NAVIGATING BETWEEN DISORDER AND CONTROL: CHALLENGES AND CHOICES WHEN TEACHING READING STRATEGIES IN THE L1 CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Conversations about texts are often presented in research as particularly beneficial to students' reading development, based on the argument that the opportunity to confront, discuss and negotiate different readings in the classroom enhances students' skills in engaging with texts. In this article, we examine in detail the interplay between a teacher and her students when they talk about argumentative texts in a Swedish ninth grade classroom setting. In the analysis we combine a Conversation Analysis approach with reading theories that emphasize the dialogical encounter between reader and text. Our result indicates the dual nature of the teaching perspective which sometimes involves conflicting aims. The teacher has to choose between intervening in response to student reactions that reflect emotional and stereotypical attitudes that may hinder a critical reading, or intervening to make use of and stimulate reactions that may lead to more critical readings. Thus, our study emphasizes that it is crucial that teachers are able to both manage the leadership in the complex classroom interaction, and to apply knowledge about reading processes and strategies that students get involved in when they discuss engaging texts in school.

1.   INTRODUCTION

As an arena for teaching and learning, the exterior of the classroom has not changed in any significant way in the last century. It is, and has been, a place where a certain number of students of the same age gather to learn under the guidance of a teacher. However, the dominant views on teaching and learning have changed quite radically in recent decades. Teaching and learning are no longer seen merely in terms of acquisition of knowledge, but rather as a socio-cultural phenomenon that is constructed, maintained and changed in interaction between people in relation to artifacts and the surrounding environment (Lave, 1993; Rogoff, 2003; Sahlström, 2012). The perspective permeates the Swedish national curriculum where, for example, the compulsory school curriculum (Skolverket, 2011) clearly emphasizes social interaction and the use of different communication resources as crucial to students' opportunities to participate actively in society. The socio-cultural perspective on teaching and learning has also made an impact on reading research. During the past two decades, classroom researchers and theorists of literature have increasingly argued for a reading instruction based on dialogue as particularly successful in developing students as readers. A prominent example is the American reading researcher Judith Langer (2011) who argues that a reading instruction allowing different voices to be heard makes for a classroom in which the reader's thinking is developed.

Research that advocates a 'dialogic reading instruction' draws on an understanding of the situated and dialogical character of all communication where meaning and understanding is something that is created and recreated by people who participate and interact in certain contexts where different voices meet. On the basis of such an approach, students must then be given the opportunity to engage with both teachers and other students on meaningful content, in order to learn and develop. Especially conversations about texts are seen as particularly beneficial to students' reading skills in that teachers and students can pool their different readings and let them go into dialogue against each other in the classroom (Murphy et al., 2009; Nystrand et al., 1997; Soter et al., 2008). In addition to being an arena for curriculum-driven education, the classroom is also a place where students build relationships and form their identities in interaction with each other and the teacher. This means that there are many social projects going on in the classroom, both related to the curricular content and to other issues that are in different ways important to the students, but sometimes in ways that may lead to disciplinary challenges for the teacher. In this article we focus on the clash that may occur when students discuss issues that engage them on a personal level to an extent that challenges the teachers' control over the classroom agenda. We examine in detail the interplay between a teacher and her students as they get engaged in a lively discussion during reading instruction aimed at developing students' advanced reading strategies.

Empirical studies indicate in various ways that dialogue-based reading instruction, involving discussions about texts and other collectively-based teaching methods, is beneficial to students' reading ability in multiple ways (Applebee et al., 2003; Gamoran & Nystrand, 1991; Murphy et al., 2009; Nystrand et al., 1997; Soter et al., 2008). A majority of the studies on discussions about texts in classrooms are studies that focus on literature discussions. Some of these studies draw attention to teachers' questions and students' and teachers' speaking space in discussions (Chinn et al., 2001; Hynds, 1990, 1991, 1992; Marshall, 1989) and other studies are concerned with studying the quantitative aspects of students participation in literature discussions regarding, for example, their tendency to present and argue for their own interpretations (Almasi et al., 2001; Anderson et al., 1998; Goatley, Brock & Raphael, 1995). Many studies also highlight the positive aspects of literature discussions, although these tend to focus more on group processes or present more general descriptions of students' cognitive development (Almasi, 1995; Evans, 2002; Maloch, 2002; Parsons, 2004), than on how the conversation can help develop students' reading strategies (Asplund, 2010; Roberts & Langer, 1991; Reninger, 2007; Tengberg, 2011 are some exceptions). Compared to studies of literature discussions, there is a lack of research on discussions of argumentative texts, especially studies with a focus on teaching reading strategies and classroom interaction. Overall, studies show that explicit teaching the reading of argumentative texts critically is quite rare, and that students on secondary and tertiary levels have difficulties reading argumentative texts critically, i.e. in identifying key components of argumentative structure in texts (Chambliss, 1994; Newell, Beach, Smith & VanDerHeide, 2011). In this article we are interested in how teaching the reading of argumentative texts takes shape in classroom interaction, as a teacher tries to implement teaching methods of dialogic strategy instruction (Tengberg & Olin-Scheller, 2016). We focus on how teachers and students distinguish and talk about arguments in the texts in relation to their own attitudes to the content of the text and to each other. More precisely, the aim of this article is to examine the teachers' pedagogical positioning in relation to the social- and content-related challenges that arise in classroom interaction as a teacher enacts methods of dialogic reading instruction with a focus on argumentative texts.

2.   THEORETICAL FRAMING

In this study we draw on reading theories that emphasize the dialectic encounter between reader and text. Scholes (1985, 1998) emphasizes the importance of the reader having the ability to respond to and analyze all types of texts, and the importance of the reader being able to take a textual position in relation to the text. Textual power, according to Scholes, means that the reader is aware of how every text requires something of its reader and that readers themselves are active and create meaning in the meeting with the specific text. But textual power is not merely about the ability to be aware of one's own role as a reader and of the processes that are set into play when reading a text, but also about the ability to

communicate this awareness (Bruner, 2003; Gee, 2008; Olin-Scheller et al., 2015). The teacher's most important task, in such teaching, is to show students how they can move from text reading to text interpretation, and further to be critical of the values that are implicit in the texts (Scholes, 1998). In this study we take an interest in whether and in that case how such processes are set into play in the dialogic reading instruction.

We also turn to Langer (2011), who has conceptualized what happens when young people read and talk about their reading in a school context. Langer describes reading as a dialogic process in which the readers are trying to create meaning and understanding through, consciously or unconsciously, building envisionments. The concept envisionments refers to the world of understanding a reader has at a given time, which continuously changes with time, as the reader makes sense of herself, of others, and of the world, during the reading process. From Langer's point of view, reading is an interpretive act and when different readings meet in a classroom, different readers can be influenced by each other's readings. Langer distinguishes five, non-linear stances that a reader can go through in her search for meaning and context in the reading. These stances describe different types of movements between reader and text, and they are also part of, and crucial to, the act of envisionments building. In the first two stances the reader tries to establish contact with the text and build envisionments, while the other three stances concerns the reader movements from the text in order to reflect and analyze what has been read.

The interactive classroom is to Langer (2011) a central issue for successful reading instruction and she further states that the notion of and understanding of different stances helps teachers conceptualize activities in reading instruction. It also allows teachers to think about ways to engage in conversation with students. In our study we find Langer's concepts relevant to conceptualize the movements that are set into play in the classroom when the teacher and the students interact and discuss their readings of the argumentative texts.

In order to study how teaching and learning take shape in the interaction between teacher and students we use Conversation Analysis (CA). This means that we view social interaction as constituted in face-to-face interactions, and as possible to investigate through the turn-by-turn sequential ordering of human cooperation in naturally occurring encounters between people in everyday life (Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008; Schegloff, 2007; Sidnell & Stivers, 2013). It is a perspective that shares basic theoretical principles of dialogism concerning how communication, context and joint meaning making are constituted through sequential organization, joint construction and interdependence between acts (Duranti & Goodwin, 1992; Firth & Wagner, 2007; Linell, 1998; Prior & Hengst, 2010). Drawing on socio-cultural theories of learning, emerging research in CA has shown how learning can be understood and studied as social actions that take shape in the turn-by-turn contingency of interaction between participants, in our case teachers and students in the classroom (Lee, 2010; Martin, 2004; Melander 2009; Sahlström, 2011; Tanner, 2014). Lee (2010) shows how teachers successively discover aspects of a learning content

that needs to be clarified or explained, which they use to adapt their instructions in relation to students' displayed understandings. Lee argues that the contingency of interaction is analytically central since "[t]he contingencies then do not represent the unplanned, random, or surplus details; they are the essential analytic resources for those participants who discover teachable items and demonstrate their learning" (ibid, p. 418). Also Hellerman & Pekarek Doehler (2010) show how participants' individual and group orientations in the contingency of interaction lead to unique co-constructed performances and learning potentials.

This article is based on an understanding of teaching and learning as constituted in teacher–student interaction. We use the methodological tools provided by CA in order to analyze, from the participants' perspective, how some examples of the trajectories of teaching and learning take shape in reading instruction based on dialogical intentions. The emic perspective called for in CA means that we attend to how the participants' themselves orient to each other and to their different readings of a text and how this is relevant in their joint classroom conversation. We avoid adding our own interpretations about underlying intentions or causal connections in the actions taking place, but aim for a robust empirical grounding in what the participants display and make visible to each other. As our main interest lies in understanding how the course of actions develops in classroom talk we have made the choice to translate mainly the participants' verbal turns while non-verbal resources such as prosody, gestures or material structures are described only when they are discussed in our analysis. Since we have wished to follow rather long stretches of turns we have chosen a simplified version of the conventions used for transcription in CA (c.f. Hutchby & Wooffitt, 2008) and we have chosen only to show the English translations of the participants' conversation. Even though it means that we cannot claim to have carried out a full CA analysis including all the fine-grained details in the interaction, we think that this selective approach still reveals the interplay between teacher and students during the multifaceted and polyphonic discussions that take place in the studied classroom.

2.1 Empirical data

This article is part of a larger intervention study on reading instruction designed to improve proficiency in critical reading related to argumentative texts among adolescents. The working definition of critical reading in the study includes being able to 1) identify written argumentative structure; 2) analyze arguments in terms of relevance and sustainability; and 3) evaluate argumentation through written, critical response (Tengberg & Olin-Scheller, 2016). This larger study concerns the implementation of dialogic reading strategies in teaching Swedish as a first language, and is planned in close cooperation between researchers and teachers. The instructional focus in the study is related to a framework called Dialogic Strategy Instruction (DSI), based upon theories of dialogicity (c.f. Tengberg, Olin-Scheller & Lindholm, 2015; Olin-Scheller & Tengberg, 2016), and in line with the pedagogical aims of the intervention the reading strategies were defined as *identifying*, *analyzing*,

and *evaluating.* Besides explicit strategy instruction, DSI includes recurring conversations about the texts as well as challenging writing tasks. In other words, the interactions that we study in this article take place in a classroom setting where the teaching and instruction have been planned in relation to an explicit purpose of enhancing the students' critical and reflexive readings on the basis of a dialogic understanding of communication and meaning making. However, in this study we are not interested in examining how well the teacher succeeds with her intention in pursuing a dialogic reading instruction. Instead our focus is on what happens in classroom interaction in relation to an intention of enacting dialogic reading instruction.

The analysis in this article is based on video-data from eight lessons in the Swedish ninth school year, i.e. students aged 15. The school is situated in a small town and the class consists of a total of 20 students (10 girls and 10 boys). Whole lessons were recorded using three different cameras. One camera followed the teacher, and the other two cameras were directed towards two different groups of students seated at their desks. For the purpose of the study, we have selected situations from two different lessons that both employ texts about different political opinions on the presence of wolves in the vicinity of inhabited areas. This is a question that has been lively debated in the Swedish media and especially engages inhabitants in smaller countryside towns like the one we have studied.

2.1.1   Three examples

In this article, we focus on three examples that illustrate different situations that arise in the classroom interaction between a teacher and students during the implementation of DSI. In these situations, the teacher is faced with different pedagogical choices, which relate to social and contextual challenges, where the outcome of the teacher's choice also has direct consequences for the continued reading instruction. The first example illustrates a situation that could be perceived as disorderly where students, in the interaction, sometimes leave the text to talk about other issues. In our second example we analyze a more orderly interaction, but where the students' engagement is low, presenting the teacher with the challenge of leading the discussion forward. The third example shows a situation where several students' readings compete for the floor. By analyzing how classroom interaction between teacher and students is organized, we show how the teacher's pedagogical positioning is formed in relation to the students' participation.

2.1.2   Example 1: No, you go to the text. Students' engagement as a possible resource

Our first example is drawn from a lesson where the teacher and the students are working to identify the claim and arguments in a debate article on wolf hunting. The lesson started with the teacher handing out the text to the students after which she read it aloud to the class. In connection to this, the students were asked

to find the claim of the text and as enter the scene, the teacher and the students have formulated suggestions, which she has written on the whiteboard. The fact that the wolf issue is something that engages the rural students, is now something we (and the teacher) will witness:

Excerpt 1:1

```
1    Teacher:    e:: what you are gonna do now
2    Anton:      (inaud) grass-
3    Teacher:    sch::
4    Anton:      bark
5    Teacher:    now-
6    Evelina:    but we are the same we eat sheep as well
7    Mikael:     yeah [but-
8    Caroline:        [no we don't (inaud)
9    Mikael:     no:t in that way
10   Evelina:    not just humans I think (inaud)kills is what
11               the wolf does.
12   Caroline:   but we do kill animals more
13   Evelina:    god has created us equal and we will
14               all[(inaud )
15   Anton:         [but we don't do nobody (inaud)
16   Mikael:        [we slaughter sheep in a nice way
17   Mikael:     [they just- [rip off your neck and then eat it
18               up ((makes=
19   student:    [but I eat (inaud)
20   Anton:                  [halal
21   Mikael:     =gestures.))  hehehe
22   Caroline:   and in China (inaud)
23   Students:   ((simultaneous speech))
24   Evelina:    I mean (1.0) how many sheep farmers chop the
25               neck o:n [their=
26   Mikael:              [yeah=
27   Evelina:    =sheep or shoot them to death?
28   Mikael:     =but in quite a nicer way [((makes gestures
29               with his body – making
30   Student:                              [halal
31   Mikael:     =himself smaller)) (inaud)
32   Anton:      the wolfs make halal
33   Evelina:    yeah that's right
34   Students:   ((simultaneous speech))
35   Caroline:   in China they also eat cats and dogs but it's
36               the humans that eat
37   Mikael:     what?
38   student:    what?
39   Caroline:   [in China they eat (inaud)and dogs and stuff
40               but they are humans=
41   student:    [((laughter.))
42   Caroline:   =who eat that.
43   Mikael:     yes but the Asians they kinda do a little bit
44               of everything
45   Caroline:   [yes (.) but still.
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In line 1 the teacher makes an attempt to get the work with the text started when she tries to get their attention by saying: *e: what you are gonna do now*. In line 3

and then in line 5 she makes new attempts to catch the students' attention without success, since the students have their attention focused on some boys' comments (which are hardly audible in the video recording). In line 6 the student Evelina says that we (referring to humans) *eat sheep as well* as wolves. Two students respond to this comment, taking a slightly different position to it. The student Mikael is not slow to agree with Evelina's statement, but his affirmative act is also followed with a *but* (line 7), indicating that he opposes her position in some respect. He is also interrupted by Caroline who says *no we don't* before he follows up on his opposition in line 9: *not in that way*. Caroline, in turn, continues her opposition in line 12 by claiming that *we do kill animals more*.

Hence, in the class there are two opposite positions formed with regard to the wolf's way of killing sheep compared to the human way, where Evelina and Caroline represent the opinion that the human way of killing may not be better than the wolf's, while Michael represents the opinion that the wolf's way to kill is more brutal. This is the introduction to a lively discussion between some of the students, where a gender-based division emerges between the boys, Michael and Anton, and the girls Evelina and Caroline. The pro-wolf arguments refer to the fact that humans *do kill animals more* (line 12) than the wolf does while the students disagreeing claim that the human methods of killing sheep are more humane. The humans *slaughter sheep in a nice way* (line 16), while the wolf *rip off* (line 17) the neck and in line 20 Anton compares the wolf's killing of the sheep to *halal*. Caroline refers to how people in China also eat cats and dogs, thus suggesting that people are no better than wolves. Michael responds to this argument by saying *but the Asians they kinda do a little bit of everything* (lines 43-44), thus producing a racialized interpretation of people's different ways of treating animals.

In this seemingly disorderly discussion (given the teacher's failure to initiate an instruction and the students' quite lively interaction), it is the group's shared reading of the text that is the basis for the argument that follows. The longer the discussion progresses, the more students move from the text and instead increasingly engage in establishing different social positions and relationships within the group. So far, the event appears as a relatively messy classroom situation where the teacher after her initial attempts to get the class's attention, takes a passive and cautious approach. She simply takes a step back without making any verbal objections to the discussion that is going on, where the students' arguments display both gender stereotypes and seemingly racist features (see also Åberg & Olin-Scheller, submitted, for in-depth analysis of the relationship-building that is in progress in this situation).

In conversation that follows after this (not shown in the transcript) the students start talking about other projects linked to a school assignment in another subject about different political parties in the Swedish Parliament. While the students are discussing, the teacher turns to the whiteboard and draws some pictures to which she adds some words (see figure 1, below).
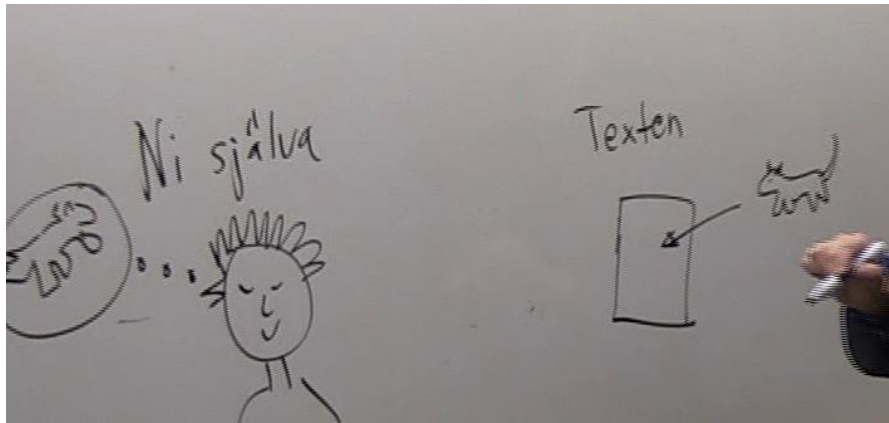
Figure 1. The students and the text.

One of the pictures depicts a face and a thought bubble with a wolf in it. Above this face the teacher has written "Yourselves [Ni själva]". Next to the face the teacher has drawn a picture of a sheet of paper with a wolf next to it. Above the sheet the teacher has written "The text" and there is an arrow placing the wolf in the "text". As soon as the teacher finished drawing the pictures on the whiteboard, she turned around and focused her attention on the students and the classroom:

Excerpt 1:2

```
1    Teacher:    hey you
2    Lena:       (inaud)
3    Teacher     e:: like this what I want you to think about
4                no:w i:s-
5    Lena:       how good looking you drew us.
6    Teacher     yes this is you (0.9) so-
7    Mikael:     good [damn I look like an Asian
8    Teacher:         [so
9    Anton:      you are an Asian
10   Teacher     you close your eyes
11   Anton:      it is Jakob
12   Mikael:     ((grimaces)) a tiantiatija:: tiatija::
13   Teacher:    [sch:
14   Anton:      [(inaud)
15   student:    yes
16   Teacher:    okey you are here and you have a lot of opinions
17               about the wolf I can hear that, I can hear very
18               clearly different opinions here [from=
19   Anton:                                      [(inaud)
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20    Teacher:    =for example Mikael and Evelina (0.4) so you
21                could have the most awesome debate that sounds
22                really interesting e:h (0.5) but this is
23                wha:t (0.5) what you think is what you should
24                try to ignore a  little bit from now and so you
25                should sort of look  at (0.2)the actual text
26                 instead and check the  arguments that actually
27                exist there  because  it is like this when
28                you read an argumentative text (0.5) you almost
29                get blind to the text if you are  engaged in the
30                issue because then you just see like (0.2)
31                either you get upset because they argue
32                against what you think (0.2) or you get like
33                kinda yes yes yes because they write something
34                you think  is good (0.9) and then you forget to
35                examine the  text in a critical way, huh so try
36                to ignore your  own opinions about the wolf
37                right now (0.2) and then  you go to the (1.0)
38                actual text.
39    Mikael:     I can take what Jacob thinks about the wolf.
40    Teacher:    no you go to the text. and I want you to sit
41                together two and two now.
42    students:   ((comment on who they want to sit next to.))
43    Teacher:    ((instructing the students how they should sit))
44                turns omitted]
45    Teacher:    and I want you to (3.0) find (1.0) the
46                arguments (2.0) together now sch: (0.7) the
47                arguments that  support the thesis. what
48                arguments does this  man (2.0) ((looks in the
49                text.)) Magnus Boman present.
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In line 1 the teacher makes a new attempt to get the students' attention by shouting: *hey you*. The attempt is successful, but she cannot say anything other than *what I want you to think about no:w i:s* (lines 3-4) before Lena interrupts her by commenting on the picture she has just drawn on the whiteboard: *how good looking you drew us (line 5)*. Also Michael has opinions about the teacher's drawings, which he uses to make a point that he looks *like an Asian* (line 7), a joke that his friend Anton picks up on by claiming *you are an Asian (line 9)*. The students' references seem to be a continuation of their previous discussion, but the teacher responds to the race references arguing that *you close your eyes*, and she does not respond to the boys' comments further. Instead, she initiates quite a long turn (lines 20-38) where she relates to the students' previous discussion and incorporates this in what we, drawing on Hultin (2006), refer to as a mini-lecture.

Hultin uses the term mini-lecture as a concept for the longer turns a speaker (in classrooms mostly teachers) has, through which the speaker "states, explains or exemplifies something specific" (2006, p. 146, our translation) to the other participants (usually students). These mini-lectures are therefore examples of situations in which the teacher keeps a slightly longer turn for educational purposes. In the example above the teacher begins her mini-lecture in lines 16-18 in that she first focuses on the pictures she has drawn on the whiteboard while she tells the students: *you are here and you have a lot of opinions about the wolf I can hear that.* After this she mentions Mikael and Evelina as examples of two persons in the class

that *could have the most awesome debate* (line 21). Then she says that this is *re:ally interesting* (line 22), and goes on to point out to the students that this is their opinions and that it is important that they leave them outside the task they are doing, and instead focus on the *actual text* (line 25) and the arguments presented there.

In lines 27-35 the teacher then says to the students that a commitment to the issue discussed in an argumentative text in itself constitutes a risk: *because it is like this when you read an argumentative text (0.5) you almost get <u>blind</u> to the text […] and then you forget to examine the text in a critical way.* After making the students aware of this she then encourages the students to <u>*try*</u> *to ignore* their *own opinions about the wolf* and *go to the actual text* (lines 35-38). Then the teacher says to the students that they should sit *together two and two a*nd after she has arranged the seating, she summarizes her instructions to the class saying that they should find *the arguments that support the thesis* (line 47). She then clarifies in lines 48-49 that the arguments to look for should be those that *Magnus Boman presents*.

In the excerpt there is a change in the teacher's participation in the classroom interaction in that she now takes a more active approach, based on the pictures she has previously drawn on the whiteboard during the students' discussion. What at first glance might seem as if the teacher has given up her attempt to inform the class about what she wants them to do, by allowing the students to voice their views on the wolf issue, now rather appears as a starting point that the teacher can use in order to move the lesson forward.

If we take a closer look at the teachers' mini-lecture, we can also see that she reconnects to the students' previous turns and incorporates them in the mini-lecture. The teacher shows that not only has she taken part of their discussion, but she also uses their engagement in the interaction as a resource to make them aware that their debate is based on their own opinions and attitudes. She confirms that this is certainly interesting, but that they in some ways miss the point when it comes to assessing the arguments of the author in the text. What she instead calls for is a more targeted focus on the text, that is, on what is actually said there. The teacher's mini-lecture can thus be seen as an exhortation to the students to embrace the movement when the reader moves from life to the text and which Langer in her theory calls "being outside and stepping into an envisionment" (2011, p 17).

When a reader is in this stage, she tries to get a grip on what the text is trying to communicate by, for example, sorting out unfamiliar vocabulary or searching for starting places in the text if the reader has lost track. The interaction between the students and the teacher above, can, in terms of Langer, be understood as a longer sequence where the teacher uses her mini-lecture to launch a process through which the students will re-establish contact with the text. However, while she asks the students to look at the text, she also reminds them to look for the arguments that are presented in the text - that is, to be critical of the text and examine its arguments. Thus, the students are here encouraged to take a step back as readers and consider and analyze the text at a distance, which is a movement that Langer

(2011, p. 19-20) describes as "stepping outside and objectifying the experience" (phase 4).

What happens in the example, is that the teacher uses the students' engagement in the wolf issue as a resource to move on. The students' experiences and opinions that they expressed in the discussion, and which the teacher initially tried to stop, are used instead on the whiteboard as a methodological resource to visualize the students' readings. With Langer's concept this means that the teacher's intervention can contribute to the movement between the different phases that a critical reading requires, but the teacher's intervention also means that she can contribute to the students' awareness of their own roles as readers in the reading process, which includes what Scholes describes as textual power (1998). Hence, the seemingly disorderly talk that at first sight seems to challenge the teacher's management of the classroom interaction is instead used to teach reading strategies. At the same time, the teacher's choice to focus on creating this movement in the students' reading means that she cannot pay attention to or challenge other aspects that are displayed in the discussion. This applies not least to the questions arising in the analysis about how the racially coloured arguments put forward in the discussion, and the gender-stereotyped positions reproduced could have been addressed and how the focus of the teaching would have changed. This, we believe, illustrates the complexity of the pedagogical considerations that a teacher faces in situated teaching, where the interaction is temporally and spatially limited, which means that the choice to follow up one possible strand leads to another possible strand not being pursued.

2.1.3   Example 2: "No one here super interested in hunting?" Lack of student response

We will now take a closer look at another example which lacks the kind of student engagement shown in the first example. The lack of student involvement will have an impact on the teacher's pedagogic discretion and on what is possible to do, within the context of dialogic reading instruction. The example starts with the teacher who writes on the whiteboard "Arguments: The wolf kills dogs so that small game hunting with dogs is disappearing" on the whiteboard, and then she turns to the students and asks them whether the argument is relevant and important in the context:

Excerpt 2

```
1    Teacher:   why the wolf should be removed. and now we'll take a
2               look at e:h is this a relevant (1.5) argument ((writes
3               on the whiteboard.))is it sort of important in this
4               context? do you have any comments?
5               (8.0)
6    Teacher:   none of you here is really interested in hunting, as
7               far as I know
8    Caroline:  what did you say?
9               ((some students communicate silently with each other
10              with glances, body movements and laughter.))
11   Caroline:  I didn't hear what you said?
12   Teacher:   I said (0.8) e:h one argument that he presents is
13              that he wants to get rid of (.) the wolf hunting or
14              wants the wolfs to be removed.
15   Caroline:  should we give one?
16   Teacher:   no I have an argument here ((points to the text on the
17              whiteboard)) what about this one with the wolf (0.5)
18              e:h kills dogs so that it's no longer possible to hunt
19              anymore with dogs.
20   Caroline:  that's an argument though.
21   Teacher:   that's absolutely an argument. Do you think it is a
22              relevant argument? ((touches the whiteboard – points to
23              the text on the board that says 'Relevant?'))
24   Caroline:  yes (inaud)
25   Teacher:   yes(1.5) yes (1.0) is there anyone else who thinks like
26              that or do you have any other thoughts?
27              (2.0)
28              ((Some students are laughing.))
29   Caroline:  yes I think so.
30   Teacher:   you think so. good. it's fine that you are following
31              Caroline.
32   Caroline:  at first I wasn't though.
33   Teacher:   yes no but now e:h (1.5) it is relevant if you assume
34              that you live in the countryside and if you like to
35              hunt and to have a dog and stuff like that then it is
36              important (1.0) so if you live in the countryside and
37              you like to be outside and hunt with your dog and now
38              you can't do it then it sure is relevant (1.0) so are
39              you with me? mm: now let's check ((turns around to the
40              whiteboard)) if it's tenable.
41   Caroline:  what do you mean by tenable?
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As soon as the teacher has written on the whiteboard and asked the students
about their views on the relevance of the argument, there is a silence in the class-
room. After waiting for eight seconds without getting any reaction, she says: *none
of you here is really interested in hunting, as far as I know* (lines 6-7). Here she is

positioning the students as non-hunters, which in this context may be an attempt to challenge the students in relation to the commitment they showed earlier in the lesson (see Example 1). Instead of answering this, Caroline breaks the silence of the students that has prevailed since she asked *what did you say?* (line 8). While this is said a few other students are engaged in a parallel project of exchanging gazes and laughing about something that other students seem interested in. Caroline repeats her question in line 11, and the teacher explains again that the argument she has written on the whiteboard is taken from the text.

This explanation is not enough for Caroline who asks for clarification: *should we give one?* (line 15). Caroline's question indicates that she did not understand the teacher's instruction, which initiates a repair where the teacher again explains what she means by pointing to the whiteboard as she says that she already "has" an argument there, which says that: *the wolf (0.5) e:h kills dogs so that it's no longer possible to hunt anymore with dogs* (lines 17-19). Caroline answers (line 20): *that's an argument though* which the teacher confirms (line 21). The teacher then addresses the whole class asking the students if they think this is a relevant argument. Again, it is Caroline who responds when she says that she thinks so, and the accuracy of her answer is confirmed in the teacher's next turn (line 24). After this, the teacher once again turns to the whole class when she asks if there is *anyone else who thinks like that or do you have any other thoughts?* (lines 25-26).

The teacher's question is once again met with a collective silence (apart from the chuckle of some students in side-talk taking place alongside the teacher's activity) that lasts for more than two seconds before Caroline once again is the student who responds to the teacher's question when she says that she thinks so – i.e. that the argument is relevant. The teacher then praises Caroline for her involvement and in lines 33-38 holds a mini-lecture in which she exemplifies the way in which the argument is relevant. The teacher then introduces the next step in the collaborative work with the text, which now is to examine whether the argument is tenable or not (lines 39-40).

The sequence that takes place in this example thus differs quite markedly from the previous example. Unlike the previous situation this situation stands out as calm and orderly on the surface: students are quiet and only a careful observation reveals the exchange of glances and laughter that occur between some of the students. One could also describe the sequence as a teaching situation where the teacher has control of the classroom floor. But it is also clear that the students' lack of reactions becomes a problem for the teacher. It is only after the teacher has waited for eight full seconds that a student responds to her questions (line 6). The other students' passivity in relation to the teacher's questions means that the student Caroline gets to represent the entire class in relation to the teacher, and become the one who makes it possible for the teacher to pursue the teaching in the classroom and to clarify the teaching content that she is trying to develop. But since there is only one student who reacts to the teacher's repeated questions there are no more student perspectives and student readings that can be analyzed, compared and discussed.

When the teacher, for example, in line 4 asks: *do you have any comments?* she addresses the class collectively, and when she (lines 25-26) asks the students: *Is there anyone else who thinks like that or do you have any other thoughts?* she shows clearly that she is looking for more student voices and perspectives. When these are absent, there is a lack of dialogical element in the sequence above, and the teacher must settle for one student's involvement, despite repeated attempts to get more student reactions to the discussion. The example therefore also illustrates the unpredictability of orchestrating dialogical teaching, which is also a part of its premises, namely that in order for the teacher's invitations to result in a polyphonic dialogue, it is also required that students show an interest and commitment, and that they also take on the responsibility to respond to the teacher's invitations.

2.1.4   Example 3: "A mad person". Multiple readings competing for space

Our third and final example derives from a lesson in Swedish that took place on the following day in which an intensive discussion developed in the classroom so that the students' different readings were competing for space. On this occasion, the students had read another argumentative text that takes up the theme of the wolf: a short letter to the editor, titled "When will the Prime Minister take the wolf issue seriously?". The students now have the task to read this new text, to compare it to the previous text of the wolf and then decide which one they think is most interesting. One of the students, Mikael, replies that he thinks the shorter of the two texts is the most interesting, a statement that the teacher follows up:

Excerpt 3:1

```
1    Teacher:   e:h (.) what is it that makes it more interesting.
2               (2.0)
3    Teacher:   [Mikael.
4    Caroline:  [It got bloody (.) oh.
5    Mikael:    I don't know but the thing with [70-year old man got=
6    student:                                   [(inaud)
7    Mikael:    =smashed with a baseball bat ((holds his sheet of paper
8               and points at it.))
9    Teacher:   yes-
10   Mikael:    that's more interesting.
11   Teacher:   he gets your [attention there.
12   Mikael:                 [(inaud)
13   Teacher:   yes (1.0) I can understand that.
14   David:     I think so [too about this that he gets like straight=
15   Teacher:              [absolutely
16   David:     =to the point
```

```
17    Teacher:   he gets straight to the point.
18    David:     (inaud)
19    Teacher    where does he go straight to the point?
20    David:     he kind of (0.7) it's not that long-
21    Teacher:   no the other is much longer.
22    David:     yes
23    Teacher:   absolutely
24    Caroline:  it's like three masked morons somehow
25    Lena:      it's kinda written in a brutal way.
26               (1.0)
27    Teacher:   it's writ-written in a brutal way.
28    Mikael:    there are no curses left (0.4) or [with (0.2)in.
29    Lena:                                        [it kind of he
30               doesn't point to the wolf (0.4) issue that much. he
31               just-
32    student:   true
33    Mikael:    but people should have knowledge about it (1.0) or know
34               about it
35    Teacher:   sch- no wait a minute Mikael (.) it is Lena now. I
36               think that you pinpoint some good things [here.
37    Mikael:                                             [mm:
```

In lines 4-6, in response to the teacher's question (line 1), first Caroline, and then Mikael share their views of what it is that makes the latter text interesting, namely that *it got bloody* (line 4) and it is about an elderly man who had been *smashed with a baseball bat* (lines 6 and 7). David agrees and also thinks he gets *straight to the point*. The teacher confirms this and asks David to find support for his reading in the text when she asks him where *he* (the writer) goes *straight to the point* (line 17). David does not refer to the text as such, however, but delivers a more general comment on the text in general; namely that *he kind of (0.7) it's not that long* (line 20), something that the teacher then confirms (line 21).

In lines 24-31 both Caroline and Lena join the open discussion in the classroom. Caroline draws attention to how the text describes that there are *three masked morons* (line 24), and Lena says that this is written in a brutal way (line 25). Thus, the two girls make a reading closer to the text, compared to the two boys (David and Mikael). Mikael seems to have objections to this; he notes that there are no curses left (line 28), but gets no sympathy for this. Instead Lena develops her interpretation by pointing out that the text *doesn't point at the wolf (0.4) issue that much*. Mikael continuous to question Lena's interpretation, though: *but people should have knowledge about it (1.0) or know about it* (lines 33-34), thus reducing the significance of the fact that the text is not explicit about the wolf issue's substantive dimensions.

The conversation that takes place here, thus moves closer to the text. Mikael and David, on the one hand, argue for the benefits that the text is short and concise, while Caroline and Lena highlight the brutal nature of the text but also its lack of substance. Here, the teacher encounters two competing readings from the students – a gender distribution emerges - which she deals with first by silencing Mikael, *sch- no wait a minute Mikael* (line 35) and instead encourages Lena's interpretation: *it is Lena now. I think that you pinpoint several good things here* (lines 35-36). Mikael accepts this with a short *mm:* (line 37), and the teacher then continues:

Excerpt 3:2

```
39    Teacher:    the word moron (3.0) ((writes the word on the
40                whiteboard.)) are you used to seeing that in a
41                newspaper text? a fortytwo-year old moron (0.2)
42                committed a burglary yesterday.
43    Mikael:     when it is a mad person that sounds all right
44    Teacher:    is it a mad person that writes in an ordinary newpaper?
45    Mikael:     ye:s in this case he seems to be so ((touches the
46                text.))
47    Teacher:    but you don't know where it's printed
48    Anton:      isn't it a newspaper [then?
49    Mikael:                          [supposed it was
50    Teacher:    ((smiles towards Mikael))e:h no but I think that e:h I
51                think that you pinpoint a thing in the language so
52                (1.0)so you can tell that in this case it is kind of
53                emotional (1.0) so ((moves her arms.)) a little bit
54                more than it would be in an ordinary newspaper text. An
55                ordinary journalist must try to be objective and write
56                without adding so many opinions and thoughts and stuff
57                (0.5) but (0.4) e:h now we are talking about
58                argumentative texts with sort of emotionally
59                (1.0)charged words so moron you can hear how miserable
60                it is. yes, so it's fine.
61    Mikael:     I think this is fine ((said with a childish voice.))
```

However, it is not Lena's reading that the teacher then highlights but Caroline's reactions to the word moron (line 25) in the text, when she (lines 39-40) asks how common the word moron is in an ordinary newspaper text. When it is a *mad person that writes,* it is, claims Mikael (line 43). Mikael's reaction, however, is questioned directly by the teacher who has doubts that mad persons writes in an ordinary newspaper (line 44).

Mikael defends his interpretation by touching the text with his hand while claiming that in this case he seems to be (lines 45-46). As an outside observer one might think that Mikael has support for his stance when he refers directly to the text they are discussing. The teacher, however, in her response, directs her attention to another project by arguing against Mikael with the argument that he doesn't know *where it is printed* (line 47); an argument that does not really relate to whether the writer is mad or not, but rather concerns if the text is from an *ordinary newspaper* (line 44).

The teacher then starts a mini-lecture in which she explains to the students that *an ordinary journalist* who *writes in an ordinary newspaper must try to be objective and (.) write without adding so many opinions and thoughts* (lines 54-56) while in the text they are discussing right here and now, which is an argumentative text, there are *emotionally* (1.0) *charged words so moron* (lines 58-59). In lines 58-59 the teacher thus again uses some of the students' interpretation of the text as brutal to give an in-depth mini-lecture (Hultin, 2006) on the difference between the current text and a regular newspaper. She incorporates the students' previous voices and readings as resources and explains, clarifies and exemplifies to the students how the text is written, why it was written that way, and what it does to its readers.

Again, we have an example of a situation where the teacher uses the students and their readings as resources in the lesson. But the example also shows how the teacher is forced to prioritize among the different readings expressed by different students. Here the teacher must navigate among them, consider and respond to the readings and responses that the students highlighted in the open conversation. When the teacher asks questions, thus inviting the students, there are spaces created for the students to engage in dialogue with her and with one another. But this also means that the teacher must give some voices and readings precedence before others.

This is a consequence of the interactional conditions in the classroom, sometimes described as a turn-taking economy (Sacks, Schegloff & Jefferson, 1974; Sahlström, 1999), where a conversation with a large number of participants necessarily means that the turns of talk must be distributed among the participants. This distribution constrains the possibilities for student participation, and it is a challenge for the teacher to structure the interaction so that students' different readings can be a part of the classroom talk. In the example above, for instance, we can see how Mikael's reading must give way in favor of Lena's reading which the teacher chooses to highlight.

The extracts from Example 3 are also examples of teaching sequences where the students are given space to go into dialogue with one another on their readings and opportunities to distance themselves from the envisionments they created with their encounters with the texts, and to reflect on them. Here the students mostly move themselves into Langer's fourth phase "stepping out and objectifying the experience" (2011) and we can see several examples in the excerpts above, of turns where the students objectify both their own readings (e.g. extract 3:1, lines 11-17) and the texts they have read and examine them with a critical eyes (e.g. extract 3:2, lines 43-46). It is also in this phase that the reader, according to Langer, becomes aware of the text as a text composed by a writer, and when such insights are related to previous interpretations, this creates an understanding of why the reader interprets a text in a certain way. The students are given the ability to respond to and analyze the texts and they also get the opportunity to clarify their own textual position in relation to the two texts, which in Scholes' terminology (1985, 1998) are considered to be processes in which students may exercise textual power.

3.   DISCUSSION

At first sight, some of the classroom situations that we investigated appear rather disorderly and lacking in teacher control, not least in the first example where the teacher's pedagogical leadership is challenged by an intense discussion among the students that to some extent seems to be off-task. The analysis shows how the students are drawn into a lively discussion about the wolf issue that concerns questions that go beyond the intended analysis of the text. The students use the text to position themselves for or against wolves, which also is part of identity formations

that appear to reproduce traditional and stereotypical attitudes to gender, regionality and race (c.f. Åberg & Olin-Scheller, forthcoming). What we see is hardly unique to the studied classroom, and order and discipline are issues that are highly discussed in contemporary school debate in Sweden. Our study thus highlights the conflicting tasks of a teacher in classroom interaction during dialogic reading instruction.

Our choice in the selection of examples reflects a wish to investigate what we think is a rather frequent example of the unpredictability and complexity that occur when teachers open up for students' opinions based on their reading. From the teacher's perspective this brings challenges in terms of finding a balance between disorder and unpredictability without losing classroom control. This shift of control from the teacher to the student is something that Langer points out as necessary in order to achieve "substantive thought and discussion that can extend students range of understanding" (Langer, 2011, p. 55). But as we can see, such shifts also require more of the teacher's ability to orchestrate the discussions in the classroom in a way that can both confirm and challenge the students. The result of our analysis shows that the teacher's choice to follow-up some trajectories in the students' readings, as in the case when the teacher gives priority to clarifying the reading strategies, often means that other valuable aspects will not be attended to in-depth.

Through the detailed analysis we have shown what the momentary openings and coincidences that occur in the contingency of teacher-student interaction means to the pedagogical potentials that present themselves (Lee, 2010; Hellerman & Pekarek Doehler, 2010). The situated character of teaching and learning involves important pedagogical constraints. Firstly, classrooms are settings where many voices compete for the floor, which means that yielding the floor to one student also means not yielding it to someone else (Sahlström, 1999). This complicates the teacher's ambitions to create a polyphonic environment of different student voices. Secondly, we see how aspects of task-related content to a high degree are intertwined with the students' various social projects that go on in the classroom setting. These constraints display the complexity that permeates teaching when the teacher's agenda encounters the locally situated interaction in the classroom.

The disordered and in many ways challenging discussion that takes place between the students does not only lead to problems. It also includes possibilities and opportunities that the teacher can seize and use to exemplify, deepen and maybe also challenge the students' readings. Seen in this perspective, the second example, which appears as the most ordered lesson on the surface, is the most challenging situation for the teacher when she tries to engage the students in a dialogue. It is a situation that in many ways corresponds to the debate about order and discipline as a necessary prerequisite for learning and development. However, in relation to the other two, more unordered situations, the second example seems rather poor in terms of learning opportunities as the lack of student engagement makes it very difficult for the teacher to progress in the instruction, since there is a lack of situations where different views on the text get articulated.

The two other examples have a much stronger potential for learning and development in spite of the challenges to classroom order. In the first example, the text initiates movements that transfer the students out of the text. As a result, their engagement in the wolf issue could be said to interfere with a critical reading of the text. Instead of treating the students as disorderly, the teacher here chooses to withdraw for a while before giving a "mini-lecture" in which she uses the students' previous interaction as effective means in relation to the purpose of visualizing different reading strategies. In the third example, the teacher is faced with a situation where many student voices compete for the floor, which turns out to be demanding in terms of creating shared meaning and coherence in the conversation about the text.

The studied examples are based on the principles of dialogic reading instruction where the dialogue offers different opportunities, while at the same time is exposed to the unexpected openings that occur in the contingency of interaction. As soon as the teacher opens the floor by asking for the students' readings and reactions, it is possible for different voices and perspectives to compete for turns in the public classroom conversation. Inevitably, the coordination of turn distribution means constraints, compromises and negotiations among the parties, which the teacher is responsible for leading and for balancing different agendas. This is what happens in the examples in this article, and we show how the teacher's pedagogical stance in these situations is based not only on the planned purpose of the lesson but also is taking in the evolving interaction as a response to the students' displayed stances. In those situations when the text initiates movements that transfer the students out of the text, or when they debate their different stances to the wolf-issue, the teacher uses and refers to previously instructed reading strategies to bring them back to the text. But there are also stretches of turns where the teacher encourages the students to take on a distance to the text.

Drawing on the concepts from Langer (2011), the interventions from the teacher seek to contribute to a movement between the different phases that critical reading requires. Here, the teacher also tries to make the students conscious both about text structure and about the processes this initiates in them as readers. The teachers short lectures points at an ambition to accomplish a consciousness with the students that the text affects them and to develop knowledge about how and why the text has a specific effect. The meta-cognition that this refers to contains features of what has been coined "textual power" (Scholes, 1998). Through inviting the students to share their readings in a conversation about the texts, the teacher provides a possibility for the students to display their different understandings, which eventually could make them jointly aware of what they have or have not understood in the text they are working with. This means that the teacher can take advantage of the reading strategies that the students use and make it possible for them to respond in ways that she finds adequate in order to help them develop as readers.

To conclude, we argue for the importance of recognizing the teachers' role and continuous orchestration of the reading process in relation to the students' succes-

sively displayed readings. Our result points at the dual aspects, where the students' reactions on the one hand reflect emotional and stereotypical attitudes that could hinder their critical reading while the teacher's interventions in response to this, on the other, enables the movements that are necessary to achieve a more developed critical reading. The teachers' recurring mini-lectures show that she uses her knowledge of the reading process as a resource in the interaction. Hence, to be able to walk the thin line between disorder and control, and between opinion and critical reading, the teacher has to both manage the leadership in the complex classroom interaction and to be able to apply subject knowledge of student reading processes and strategies.

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APPENDIX: TRANSCRIPT NOTATIONS

[	Overlapping utterances
(2.0)	Length in seconds of a pause
(.)	A short untimed pause (less than 0,2 seconds)
(( ))	Scenic description and accounts
(inaud)	An uncertain hearing of what the speaker said
	A halting, abrupt cutoff
<u>word</u>	Stressed syllable or word
:	A prolonged stretch
=	Continued speech