked in more than one school.

All four interview candidates were informed when they were asked if they would participate that they could say no if they didn’t want to. All of the interview candidates were given access to the same information prior to the actual interview. Every interview has taken up to an hour to conduct. Three out of four of the interviews were recorded the fourth was not recorded upon the request of the interview candidate.

Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative methods in the form of semi-structured interviews are a suitable method if the researcher (just as I do) wants to use a phenomenological approach (Clegg, 2006). Apart from what is discussed above there are several factors that can influence the outcome of interviews (both positively and negatively) that can be useful as a researcher to reflect upon beforehand. These include the timing of the interview, the interviewer's behaviour towards the interviewee, preparedness and the amount of information given to the interviewee (Sauders, Lewis & Thornhill, 1997). An interview should be considered as "a social encounter" rather than just as a means by which to gather data (Cohen et al., 2007). I have previous experience from conducting interviews and I can draw on this knowledge to try to minimise potential negative influences on the interview process.

I aim to get my interviewees to tell me about their perceptions of real life personal experiences of leadership behaviours in schools. This can be attributed to a biographical research method (Denzin in Cohen, et al., 2007).

There is no ideal goal for sample size although there are some recommendations (Cohen et al., 2007). Quite simply I will interview until I have all the information I need to complete my research, this will be when nothing new comes up. My aim is to identify and gain insights into what my research subjects experience in a particular social context and why.

I chose to structure my interviews thematically, which according to Clegg (2006) is an appropriate approach because I don't want to confirm or disconfirm a hypothesis. I want to try to get accounts in everyday language. The semi-structured nature of my interviews meant that it was not possible to predict what the participants were going to say. It was however possible to base the structure of the interviews on an interview guide. Just as Clegg (2006) did I used the interview guide to help give direction in my interviews while asking for clarifications to further my understanding for some of the answers. I also chose to let the interview candidates do the talking.

Data analysis approach

In order to find meaning in the data collected it can be appropriate to combine several different methods of analysis. A selection of methods can also appropriately create different views of these phenomena (Sauders, Lewis & Thornhill, 1997). Using an ad hoc technique of two or more methods allows the researcher to try to find patterns or themes; this is appropriate for me, as I want to see if teachers have similar views and perceptions on their leadership requirements in different social contexts in order to feel job satisfaction.

According to Westlund, in Fejes & Thornberg, (2009) hermeneutics is a phenomenological method, which focuses on interpreting, understanding and relaying information. It can be used to provide descriptions of experiences of phenomena. It is best used when the researcher aims to gain access to peoples' views on personal experiences (ibid). This is very relevant for my research as my focus is to gain access to teachers' views in order to interpret them. Here I think it is important to think about my interpretation approach. There is no set model for how the process of interpretation should take place as different researchers are considered to have different starting points according to their prior experiences. As I have a lot of prior knowledge in terms of experiences both positive and negative and these will almost certainly impinge on the way I analyse my data. It is im-

portant to keep this in mind and reason about it throughout my research in order to encourage transparency (ibid).

Using relevant research literature in my data analysis can serve several purposes. It can be a means by which to broaden and strengthen my understanding of the phenomena and it can even help to challenge my interpretations (ibid).

Employed analysis method

The methods I employed for my analysis were to transcribe my interviews. Every interview has then been analysed by using a combination of both the audio recordings and the transcriptions. Clegg (2006) placed focus on the spoken word rather than the written one and this is what I have attempted to do. I am not analysing the specific words that the teachers use the focus is therefore what they say rather than how they say it. For one interview I had to rely on my transcript from the interview and the write up I did afterwards because the interview candidate did not wish to be recorded. Each interview has been analysed and categorised according to the contents of the interview and the views of the teachers have been placed under relevant subject categories. Quotes have thereafter been chosen according to their relevance to depict what is being said.

Quality aspects

When a researcher's point of departure is the phenomenological paradigm, which inclines to yield qualitative data, validity tends to be high. This can be attributed to the fact that data collection and analysis is focused on attaining as much information as possible to analyse and provide clarification on the research question (Hussey & Hussey, 1997).

When researchers ask their research candidates to depict something in a narrative then this will in the act of it being recalled become an account of what has happened rather than being what is happening at the time. The act of reflection is a requirement of verbal reports and the recollection of an experience can never be the same as when it was lived. This is not a problem for the phenomenologist as what is important is the understanding of how the experience is lived is what gives us the knowledge about this experience (Churchill, 2000).

In qualitative research there are many different types of validity and validity is defined as being many different things to many different researchers. Validity can be described as the amount precision with which research accounts relay how a researcher has conducted their research and how the researcher has come to their conclusions. This allows the research reader to draw conclusions as to whether the research is credible or not (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). I will attempt to apply this in my research. Using incorrect methods and approaches in the research processes can reduce validity by leading the researcher to make the wrong conclusions (Hussey & Hussey, 1997, p. 58). A researcher should attempt to avoid invalidity by making the appropriate research decisions thus approving overall validity (Cohen, et al., 2007). For me this means my awareness is the key to successful research in terms of producing quality.

Reliability brings into question whether research results are credible or not. This can be defined in terms of whether the same research outcomes can be reached by other researchers; if they can then it is reliable (Hussey & Hussey, 1997, p. 57.) In the phenomenological paradigm reliability can be seen in a slightly different light where there is

less focus on exactness of result outcomes and more focus on whether similar conclusions can be drawn on different occasions (Hussey & Hussey, 1997).

Method reflections

Choosing a method and sticking to it has not been an altogether easy task. There are so many methods that have shared characteristics and are presented in slightly different ways by different authors. This dilemma that I have encountered is not uncommon to researchers. Upon reflection as Groenewald, (2004) suggests it is not only important to select the right method it is also vital to understand where you as a researcher stand in relation to the research you are conducting. I can see that I cannot escape the knowledge that I have and that this might at times have led to the fact that I haven't been as forthcoming with explanations for school phenomena, which I take for granted.

Teachers' reflections

This section contains the results from my interviews. A synopsis of common findings is presented first to provide an overview of the findings subsequently a more individualised account from these interviews is provided. These are provided under the different themes covering teachers' perceptions on: teaching in its local context, job satisfaction and school leader role verses teacher role.

Synopsis of research interview findings

The role of a teacher today is seen as complex and does not end at the end of the lesson when the classroom door closes. It involves developing and maintaining working relationships with colleagues, pupils, parents and school leadership. Communication is what enables teachers to establish and nurture these relationships and roles. The role of the teacher today is not only defined by the teacher themselves but also by school leaders, municipalities and national objectives. Together these determine the focus for teachers who are expected to lead by good example.

Today teachers perceive that there is more of an emphasis on preparing pupils with the life skills that they will need to be good citizens than there is on the actual subject being taught. Teachers feel that they constantly have to watch over their pupils in a nanny like way. They eat meals together with them, look in their lockers to check that they are tidy, and spend their breaks watching over them in the corridor. Teachers are also expected to maintain contact with their children's parents to give progress reports about their subjects and social issues. All of these activities have dramatically reduced the amount of time that teachers have to plan, mark and reflect upon their lessons.

Teachers feel that school leaders can make a difference in how they feel about their work by paying attention to what teachers actually do. They want school leaders to pay regular visits to the classroom so that they can see for themselves what goes on there. They also want more of a dialogue and feedback about what is observed by the principal in the lessons. They feel that feedback from their principal is an essential component for competence development in the classroom. All of the teachers identify giving feedback as part of their expectations of the role of a school principal today. The teachers also reveal that they are disappointed in their school principals because do visit them on a regular basis. Some of the teachers questioned the credibility of staff appraisals when principals haven't visited their classrooms but still judge their work. What are they judging then?

Feedback from other stakeholders such as parents, pupils and colleagues about performance at work is also perceived as being important for personal development. Teachers who hear that their lessons are good feel appreciated by others. This in turn serves to motivate them and they expressed feelings of job satisfaction that stem from this behaviour. Negative feedback from stakeholders is something that the teachers found hard to deal with and distance themselves from. They highlight the fact that when working with so many different people it is hard to keep everyone happy. They felt that sometimes people only see half of the picture and it is still difficult to hear criticisms when they have done the best they can with the resources they have. School principal support in solving issues with stakeholders is an important motivator for teachers under pres-

sure. They feel that if their school leaders show that they believe in them they can deal with problems more easily. If on they don't feel supported then they feel dissatisfied at work.

Teachers feel satisfied at work when they were given more time for reflection and planning lessons and less time is taken up by other administrative tasks. They feel that sharing ideas and having discussions with colleagues is an important tool for competence development. They feel that school principals could organise the teachers' schedules better so that time spent with colleagues is not just centred on pupils' and their achievements and problems.

Teaching in its local context

Under this heading a closer look at how the teachers describe their duties today ensues.

The teachers all describe that they all teach more than one language across the board from years 6-9. They have up to 28 teaching hours per week. Teaching duties as multifaceted they nearly all share the responsibility of mentorship for a class with another colleague and they all work as part of a team. Some had other duties that include being involved in different school initiative programmes. Apart from teaching and mentorship other duties include holding parent meetings, writing progress reports, supervisory duties during breaks in the cafeteria and having lunch with their pupils at least once a week. A regular feature of their job is communication with parents. Apart from face to face meetings communication with the home is also conducted via local web platforms, telephone conversations and written reports.

One of the teachers describes the hectic pace of a typical day as "fulltime teaching is like a merry go round, non stop!" This is a common view that the other teachers share. They see their work as never ending and being crammed full of daily tasks and responsibilities that leave them short on time for planning. The teachers see that this lack of planning time has negative implications on their classroom teaching because they don't have any energy left to give the pupils that little bit extra. The quality of their lessons is also seen by the teachers to diminish with the reduced amount of time that they have to spend on developing lesson plans. This is problematic for the teachers who want to spend time on developing their skills and lessons so that they can meet the individual needs of their pupils.

Expectations

When asked to recount their perspectives on what the expectations are on teachers today they reveal that more is expected of teachers today than in the past. They attribute this to the fact that the role of the teacher is very different today from what it was before. A common view that the teachers' share is that teaching encompasses forming and bringing up individuals by giving them the necessary skills to become good citizens. The teachers all express concern with the amount of time and energy that this task takes from them as a person. This is how one of the teachers explains their view "A teacher is expected to look after pupils and care about pupils both inside and outside of the classroom. If they don't look into for example why pupils are upset about something then this might later have a negative input on their work in the classroom. The problem is that there aren't any set rules about how teachers are meant to behave in this kind of situation. Some teachers choose to get involved whereas others choose to ignore problems. Due to the lack of consensus on this issue some teachers' health suffers as a result

of not knowing how to deal with the situation”. The teachers all express concern for the level of pressure that they are under when they undertake these different duties and responsibilities. They are more of a “nanny” than a teacher and feel ill equipped to deal with all of the difficult social problems that they encounter. There is a common call for the need to address this issue and the burden on teachers. The teachers themselves want more resources to be able to focus on providing their pupils with a good education.

One of the teachers reveals that they feel that teachers are under pressure from stakeholder expectations to keep up with changes that occur in society like for example technological advances. They even note that the way in which they work with their pupils in the classroom has changed “individualism has increased and every child needs a customised educational plan”.

Other expectations of relevance that they identify are that teachers are expected to work 24/7 and that this is unrealistic and they should be allowed to have a life outside of school.

They also call for a more integrated way of working together with other colleagues. “I want more time to work together with colleagues in different subjects as this is part of the new education act we need time to organise how we can work together”.

Job satisfaction

When asked to recall what gives them a feeling of job satisfaction all of the interview candidates identify feelings of doing a good job although they all express this slightly differently.

One of the teachers thought of the first year of her current job as a source of job satisfaction. “There was more planning time which meant that I could give that extra something, an energy and a passion for making subjects full of cultural elements.” They remark about the positive results they felt that this extra planning time resulted in terms of pupil appreciation and praise from parents at parent teacher meetings. They recount that they see being appreciated by pupils and parents as a natural extension of doing a good job. The other teachers share the view that praise is an important source of job satisfaction because it serves as a source of motivation.

The teachers also identify that it is just as important to receive praise from their school leaders in order to feel satisfied at work. When asked to describe what in this situation they attributed to giving them job satisfaction one interview candidate directly associated their perception of being appreciated with job satisfaction.

More than one of the teachers express the feeling of accomplishment that seeing pupils develop as a source of job satisfaction. One likens this to a feeling of personal achievement for the ways in which they have contributed to pupil development. This can be achieved by ensuring pupils have all the help they need or by developing a good contact with the parents of a pupil.

One describes job satisfaction as “the feeling like you have been part of the jigsaw puzzle in forming someone, something that I have said or done has had an effect on what this pupil has become”. This was echoed by another teacher who says, “Pupils have developed and I helped them to accomplish this.” The sense of achievement is satisfying “I have given something to the pupils and they can see this too”.

Job dissatisfaction

Lack of time was expressed by a majority of the teachers as a source of job dissatisfaction. Lack of time can be seen in a number of the teachers' comments and concerns about different parts of their jobs. It was also linked to the amount of work that teachers currently have. One teacher felt job dissatisfaction is when they have hundreds of thoughts about what they have to do and they just feel there is not enough time to do it all. All they want to do is sit down in the cafeteria and have a cup of tea but they know that that's impossible. Another teacher expressed that lack of time was problematic as they aren't able to give enough time to their pupils' needs and that they find this dissatisfying.

The teachers reveal that the negative reactions of stakeholders can lead to feelings of job dissatisfaction; the ways in which they express this varied. One of the teachers chose to describe the perceived lack of support from a school principal when a problem arose with a former pupil as a source of job dissatisfaction. The teacher's perception was that there was no discussion over the matter; it was a case of "guilty until proven innocent". In this particular incident, which for obvious ethical reasons cannot be entered into in great detail, the teacher felt that the lack of support also came from their immediate superiors. This was particularly problematic, as the teacher had thought of himself or herself as having a good working relationship with this person. What bothered them most was that they felt that they were reprimanded for something they didn't do. They felt that this in turn meant that their professionalism as a teacher was brought into question and as a direct consequence of this they lost all of their motivation and some of their self-confidence. The other teachers focused on negative feedback from pupils and parents as job dissatisfaction, one said, "we want people to think that we do a good job. When you get negative feedback it is so easy to forget anything positive that has been said, maybe its because I take it the wrong way. I realise that it is impossible when you teach more than 150 pupils for everyone to be totally happy with everything that you do but that would be nice. It is dissatisfying when I think that I have done a good job but others think differently".

Several of the teachers identified the lack of competence development as an area of dissatisfaction. One said "Teachers are expected to find their own sources of inspiration and development at home or in their spare time". Another described competence development as "not stimulating and virtually non-existent because other things were prioritised". Dissatisfaction arose from the fact that the teachers have very little influence over this area of their work.

Summary of job satisfaction

When summarising what job satisfaction means to them the teachers identified slightly different things. One describes that job satisfaction is using their talents and abilities in the best way possible by using knowledge from studies efficiently and with good will. Another suggests that being able to leave the job behind you at the end of the day and go home feeling you've done a good job as satisfying. They see a sign of job satisfaction is that and you feel fine about returning in the morning. Additional views include the feeling of success that they have done a good job and others can see this and show their appreciation of this. "Hearing from pupils, parents, school, and colleagues even higher wages are all ways of showing appreciation. Feedback plays an important part". Feedback can come in different ways a higher salary is always appreciated."

Some of the teachers view the amounts of resources that they are provided with as contributing to the amount of job satisfaction that they feel. As a means to encourage job satisfaction they see the need for the provision of good competence development.

School leader role versus teacher role

With regard to the school leader versus teacher role the teachers identified that principals are meant to be pedagogical leaders but they are not seen to be doing this part of their job. The teachers all identified the fact that their principals lack time for them and that their principals through their feedback and actions can make a difference to the overall performance and quality of teachers' work.

The teachers voice concerns about the quality of the work that their principals are conducting. One said "at the moment there is one rule for teachers and how they are to behave towards students and another rule for how leaders behave towards teachers. A school principal would never accept that a teacher could set a grade on a pupil without looking at their work but this is exactly what they do to us. They aren't in the classroom seeing what you do with your pupils but they still can say whether you do a good job or not! This means that we feel that when they are giving feedback about our work that they are often saying things that they know nothing about. They are not pedagogical leaders they are more of a boss".

Another highlighted the fact that a good principal means that they can focus on their jobs because their working environment is good whereas a bad principal means that energy and focus are taken away from their main task, educating their pupils. This is not simply resolved by having the right principal in charge the role of the government, local councils and politicians need to pass the right legislation that can give the right guidance and resources to principals.

Additional views include a call for the need to develop a universal language in schools to encourage shared values and norms as is a call for a reduction in hours that the teachers have to spend with administrative tasks. By reducing teaching hours and giving more time to planning would teachers could focus on their work more. Teachers are often doing the same administrative task more than once. Contact with parents is something that takes up a large amount of time and most of the tasks are repeated. For example filling in absences on an intranet and then having to ring parents with the same information that they can see online doing the same task twice. Teachers often have to prioritise what they are doing because there isn't enough time. School leaders could put this right to ensure that we are not doing the same task over and over again.

Supportive Leadership behaviours

Supportive leadership behaviours are seen in terms of superiors communicating the fact that they have "faith in you" through their actions of support in terms of advice when different problems arose. This view is shared by all of the teachers but expressed in slightly different ways.

One felt that supportive behaviour was "when a principal showed that they believed in you when problems arose this makes a difference because our principal showed this in their supportive behaviour to other stakeholders". Another said that that the feeling that someone believed in you and could give you the appropriate advice is supportive behaviour.

Additional views are that it is supportive to hear positive feedback about things that have been going well from school leaders. Although at times this feedback can feel a little uncertain because they wonder how much about their work he/she actually knows. This is attributed to the fact that “the principal and I share a common interest and feedback has focused on my progress here rather than other work that I do. The same principal doesn’t seem to notice other colleagues who also do a good because they don’t share this common interest”. Supportive behaviour is also seen in terms of visiting classrooms to find out what goes on there on a regular basis

One teacher found it difficult to identify supportive behaviour from school leadership. “I have had feedback now and again but nothing that felt like it came from the heart it was more like they said something because they felt they had to. Once I heard ‘I haven’t heard anything bad about you so you must be ok’.”

Unsupportive leadership behaviour

When asked to identify unsupportive leadership behaviour lack of good communication in different aspects of the teachers’ work is raised. One raises lack of feedback on classroom work as unsupportive behaviour they attribute this to a lack of knowledge to a lack of interest for what goes on in the classroom.

The teachers feel that school leaders have got their priorities wrong and there is more focus today on sticking to a budget than supporting and developing staff. A principal’s lack of ability to relate to teachers’ situation is also seen by the teachers as problematic. One says “our principal finds it difficult to relate to certain things like for example if we say we find things stressful. I think this is because they haven’t worked as a teacher before. If you say things are stressful then our principal thinks that the problem is with the teacher rather than understanding that we have to do something about the situation in the school”.

Lack of appreciation for the amount of work channelled into a specific project is also raised as being unsupportive behaviour. This was directly attributed to the fact that many of the hours that went directly into developing the project were from the teachers’ free time. This had ungrudgingly been given up because they believed in the benefits that the pupils could gain from this project. They felt they were more than willing to put all their energy into this project. However, it was not until recently that it dawned on the interview person that after a change of leadership at the school had meant that priorities had changed; this project was no longer viewed positively instead it was viewed as a burden.

The fact that school leaders don’t make use of the competencies that they have in their schools to develop their staff is considered by some of the teachers as an area of weakness and as unsupportive behaviour. They say that school leaders “see knowledge as a threat rather than a means for the organisation to grow”.

Leadership behaviours that can promote job satisfaction

Organisational skills are seen as important for promoting job satisfaction. With the right planning and organisation teachers can be given the time to spend on teaching and planning and not have to waste time putting right timetable issues that have occurred because principals haven’t been able to organise things properly. Scheduling time for planning and toilet breaks means that teachers can have time to do other things. One teacher expressed this by saying “Currently teachers have to choose between making a

phone call or going to the toilet”. Teaching today is likened to a factory “assembly line” because teachers have so little time to think on their own; they go in do their job and then go onto the next task.

Other views include the lack of time that is made available to reflect upon teaching methods, “I want more time to be made available to complete tasks or to reflect on on-going projects rather than starting up something and then moving on before we have had to evaluate the work that we have done”.

The listening and observation skills of school leaders are also identified as a means of promoting job satisfaction. One of the teachers states that, “a good leader should be able to listen to you and take you seriously.” All of the teachers identified the need for school leaders to make regular visits to their classrooms to give feedback and be inspirational as a means by which to promote job satisfaction. School leaders need to be able to show appreciation for a job well done. They should make time to see what is going on in the organisation and know what should be done and when. Leadership style should be authoritative but still relaxed enough for a conversation; they should make sure that the working environment is good and everyone is well. They should also have teaching experience”.

The competence development of teachers and school leaders is seen by the teachers to promote job satisfaction. One reveals “I would like to have a well educated school leader who could be a source for inspiration for us teachers in the classroom. They should study on a regular basis to keep up to date with research. I think that they should all continue to teach at least one class because this means that they would be able to understand our position and our daily work better it isn’t enough that they were once teachers they need to know what it is like now as teaching is continuously changing. School leaders need to be able to stand up to the politicians’ demands to reduce costs and argue why we need more resources to provide a better education for our pupils. Politicians also need to take their responsibilities and focus on pupil needs rather than trying to cut costs all the time”.

Concluding results

The teachers in this study identified several areas of their jobs where they experience feelings of job satisfaction and motivation all of which can be enhanced by the right leadership decisions and behaviours. They also identified the complex nature of the environments in schools today. The following contexts were identified in the teachers’ reflections and these serve as structure for the analysis chapter.

- Classroom teaching
 - Pupil relations
 - Autonomy in the classroom
- Relationships with colleagues
- Relationships with school leaders
- Relationships with stakeholders-parents, mass media, politicians
- Access to competence development

Analysis & discussion

An analysis and discussion of my results in relation to the theories presented earlier in this study ensue under this heading; the contexts identified by the teachers' reflections will be used to structure this section. My own reflections will then serve to provide a picture of my interpretations of this section.

The teachers' reflections in this study show that job satisfaction can mean slightly different things to different people. Research also confirms that job satisfaction is difficult to gauge because it is related to personal perceptions of how well a job matches with expectations (Smither, 1999). What is clear is that job satisfaction and job motivation go hand in hand; when you are motivated you work well and you feel satisfied with your work, which in turn makes you happy at home (Smither, 1999).

In the classroom teachers expressed that they wanted to be able to focus on teaching their subjects rather than the bringing up of their pupils. They saw that the pupil teacher relationship as important and they wanted their principals to take an interest in what is happening inside of the classroom. Parallels can be drawn with research into foreign language teachers, which identified six areas that promote job satisfaction. These included intrinsic motivation, extrinsic motivation, autonomy, relationships, self-realisation and institutional support (Praver, & O-Baldwin, 2008).

Classroom teaching

Pupil relations

The teachers in this study express the fact that the focus of the role of the teacher has changed to encompass a number of roles and tasks. Teachers see themselves as providing knowledge about a subject whilst contributing to the social development of their pupils. Research attributes these changes to changes in society and to the national and local frameworks (Brante, 2008). The teachers in this study found some parts of this role rewarding like when a pupil shows that they have taken in something that a teacher has said and that this has led to their personal development. However, they also expressed concerns about the amount of time and energy that has to be put into this task. This is because this role is not something that can be turned on and off it is part of a relationship that forms with the pupils during their time at that school and it encompasses life both inside and outside of the school walls. Research also reiterates the fact that teachers are now spending copious amounts of time with their pupils both inside and outside of the classroom and that this is directly connected to their supervisory social role (Brante, 2008). Teachers in this study also felt unhappy about having to deviate from teaching their subjects in order to fulfil this role in the classroom. Research also broaches this subject and suggests that teachers are right to feel that educational standards are dropping due to this additional role and there should be more focus on the actual teaching of their subject (Brante, 2008). What the teachers expressed as rewarding and a source of motivation and job satisfaction in the classroom was feelings of an intrinsic nature related to the feelings of personal rewards gained from their pupils' progress.

The teachers revealed that they are under pressure to juggle tasks. Brante (2008) discloses that multitasking can be detrimental to your health in the long run because you

are constantly on the go. The teachers in this study expressed feelings of concern for the fact that they hardly had enough time to go to the toilet and that they felt that they couldn't sit down for five minutes because they know that there is something they should be doing. The teachers in this study voiced their concern about the lack of time they had to spend on lesson planning. They felt that other tasks were taking time away from this and as a result they felt that they couldn't provide their students with quality teaching. Research has shown that it is common for teachers to be concerned about not giving enough of themselves to their pupils. Brante (2008) also points out that the quality of a person's work suffers in the long term from multitasking because they have to limit the amount of time they can spend on certain tasks.

Autonomy in the classroom

The teachers revealed that in contrast to many of the other tasks that they had classroom instruction was an area where they are very much left to their own devices with little or no input from school leaders. They felt put out that school leaders didn't visit their classroom more. Research shows us that teachers' value relationships and their classroom work most of all (Brante, 2008). There has also been a change in teacher expectations towards the role of the principal who was previously viewed as an administrator whose place was not in the classroom (Blase & Blase, 1999).

All of the teachers understood the need for them to get feedback on their teaching in order to develop it. They valued the principal direction that potential feedback from classroom visits would give them and they expressed their concern that their current school leaders were not carrying out this duty. Using a combination of instructional and pedagogical approaches to leadership can encourage reflection and dialogue about classroom processes. Feedback is also considered as a source for motivation and job satisfaction (Blase & Blase, 1999). Research has shown that school leaders have not been as active on this front as they should have been and that there is room for improvement. Principals are expected to exert pedagogical leadership and research has shown in order for that to take place they have to enter into the classroom and communicate with their employees. Principals are seen to be lacking in some of the skills that they need in order to complete this task; potential problem areas are lack of understanding of the subject that is being taught and lack of teaching experience. Teaching experience has not previously been a prerequisite when recruiting school leaders (Skolinspektionen, 2010). It is problematic to say that principals are only at fault here, principals also need guidance and competence development from their superiors, how many of them are visiting the schools?

More than one of the teachers expressed that school leaders were contradictory in the way they behaved towards the teachers. As part of their role teachers were expected to have detailed accounts of pupil school performance to be able to give them their grades but school leaders could give performance reviews without having visited the teachers' classrooms! Research has proven that feedback from school principals can serve as a catalyst for job motivation and job satisfaction (Blase & Blase, 1999; Bolger, 2001). Parallels can be drawn here to the nature of a school culture that communicates to its employees in a contradictory way. Research has shown that the actions and behaviours of school management convey the values and vision of a school; conveying the wrong message can create a climate of distrust and a lack of transparency (Bolger, 2001; Ärlestig, 2008). This in turn can be said to undermine the very democratic and transparent leadership required of school leaders. The fact that school leaders find it difficult to give

good feedback suggests that they need to develop these skills and employ the right feedback techniques.

Relationships with colleagues

Granström (2006) tells us that changes in the role of the teacher to date have meant that the teachers work more as a team. We also learn that workplace relationships have become more important to teachers (Rhöse, 2006). The teachers in this study confirm that they value their colleagues' opinions and that they all see themselves as being part of a team. However, teamwork is confined to meetings and work outside of the classroom and much of that time is spent discussing their pupils rather than spending time on exchanging ideas and socialising. According to Granberg (2004) dialogue is an important tool for learning and sharing ideas but this is only possible if the teachers are given the opportunity to do this.

Teachers reveal that in schools relationships are what matter; they can make a difference between wanting to go to work in the morning or wanting to stay at home. Research has shown that how a school principal acts and what he or she says is of vital importance to the success of the school (Årlestig, 2008; Barth, 2006). From professional experience schools are complex organisations where lots of individuals interact on a daily basis. The way in which relationships are formed with members of the organisation and stakeholders matters to those who work there. Who wants to attend or work in a school that is constantly portrayed as having problems?

Relationships with school leader

The teachers in this study all identified that there was a need to improve communications with their school principals. Problems that the teachers identified were that their school principals were not transparent in the way in which they communicated at all levels of the organisation. These problems lead to a lack of clarity on the parts of the teachers about what message their principals were trying to convey. As has been previously discussed lack of openness can create an unhealthy environment of distrust and job dissatisfaction (Barth, 2006). Lack of clarity is as research has shown us also contributory factor of work related stress (Jacobsen & Thorsvik, 2008).

Establishing a better understanding with school leaders about what work tasks encompass would enable school leaders to communicate teachers' views upwards in the organisation. This in turn could serve to inform others upwards in the organisation of the complexity of their work today. Research has emphasises the fact that school leaders need to be given the right amount of resources at local and national levels to do their jobs properly (Skolinspektionen, 2010).

Relationships with stakeholders

The teachers in this study were unhappy about having to tackle some of the social problems that have become apparent in today's schools because they felt that they weren't equipped with the necessary skills to handle such difficult tasks. Research has also identified the new role of the teacher as problematic because they are not provided with the skills with which to handle difficult situations. Research has also identified the fact that teacher training doesn't prepare teachers for difficult situations whereas social workers and psychologists who encounter similar situations are trained as part of their education (Brynolf et al., 2009).

Teachers' roles are also under scrutiny today from the various stakeholders who are all too ready to highlight what isn't working rather than what is working in today's schools. The teachers all expressed that they felt unhappy when they received feedback from parents and pupils that wasn't positive even though they felt that they had done the best they could in the situation. This is also related to what teachers are trained to do and how they can learn techniques to be able to receive this kind of feedback (Brynolf et al., 2009). Being able to leave the job behind them at the end of the day was also of importance to the teachers in this study.

Teachers identified the fact that praise and affirmation from stakeholder was a source of motivation and job satisfaction. They felt that their efforts were being acknowledged.

Access to competence development

All of the teachers in this study emphasised the importance of improving the skills that they had to do the job. They wanted personal development in the classroom, to share and exchange ideas with colleagues. They want access to good competence development that they can make use of; they also want to be given the time to reflect upon the new skills that they have acquired so that they can implement them in the classroom. Research suggests that a transformational approach to leadership can lead to the personal development and commitment of organisational members (Leithworth & Janti). Principals can also benefit from using pedagogical leadership skills to identify, support, and develop their teachers' competencies (Skolinspektionen).

Own reflections

The nature of teaching today is such that it requires teachers to occupy a number of different roles. They are a mentor, a supervisor, a link between parent and pupils, a teacher, an employee, an individual and a member of a team. In turn each of these different roles comes with its own set of requirements, which are associated with the different work related tasks that accompany them. The complex nature of these different teacher roles also has implications for school leaders and their leadership styles that they should employ. This is because in order to feel more satisfied at work teachers also require their school leaders to be able to alternate between several different roles. School leaders are administrators, leaders, pedagogical developers and communicators. The individual abilities with which a school principal can undertake these different roles have direct implications for how satisfied teachers feel at work.

If we return to the schematic figure 1 (page 4) which discusses how principal responsibilities, teachers roles and school tasks interact we can see that the above-mentioned contexts can have direct implications for the outcome on the individual teacher's school tasks. If a school principal, for example has not created an open and transparent communication then a teacher might chose to interpret organisational goals in a way which is not inline with the organisations culture. This is why communicative and a transformational approach to leadership can serve to develop a shared view of what the organisations objectives are and how teachers and school leaders can work together to achieve them.

Concluding reflections

The role of the teacher today brings with it a complex set of requirements of leadership behaviours, as does the role of the school leader. School leaders also need access to resources and competence development in order to deal with the complexities of their roles. More could be done at both national and local levels to help school leaders develop. More could also be done to recruit school leaders who have teaching experience and knowledge about pedagogical processes.

The aim of this study was to find out what secondary school language teachers require from their school principals in terms of leadership behaviour in different social contexts in order to feel job satisfaction.

This study highlights the need for school principals to be more a tune to what language teachers specifically and teachers in general need from them in terms of leadership in Swedish schools today. It is clearly not enough to stipulate in documents what leadership should be like in schools because many of the issues that have been brought up by the teachers in this study have been previously identified as problem areas in research. Can this be attributed to the fact that it is the individual school principal whose personal characteristics, background, maturity and level of knowledge ultimately form their leadership?

It is interesting to note that parallels can be drawn between the complexity of the roles of the teacher today and leadership roles in schools and the different contexts in which they are enacted. Both roles require that the individuals who undertake them to have broad competencies. They are also both formed by personal characteristics. Both roles share a common need for continuous competence development in order for them to be carried out efficiently. Both roles are also dependent on national and municipal factors, which in turn can determine how well the individual roles can be achieved. They both require a balance between being relationship orientated and task orientated. If one of these two is not in balance then the role will remain unfulfilled.

Nurturing a role requires motivation and motivation is directly related to job satisfaction which in turn is related to how well an individual's expectations are met by their jobs. The teachers in this study have all said that competence development is essential if they are going to be able to handle the demands of their various roles. These roles are continually evolving with the changes in society and therefore require continuous personal development to meet with role criteria.

My personal experience is that it is not a problem to find teachers and school leaders who want to participate in competence development the problem is that it is not openly encouraged by the schools and staff themselves. When teachers partake in competence development it is often as part of a larger municipally organised activity and on a day when teachers are not teaching. Individual competence development is often either done in a teacher's spare time or another teacher has to cover for them at work. This is often seen by the teachers themselves as problematic because they feel they are inconveniencing a colleague. Often the teachers still have to do the actual planning for the lesson they miss.

School leaders who undertake competence development are also from personal experience frowned upon because they are viewed as being away a lot. There is a need to address this issue within local municipalities and in the individual schools. Schools should encourage an open dialogue where ideas and skills can be shared and developed. This is not something that teachers and school principals can achieve alone they have to have help from the municipalities and even the national policy makers. Without the right amount of resources being made available teachers will continue to be overloaded with work. Above all schools need a balance of resources to cope with increasing load of new responsibilities and tasks. A review of the actual amount of tasks would also give direction of the way forward.

Implications for future research

In this qualitative study reveals that language teachers in lower secondary school have to meet with a complex set of requirements on a daily basis. It also shows that school principals can through their words and actions improve teacher job satisfaction if they address the issues that the teachers have broached. It would therefore be interesting to compare teacher and principal views on these issues to see how principals view what has been revealed by this study.

It would also be interesting to use these results as a form of a school development project. Where principals use the teachers' reflections to create a dialogue with teachers about introducing and creating school policies that can promote job satisfaction.

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Appendices

Interview guide

Välkomna intervjukandidat repeterar syftet med forskningen och intervjun. Prata om att informationen blir konfidentiellt och hur den framöver skall användas. Diskuterar om intervjun kan spelas in och om jag kan återkomma med frågor senare.

Information till intervjukandidater angående syftet med intervjuerna

- Kan du berätta om dig själv och hur länge har du varit lärare?
- Kan du beskriva hur ditt arbete ser ut på din nuvarande arbetsplats?
- Berätta allmänt om hur utformningen av ditt jobb ser ut idag
- Vad har du för förväntningar på att vara lärare idag med tanke på de krav som ställs på dig i denna miljö?
- Berätta om när du kände dig tillfredsställd på jobbet
Vad var det i denna situation som du har beskrivit som tillfredsställde dig?
- Berätta om när du inte kände dig tillfredsställd på jobbet
Vad anser du att detta beror på?
- Sammanfattningsvis vad betyder begreppet arbetstillfredsställelse för dig?

Om vi tittar närmare på ditt nuvarande jobb och skolledaren funktionen

Kan du

- Berätta om situationer där du har upplevt stöd från din skolledare
- Berätta om situationer där du har upplevt att det saknades stöd från din skolledare
- Berätta om vad du behöver från en skolledare för att känna dig tillfredsställd på jobbet och hur de kunde förverkliga detta.
- Berätta om hur du uppfattar skolledarrollen i relation till din egen lärarroll

Tack för intervjun