

Article

Covering the news to develop students' understanding of political responsibility in social studies classrooms?

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Highlights:

- Teachers do not explicitly frame the news as questions about political responsibility.
- Teachers do not switch between individual and social responsibility when covering the news.
- There is little room for students to explore their own understanding of political responsibility in the classrooms.
- A didactic model for developing political responsibility covering the news is discussed.

Purpose: The article discusses to what extent and in what ways teachers make room for students to develop their understanding of political responsibility when covering the news in social studies classrooms. The goal is to outline the conditions for a model that generates an understanding of political responsibility through news coverage.

Design/methodology/approach: Six teachers' news coverage during 25 lessons has been observed, three at lower secondary- and three at upper secondary school and analysed using content analysis, combining political-, media- and pedagogic concepts relevant for the purpose.

Findings: Students' ability to develop an understanding of political responsibility is limited. There are various needs to consider when designing a didactic model to address this problem. One concerns teachers' readiness to perceive the political implications of news events related to political responsibility.

Research limitations/implications: Although the robustness of the results increases when compared to previous research, it cannot be generalised.

Practical implications: We have identified certain conditions that challenge conventional news coverage that should be considered when aiming to develop an understanding of political responsibility.

Keywords: social studies, political responsibility, news coverage, classroom, didactic model

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1 INTRODUCTION

It is not uncommon for news to invite reflection on ideological political tensions between private and public responsibility. For example, reporting on the COVID-19 pandemic raised questions about responsibility for using face masks, but also questioned principles regarding the level of public crisis preparedness. Different views on what a suitable social contract should look like effectively broke each other (Rothstein, 2020). Another example is the news in the summer of 2023 about an increased risk of terrorist attacks in Sweden: The country's largest tabloid newspaper, *Aftonbladet* (2023), interviewed a teacher in the intelligence service, who gave advice on how a responsible private person should behave on the streets to escape terrorist attacks.

How news portrays responsibility with private and public significance affects the public's perception of responsibility, and not only regarding health and safety. These perceptions contribute to how citizens orient themselves ideologically before elections, for example, but also in their scrutiny of implemented policies. There is, therefore, a need for citizens who relate in an informed and independent way to issues of responsibility portrayed in the news flow.

The understanding of political responsibility we are interested in rests on a few premises. One of the central tasks of politics is to define the mutual responsibility of the state and the citizen in the form of rights and obligations, and to determine how the boundaries between individual and collective responsibility should be drawn (Dunn, 1990). With this as an ideological basis, political representatives decide how responsibilities and associated resources in realms such as service, welfare, health and safety are to be regulated and distributed (Easton, 1965, 1953/1971). Understanding political responsibility is based on an ability to weigh between public social responsibility and private individual responsibility, and to understand the consequences that the application of one or the other can have on issues portrayed in the news. This understanding also rests on awareness of the varying capacities of individuals and groups for private responsibility.

A shallow understanding of political responsibility can make it difficult for citizens to relate rationally to political proposals on distributional issues, but also to policies that are delivered, which in turn can result in a lack of trust in policies and institutions (Kumlin, 2003; Möller, 2000). Hence, it is important for citizens to develop a deep understanding of political responsibility. In this article, we approach this claim from a Swedish point of view, focusing on young people still in school. The fact that trust in politics and institutions is declining among young people is a challenge for the Swedish education system. Multiple studies have reported that the number of Swedish young people who say they intend to participate in elections is declining (Holmberg & Rothstein, 2022; Skolverket, 2023; Ungdomsbarometern, 2023). It is noteworthy that trust is lower among young people whose parents have a lower educational background (Bergström, 2015; Skolverket, 2023). Declining trust in politics is also a global trend, as are citizens' approaches to authoritarian forms of populism (Norris & Inglehart, 2019). This makes the challenge relevant to more education systems than just the Swedish.

Our starting point lies in the school subject of social studies, which has the task of providing tools for relating to politics in an informed way – a line represented by other researchers in citizenship education internationally (Børhaug, 2011; Engle, 2003; Filzmaier, 2002; Galston, 2001; Hess & Torney, 1967/2007; Kenner, 2020; Sandahl et al., 2022; Tønnessen & Tønnessen, 2007). This is why we now examine the teaching conditions that students are given to develop an understanding of political responsibility, in news education in Swedish social studies courses. What

mastery of understanding can contribute to, such as increased political efficacy and participation, are additional important aspects but fall outside the scope of this study.

Swedish teachers have no mandate to develop an explicit understanding of political responsibility. The term political responsibility does not even appear in the syllabus for primary school social studies. However, according to that same syllabus, teaching should develop an understanding of how the individual and society affect each other, as well as of political and media conditions and structures in society. Furthermore, students should understand what it means to be a responsible citizen and develop the ability to, from different perspectives, critically examine social issues as they are portrayed in different sources (Skolverket, 2022). The meaning of understanding political responsibility synthesises these formulations in the syllabus. They constitute central parts of what social studies is expected to be in primary school, which makes the understanding of political responsibility both a broad and deep area of knowledge.

In addition to studying teaching, we also sketch out the conditions for a didactic model for news teaching based on the results. This sketch is based on what the students are expected to learn, and how and why the content is relevant. The sketch is a part of an extractive phase in didactic modelling, where teaching is conceptualised with the help of theory, which itself is taken from political, media and communication studies as well as educational sciences, to visualise and problematise aspects of teaching (Wickman et al., 2018).

1.1 Politics as an authoritative distribution of values and responsibility

Political responsibility has its theoretical origins in the phenomenon of politics, which David Easton (1965, 1953/1971) refers to as the authoritative distribution of values. Citizens delegate power to politicians who, in turn, articulate needs and decide how services, welfare, health and safety should be regulated and distributed. This distribution is based on ideological perceptions of what the proportions of private and public responsibility should look like in different areas. The power of distribution is exercised through legislation and administered by institutions. The exercise of power (output) affects citizens' everyday lives. In turn, feedback (input) on the consequences of policy (outcomes) is necessary for politicians to capture needs and reshape policy. Lack of or rational feedback from citizens, combined with the inability of representatives to act on that feedback, can undermine trust in the political system (Easton, 1965). Participating in elections and complaining about institutions' non-compliance with laws are two examples of feedback (Warren, 2014).

1.2 Understanding political responsibility in a changing news landscape

News is an important basis for citizens' feedback. It influences perceptions of how responsibility should be distributed between society and the individual, and is therefore characterised as political communication (Jamieson & Kenski, 2017). The news market has undergone changes that affect opportunities for an informed and balanced understanding of political responsibility. Notably, the development of digital media has led to reduced revenues for media companies. From a Swedish perspective, this has contributed to a tabloidisation of news, wherein entertainment is prioritised over content that can contribute to a deeper understanding of society (Ghersetti, 2019). In news media, there is a trend of personalisation as well: individuals and their impact on events are focused on at the expense of abstract societal causes and perspectives. This so-called *soft news* is

lucrative and cheap to produce. The consequence is that events themselves and individuals' guilt and responsibility are prioritised before processes and societal causes (Allan, 2004; Iyengar, 1991). News focused on events with clearer political and societal implications, or *hard news*, decreases in the news flow (Bennett, 2012). News consumers are given fewer and fewer opportunities to understand issues of responsibility in a nuanced way.

Developments can also affect the quality of political decision-making. Simplified policy measures are easily prioritised in response to simplified news reporting and subsequent understanding. Relevant but less entertaining measures are deprioritised, which in turn can limit citizens' understanding of the possibilities of politics (Altheide, 2002/2015). The emergence of political communicators has made news even more important for agenda-setting and in shaping citizens' political priorities (Bennett, 2012). The tug-of-war between political and economic interests further shapes how events are portrayed in the news. The power of expression exercised by the news media is defining for the political meaning that events are ascribed – in this case, for who appears to be more or less responsible for things that happen (Allan, 2004; Lecheler & De Vrees, 2019).

The fact that individual-based causes behind events are overcommunicated while society-based and institutionally conditioned ones are undercommunicated can lead to what Bennet (2012) calls a *false sense of understanding*. If individuals' actions and responsibility for their actions are rarely contextualised in news reporting, citizens' prospects for detecting systematic structural problems are impaired. These are problems that would otherwise be possible to form broader opinions about. This fragmentation can lead to the news consumer's perception of events stopping at personal political perceptions. According to Fishkin (2011), it is crucial that this form of raw opinion is contrasted with refined opinion. Refined opinion is based on the testing of personal opinion against the opinions of others and against nuanced information. Teaching about news in social studies and in similar subjects internationally is an important arena for the development of refined opinion.

1.3 Swedish students' prerequisites for understanding political responsibility

It is difficult to say what impact tabloidisation and personalisation have had on young people's understanding of politics. Swedish young people's political knowledge has been internationally perceived as good, although this trend is declining (Skolverket, 2023). Good skills that emphasise this knowledge are understanding the principles of the rule of law and motivations for civic participation, and interpreting political messages (Skolverket, 2010, 2017). However, Swedish young people's knowledge of the political system and institutions has previously been highlighted as less good (Oscarsson, 2005; Skolverket, 2004). Studies also show that young people's understanding of responsibility in connection with news events is characterised by short perspectives and chains of responsibility. This means that young people unilaterally highlight society's acute responsibility in the form of the police, rescue services and health care in connection with news events, while society's preventive long-term responsibility is less prominent (Skolverket, 1999). Young people seem to see individuals as the main cause of events, while societal conditions that shape people's behaviour are rather absent as causative forces (Olsson, 2021; Severin, 2002). Their ability to shift perspectives is generally limited, although the ability is unevenly distributed among student groups (Andersson & Larsson, 2023). This provides an unbalanced basis for understanding political responsibility. Differences in political knowledge between groups of young people are growing as well; it is above all the group with poorer knowledge that deteriorates the

fastest, and in this group there is an overrepresentation of boys with a foreign background and low socioeconomic status (Skolverket, 2023).

When it comes to developing independent opinions, research indicates that there is a need for greater space in the teaching of political diversity of opinion and opinion formation. One premise is that when students' ability to distinguish political issues in, for example, the news is strengthened, those issues can then be made the subject of opinion formation (Skolverket, 2012). Students are currently given limited opportunities for stimulation in political interest, to practise argumentation and to have political problems highlighted from different perspectives. They perceive that their own role in conversations is to report facts, rather than expand their reasoning about events covered in the news (Skolinspektionen, 2022). The scope for forming opinions about political responsibility and how it should be distributed is further limited by the fact that teachers in social studies have the goal of adapting students to broadly rooted political values (Liljestrand, 2002).

1.4 Purpose and research questions

Based on this problem, we have identified a research need. Our aim is thus to observe if and how a group of secondary and upper secondary school teachers in social studies, within the framework of a lesson activity on news coverage, can develop their students' understanding of political responsibility. We concentrate on the teaching itself, not on what the students actually learn, to sketch out the prerequisites for a didactic model with the potential to develop students' understanding of political responsibility.

1. To what extent do teachers work to develop students' understanding of political responsibility with the help of news?
2. How is the teachers' work to develop the students' understanding of political responsibility expressed in news teaching?
3. What are the prerequisites in news education to encourage students to develop an understanding of political responsibility?

The next section provides an overview of previous research on the role of news in citizenship education. We then describe the theoretical starting points against which we analyse the teaching, followed in turn by the method and empirical material, before we present the results. In the conclusion, we discuss the practical implications of our results for news teaching in social studies, social studies at large, and the significance of the results for the development of a didactic model.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW: THE ROLE OF NEWS IN CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

The political significance of news-savvy citizens is internationally recognised (Amadeo et al., 2004; Claes & Quintelier, 2009; Cummings & Bard, 1964). However, it was not until the 1970s that researchers began to pay serious attention to the role of mass media in political socialisation (Atkin & Gantz, 1978). Recent changes in the media landscape have created renewed interest and a need to study generational differences (Jakubowski, 2021). Researchers are concerned that young people care less about news than previous generations, have a declining voter turnout and demonstrate poorer political knowledge (Vercellotti & Matto, 2013). Younger people who take part in news tend to focus on high-sharing content such as entertainment and sensationalism, while older people pay

more attention to news about politics. In addition, the development towards online news has loosened ritualised news consumption and made it more disparate (Patterson, 2007).

When highlighting school in combination with news, the research field of *news media literacy*, which has grown out of an interest to strengthen students' news knowledge with the help of source-critical skills, immediately arises. One assumption is that news knowledge can be developed through knowledge of, for example, news production and the structure of the media system (Ashley et al., 2017; Geers et al., 2020). After the breakthrough of fake news research, interest has shifted from a source-critical approach to news content in traditional media to content on various social platforms (Chan, 2022; Swart, 2021). However, our interest does not concern source-critical competence. Rather, we are concerned with how news can be used to develop political understanding primarily within the ideological educational mission, rather than through media education in social studies. Ideological understanding of news events is a core part of understanding political responsibility, and the opportunity to discuss the significance of responsibility politics can reinforce this understanding (Trepte & Schmitt, 2017).

Studies show that regular news consumption has positive effects on young people's political knowledge (Claes & Quintelier, 2009; Conway et al., 1981; Hofstetter et al., 2000; Linnenbrink & Anderman, 1995). Additional studies highlight the positive effects of educational efforts regarding news and the development of political knowledge (Vercellotti & Matto, 2013). There are also studies in which researchers devise teaching models aimed at developing students' political knowledge (Grammes, 2004; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; LeCompte et al., 2017; McCafferty-Wright & Knowles, 2016; McDevitt & Kiouisis, 2006; Piedmont, 2020). Common elements that are advocated for successful teaching include knowledge of the political system, the importance of a classroom climate where news and politics can be discussed openly, and the opportunity for students to develop their own opinions. There are several effect studies on these elements with a longitudinal design, but significantly fewer observational studies of news education (Clark et al., 2021; Haas & Laughlin, 2000).

From a Swedish perspective, it is unambiguous that news constitutes an established part of social studies (see e.g., Bernmark-Ottosson, 2009; Bromsjö, 1965; Kristiansson, 2014; Lindmark, 2013; Olsson, 2016; Vernersson, 1999; Öberg & Bäckström, 2021). However, there is no study of news consumption as a political education activity. Here, too, there is a lack of observational studies. Olsson (2016) shows that news fulfils different functions in different contexts. He further identifies two types of news use: *news integration* and *news coverage*. Integration occurs when a teacher uses news to exemplify phenomena in different content areas; the news content itself is not at the centre. Coverage, on the other hand, refers to a separate and informal activity, disconnected from regular teaching. There are no indications in the Swedish social studies syllabus that news coverage should occur. Despite this, this activity often starts lessons and consists of teachers and students talking about news, with the news content at the centre. News coverage is traditionally based on editorially edited news from traditional news media. The activity is identified in a number of Swedish studies and internationally, but without particularly detailed descriptions (Biser, 2008; Sperry, 2006; Swalwell & Schweber, 2016).

Common to these studies is that news coverage, in contrast to other teaching, is an informal activity with a diffuse subject character (for observations on diffuse subjects in news use in other Nordic countries, see Christensen, 2021; Hankala, 2011; Ryen, 2019). When Swedish teachers describe the purpose of the activity, they highlight general knowledge to talk about news in an

unspecified sense and to establish a habit of taking part in news (Olsson, 2016). Diffuse knowledge content is also evident on rare occasions while observing teaching. Teachers rarely explicitly state what the purpose of news coverage is, but start the lesson with expressions such as “Then we watch the news as usual before we continue working on what we did yesterday”. However, when the activity is carried out in teaching, it seems to be dominated by the fact that general education knowledge, as well as factual and conceptual knowledge, are taken into account (Jakobsson & Olsson, 2023). In the latter two studies, news coverage is estimated to cover about a fifth of the total class time. In conclusion, news coverage is still some distance away from the understanding of political responsibility that interests us, but we need to be able to express ourselves with greater precision through the present study.

3 THEORY

3.1 The meaning of understanding political responsibility

Understanding political responsibility rests on the insight that both private individuals and public society are responsible for events. With Wright Mills’ (1971/2002) *sociological vision*, political responsibility is located at the intersection of the individual’s concrete everyday life and greater social structures. The distinction between personal concerns and general problems is central. Personal concerns are based on the individual’s personal qualities and emanate from a manageable private everyday life. General problems go beyond this. These are common structural problems, which have been developed by public institutions that allocate funds to address them. The ideological question of how responsibility and associated resources should be distributed is decided by regular political decisions in different policy areas (Easton, 1965). By virtue of politically made decisions, we therefore speak of political responsibility, regardless of whether the decisions reward a total dominance of private or social responsibility. Further justification for the concept is that one of the most important tasks of politics is to establish the mutual responsibility of the citizen and the state in the form of rights and obligations (Dunn, 1990).

Understanding of political responsibility is based on the interaction between the individual and society, which places demands on citizens’ ability to change perspectives (Giddens, 1984; Mead, 1934/2015; Mills, 1971/2002; Weinreich-Haste, 1983). Allowing students to study a news story based on political responsibility in teaching means examining the opportunities and limitations of individuals’ capacity and society to take responsibility for problems portrayed in the news. Understanding of political responsibility can be deepened by problematising the relationship between private and societal norms, as well as societal norms that are manifested in laws and institutions (Eriksson-Zetterquist, 2009; Grammes, 2009). Shifts in perspective can highlight alternative methods of politically distributing responsibility, as well as contribute to students’ self-understanding of responsibility (Berlak, 1977). This contextualisation of news can, in turn, support the development of independent understanding of political responsibility (Enright et al., 1983; Hartmann & Hasselhorn, 2008).

Knowledge represented by the concepts of politics is fundamental to understanding political responsibility (Caiani & Graziano, 2022; Thønnessen & Tønnessen, 2007). Institutional knowledge and knowledge of the political system (polity) are necessary to understand the responsibility of institutions and how far social responsibility and the individual’s sanctioned rights and obligations extend. Institutional knowledge is particularly important due to increased governance and

privatisation of previously publicly run activities, which has made it difficult to identify those responsible for them (Lundin & Björkman, 2020; Papadopoulos, 2014). Furthermore, knowledge of the goals and content of policy is required. This includes political programmes, proposals, and central ideological dividing lines regarding how responsibility should be distributed. Additionally, policy includes political power struggles and how actors strategically enforce their will. It is necessary to know what political opinions look like on issues portrayed through the news (Fishkin, 2011). To understand how the political struggle is channelled, institutional knowledge is necessary. Other knowledge applies to politics. This includes the profile that parties and political actors represent in matters of responsibility, but also knowledge of how the individual can influence politics – presupposing that citizens have been given opportunities to form opinions.

3.2 Studying teachers' framing of news and possible learning

Teaching has been studied on the basis that, before it is subject to teaching, news has been framed by the news media. The framed news content is the result of editorial processing that aims to give meaning and narrative to events (Lecheler & De Vrees, 2019). This process affects the news consumer's cognitive and political understanding of news (Strömbäck, 2012), as prior studies attest (e.g., Berinsky & Kinder, 2006; Chong & Druckman, 2007). Framing raises the question of whose reality is portrayed in the news, or what perspectives on responsibility for an event are made visible or invisible.

Teachers also engage in framing during news coverage, even though the media's primary framing sets limits. Teachers' framing of news has been understood as a possible learning that is offered to the students, with teaching expressed here in the teachers' speeches. One assumption is that teachers' framing is influenced by their political awareness. With good reason, social studies teachers are perceived as more politically aware than the general public, and, to a greater extent, as testing the political meanings of news against their own ideological views. This suggests that teachers' framing of political responsibility is coherent and stable (Zaller, 1992/2011). An additional factor in favour of stability is habitualised news coverage, which means that it is in a teacher's interest to repeat the activity with the same amount of energy on every occasion. This may indicate that the teacher continuously makes similar perspectives on responsibility visible (Krippendorff, 2013). In light of this, each instance of news coverage can be seen as representative of the teacher's news coverage in general. However, the teacher may have different levels of experience with different phenomena in the news. This, together with a changing external situation, can vary the teacher's portrayal of political responsibility (Crespi, 1997). In addition, teachers have the ability to make didactic considerations that broaden students' understanding of political responsibility. For example, teachers can take on the role of the devil's advocate and represent perspectives that challenge traditional views (Stradling, 1994). The complexity of teachers' teaching also includes the core values and mission prescribed in the Swedish curriculum. This involves a double task of adapting the students to broadly rooted political and moral norms of society, and at the same time giving them the opportunity to develop their own (Liljestrand, 2002).

A starting point is that the teacher's language and questions are central to the learning that is made possible. An assumption has been that a teacher's terminology of more specialised political concepts can challenge students' everyday perceptions, turn their attention to politics, and deepen their understanding of the political significance of a news item (Bakhtin, 1994). Furthermore, a fundamental criterion in the teacher's presentation of the meaning of a news item is whether the

meaning is communicated as a question to the students, and primarily as an ideological question about how political responsibility should be distributed between the individual and society (see more under 4.1. Content Analysis). In order to differentiate the nature of the possible learning that the teacher expressed, two categories of questions have been studied. With Cynthia Brock (1986), *display questions* (reproductive questions) in the teacher's speech were studied. The learning that these questions were assumed to invite the students to was to reproduce the teacher's knowledge, but also to reinforce the teacher's attitude towards political responsibility. *Referential questions* (productive questions) were also studied. The learning that these questions were assumed to invite was the exploration of the students' own understanding of political responsibility.

4 METHOD AND MATERIAL

The investigated news coverage came from two studies and was based on the teaching of six teachers. The first study was a Nordic research project (QUINT) concerning video observations of teaching quality in social studies and other subjects in Swedish secondary schools (Tengberg, 2022). A survey of 31 social studies lessons led by three secondary school teachers (all women) showed that news coverage was frequent (Jakobsson & Walkert, 2022). The fact that news coverage was not an explicit object of study in the project indicates that the coverage reflected what it looked like in everyday life.

The material from QUINT was expanded with older material, which was collected in one of the report authors' previous studies. It consisted of transcriptions of three teachers' (two women and one man) teaching of news coverage in social studies classes at a Swedish upper secondary school. The study aimed to investigate social studies teachers' understanding of the subject and how the subject was expressed in teaching. The results indicated that news coverage was a tangible element. That empirical data has now been reinterpreted from partly new perspectives.

The two studies made it possible to conduct a detailed observational study where news coverage alone is the object of study. All six teachers included in the present study had a solid education in social studies and had worked as teachers for at least ten years. All have been given fictitious names, as have the students quoted in the results section.

The form of the news coverage varied. The three secondary school teachers used a similar form of monitoring, where short-format TV news from a Swedish public service and advertising-funded channel were the basis for follow-up conversations with the whole class. Common to all was the short conversation time devoted to each news item (Jakobsson & Olsson, 2023). For the three upper secondary school teachers, the form varied more, although the news coverage activity took place with the whole class as well. The monitoring variants were teacher-led teaching based on news images, students who reported news as homework, teacher-led spontaneous conversations and news quizzes.

The relationship between the number of lessons and the total amount of news reports referenced in each learning occasion indicated a short conversation time for each news item (Table 1). News monitoring was a regular activity, but did not occur in every lesson. In total, we assessed the news coverage during 25 different lessons. During the lessons, the teachers referred to a total of 133 news items in the follow-up conversations.

Table 1. Teaching news: an overview of the material

Teacher	School-type	Form of news coverage	Learning activity at news coverage	Number of lessons with news coverage	Total number of news
Christine	Lower secondary school	TV news short format	Watch & talk	4	14
Angela	Lower secondary School	TV news short format	Watch & talk	3	6
Karen	Lower secondary School	TV news short format	Watch & talk	3	18
Ted	Upper secondary school	Teacher-led by news images Student-led after homework	Watch, listen and talk Oral presentation	2	21
Mona	Upper secondary School	Teacher-led conversations	Listen & talk	4	20
Lydia	Upper secondary school	News Quiz	Fill in, correct and discuss	5	42

4.1 Content analysis

The analysis examined the quality and quantity of the content in the teachers' statements, which transmitted information to the students. Each statement was made up of sentences of different lengths and words, which were all analysed for context (Krippendorff, 2013). The ontological starting point was the frequent use of specific concepts, question types and positions from the teacher, which signalled preferences for possible learning. Patterns were made visible by aggregating the outcome for each teacher and relating it to the total outcome for all teachers. The analyses were carried out by both researchers, in a mutual test of the plausibility of interpretations.

Frequency analyses identified the concepts that the teachers used and which corresponded to the meaning of each policy concept. No correlation analyses or other approaches were used to investigate the relationship between concepts. The frequency of reproducing (factual and moral/political) and producing questions was also counted. An example of a factual reproducing question was "What does...?", while a morally and politically reproducing question was "Wouldn't you agree that...?" In questions of the latter kind, the frequency of whether the teacher took a stand for either individual or social responsibility was determined. Meanwhile, an example of a producing question was "What do you think?"

Qualitatively, both explicit and implicit meanings of the teachers' statements were interpreted. The same applied to absent information, based on the premise that absenteeism can also affect learning (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Omitted information could have been the result of unconscious assumptions on the part of the teacher, a conscious didactic balancing or a signifier that the information carried meanings that diverged from those of the teacher (Gill, 2000).

The teachers' statements about the news were not subject to in-depth qualitative analysis. Instead, an initial categorisation was made of what each teacher described a news story as being

about. The teachers' descriptions were tested deductively against Easton's policy definition of distribution. Only news that the teachers implicitly or explicitly made visible, as the division of responsibility between the individual and society, is qualified for further analysis. Each piece of news, with associated statements, that was included in this bank was perceived to have the *potential* to develop an understanding of political responsibility. One criterion was that it would not take many steps of thought before a potential liability issue crystallised.

In the next step, whether the teacher transformed every news item from the bank of potential news about political responsibility into an ideological political question about political responsibility was analysed. This step reduced the data even further into a new bank of news stories with associated teaching sequences, where the teacher *actually* portrayed political responsibility. Teacher Karen's treatment of a news report about rising sea levels illustrates these analytical principles. The news was considered to have the potential to be portrayed as a question of the distribution of private and public responsibility to prevent climate change, but Karen chose instead to portray the risks of rising sea levels for a Swedish naval base. The news story's potential was thus not exploited to draw attention to political responsibility, and thus the teacher's presentation of this particular news item was not included in further analysis.

Typically, the teachers did not transform news content into actual issues of political responsibility. To clarify the significance of the responsibility policy, the analysis formulated a question of political responsibility in an exchange clause, in connection with each news item in the bank, thereby transcending the teachers' more literal interpretations of the news content. For example, a news item that a teacher reported as concerning an increased terrorist threat in the analysis could be transformed into the more abstract political responsibility question: "To what extent should private individuals or public society be responsible for people's security?"

The main analysis studied how and to what extent the teachers framed the question of responsibility as a private concern, a general social problem or as both, and the distribution of both. Analytical questions that were asked included whether the teacher portrayed trust or a lack of trust in individuals' capacity for personal responsibility and its suitability in relation to shared public responsibility. The analysis was focused on identifying protective welfare systems and institutions, their political responsibilities, polity and expressions of societal norms in the teachers' statements. In-depth analysis identified whether the teachers problematised the relationship between private and public responsibility, and connected them with each other. The statements were also analysed to determine the ideological political position of different actors on the issue of responsibility and how that position was expressed in the policy that was being pursued. Furthermore, the analysis studied whether the teachers described what an opinion on the particular issue looked like, acting as an opinion guide by showing ideological political dividing lines. This included the teachers' use of the concept of responsibility, with synonyms, in connection with concepts such as politics and society. Keyword searches were made in the transcripts in Microsoft Word format to locate each statement.

5 FINDINGS

5.1 News education gives students limited opportunities to understand political responsibility

Before we present the qualitative results on how the teaching provided an opportunity to develop the students' understanding of political responsibility, we give a quantitative overview of the data.

This required an analysis of the extent to which teachers taught all the news that appeared in the news coverage. One criterion was whether the teachers supplemented the coverage with additional news information and knowledge and/or took a stand themselves. We judged this expansion of the news to have potential for learning as well. It was not uncommon for the teachers not to comment on news reproduced by students, thus leaving it untaught. This was especially true in the case of homework news coverage (Ted) and in the correction of news quizzes (Lydia). Table 2 shows the extent to which the teachers taught the news.

Table 2. Extent of news taught

Teacher	Number of lessons with news coverage	Total number of news during news coverage	The number of news the teacher taught during news coverage
Christine	4	14	14
Angela	3	6	4
Karen	3	18	13
Ted	4	20	14
Mona	3	21	11
Lydia	5	42	9
Total	22	121	65

It was also necessary for us to categorise the content of the news that the teachers taught. A central question was to what extent the 65 news stories that the teachers taught had the potential to be portrayed as news about political responsibility. The results are shown in Table 3, which indicates that a total of 38 of the 65 news items (58%) had the potential to portray political responsibility, based on how the teachers reported them in class. The next logical question asked how many cases the teachers realised the potential of the 38 news stories, and portrayed political responsibility in their teaching. As shown in Table 3, the teachers made political responsibility visible in 21 of the 38 news stories.

Table 3. News with potential to develop political responsibility

Teacher	The number of news of those that occurred in total & that the teacher taught	The number of news with potential for political responsibility and that the teacher taught	The number of news with the potential for political responsibility that the teacher also portrayed as political responsibility
Christine	14	10	4
Angela	4	3	2
Karen	13	7	4
Ted	11	6	2
Mona	14	8	7
Lydia	9	4	2
Total	65	38	21

It appeared that the teachers did not transform the content of the news into literal questions, nor into questions of political responsibility. Incidentally, the term politics was not used at all, nor did the teachers portray the news as something that had anything to do with explicit responsibility. The term responsibility, or closely related concepts such as obligation, appeared very few times, and never in combination with concepts such as political or societal. All in all, this meant that the students were not explicitly offered the opportunity to ask questions about political responsibility; the teachers instead implicitly portrayed the concept.

An example of this implicit portrayal of political responsibility arose during coverage in teacher Mona's upper secondary school class, excerpted below. The empirical data from this class were collected during the global outbreak of swine flu in 2009–2010, which the Swedish state responded to with a national vaccination campaign. The news report in the lesson sequence touches on this. The political responsibility issue that the news was judged to concern was how social and individual responsibility should be distributed to prevent the spread of influenza. While Mona highlights the news with the meaning of that question, she does so implicitly by drawing the students' attention to a social responsibility in publicly funded vaccination towards the end of this particular teaching sequence. She does not explicitly portray the news as a literal issue, nor as a question of political responsibility. Mona also approves of the vaccination campaign and the public's responsibility. However, public responsibility is not something that she makes the subject of the students' own opinions, which could take place through producing questions, nor does she make visible a contrasting theme or one about individuals' personal responsibility to keep infections down. Incidentally, the following excerpt illustrates the high pace of coverage of each news item as well. It begins after Mona turns to the class and asks what news has happened:

Student 1: More people have died from the swine flu. It was some guy, a little guy. There was someone eight years old, and then there was someone four years old.

Mona: Yes. Match.

Student 1: Someone was... On Monday, I think it was.

Mona: Yes.

Student 1: He was...

Mona: But there were probably also people who were in the risk group.

Student 1: Mm... That was it. Someone had diabetes, it was.

Mona: Exactly.

Student 2: There was a girl who got really weird from... flu. (laughter)

Mona: Sorry?

Student 2: (inaudible) She who walks like this. (shows with body movements)

Student 3: Uh, how terrible!

Mona: Yes.

Student 2: Although it was probably some illness that came up because she took the injection.

Mona: Okay. (...) It was the swine flu, there is not much more we can say about it. We can think like this, that in our neighbouring country, Norway, there are a lot of deaths that we

really have no explanation for. One explanation that I heard was that, possibly, the flu would be more aggressive there. But there is nothing that is... Really, yes, I don't know if it's true or not.

Student 2: They haven't vaccinated as many people, because Sweden is very early to vaccinate, I've heard.

Mona: Yes, that's so?

Student 2: So that they... Norway has not received it at all, and there are many who are not offered it in the same way as we are, so that... here in Sweden, we are very forward when it comes to that issue.

Mona: Yes, even though there are many who have not had a chance to get vaccinated.

Student 2: Mm... Yes, that's how we are.

Mona: Okay, and that can also have some impact on... They are generous to us, but we will have to pay for it with tax money. All right! Any other news?

5.2 Social-political responsibility before individual responsibility in teachers' framing of the news

When the teachers framed political responsibility, in most cases, they took a position on responsibility themselves. In the majority of these cases, the teachers took a primarily implicit stand in favour of public social responsibility before private individual responsibility, as shown in Table 4. Furthermore, the teachers did not combine social and individual responsibility, nor connect them with each other. That change of perspective or synthesis was absent from their teaching.

Table 4. Portraying news as social or individual political responsibility

Teachers	Number of news where the teacher portrayed political responsibility	Number of news where the teacher took a stand for social responsibility	Number of news where the teacher took a stand for individual responsibility
Christine	4	4	0
Angela	2	1	1
Karen	4	3	1
Ted	2	1	1
Mona	7	4	3
Lydia	2	1	1
Total	21	14	7

An example illustrative of this stance comes from teacher Angela's news coverage. In the sequence below, Angela encourages the students to reproduce a feature of their choice from the TV news that they had just watched. One student highlights the news about the protests against the French government's pension reform. The potential political responsibility issue concerned how the responsibility for pensions should be divided between society and individuals. We assessed that Angela also framed the news with the meaning of that question, even if the framing does not take the form of a literally formulated question. Rather, the framing is implicit in Angela making a publicly funded pension system visible. Note that Angela takes a stand for social responsibility over

the pension. She does this by expressing approval of the students' answers, such as by saying "good". She also encourages the students to suggest what good public things tax money could be used for. A contrasting and balancing shift of perspective towards the possible benefits of private responsibility for pensions, and visibility of individuals' and groups' capacity for this responsibility, is absent. The framing only makes a publicly funded pension system visible, which can lead to the implicit message that there is a single legitimate responsibility model for pensions:

Student 1: Macron's pension reform.

Angela: Yes! Good! Here... Olle actually raises a socio-economic issue based on the pension system. And in France, they are demonstrating. Right?

Student 2: Is it the retired ones who are demonstrating?

Angela: No. It's not them. They are the ones who are...everything from twenty to... sixty-five... or seventy. I don't know.

Student 2: You could say that seventy-year-olds... Blokes.

Angela: But why do you demonstrate... Did you hear why they are demonstrating?

Student 3: They will also be old someday.

Angela: They absolutely will be, but why did they demonstrate?

Student 3: I didn't hear.

Student 2: (inaudible) so that it will be higher when they are going to retire.

Angela: Yes! They also want to raise – the government also wants to raise the retirement age there. Why? Why do the Swedish government and the French want to raise the retirement age? What do you think, Olle?

Student 1: They get to work longer so they get more money.

Angela: We're going to work longer so we get more money. Why?

Student 4: Pay more taxes.

Angela: We need to bring in more taxes. And why? Daniel!

Student 4: Because then they can... spend more money on good things.

Angela: Then they can put... as... what is a good thing?

Student 4: Uh... they can develop healthcare.

Angela: Great!

Student 5: They can find new ones like that...

Angela: Mm...

Student 5: ...Research.

Angela: Mm... good. Abdi!

Student 2: Improve schools. Make them more secure.

Angela: Definitely! Good! And then it's like this, that the older we get... In Sweden, we have a pension system where the state steps in and... then the pension is not enough, because we are getting older and older. Right? And it's the same thing in France, because the standard of living has increased... in the Western world and also in other parts of the world. Good!

There are examples of teachers who demonstrated even more implicit positions than through expressions such as “good”. For example, the expression “one” was not unusual. The expression “one” could make the teachers appear as spokespersons for an imaginary broader public as well, rather than as actors with their own opinions. In one sequence, Mona talks about a news piece that concerned financial difficulties for the Swedish car manufacturer Saab at that time. One question at the time was whether the state should take financial responsibility and save the group or not. Saab, based in the city of Trollhättan, later went bankrupt. In the sequence, Mona rounds off the conversation by using the expression “one” in her stand for social responsibility. A further implicit dimension in her position is the absence of the private company Saab’s possible responsibility, the employees’ private responsibility and capacity to seek new employment in the event of bankruptcy, perspectives and a synthesis that could nuance the students’ understanding of political responsibility. The news is phased out of the coverage with Mona’s concluding words: “So we simply have to follow this. I think it’s a bit exciting. And then one has to think about them and hope that it will be a good solution so that all the people who work in Trollhättan can continue.”

Even though, to a greater extent, the teachers took a stand for social before individual responsibility, there were variations between the teachers, and sometimes variations in the same teacher. One example is Lydia, who refers to the same news story in two different classes. The news concerned high interest rates on quick SMS loans, which led to high debt among young people. The news appears as a question on the news quiz that Lydia used in her teaching. In one class, Lydia makes visible a public intervention by describing a proposal for changed legislation, without contrasting with individual freedom to take out loans. In the second class, however, she suggests increased self-control on the part of the individual to avoid impulsive borrowing, but without problematising individuals’ capacity for responsibility.

The teachers rarely contextualised their positions in an in-depth way either. In cases where they took a stand for social responsibility, society itself was quite absent. In concrete terms, this means that the teachers, to a limited extent, gave more visibility to decision-making political bodies, executive institutions, and organisations that manage responsibility and ensure safety and security at different levels. In addition, there was a lack of detailed descriptions of the laws and regulations that govern the work of these institutions. In cases where teachers took a stand for individual responsibility, the ideas developed about individuals’ and groups’ capacity for responsibility and agency in situations that were reflected in the news were rather absent.

5.3 Limited opportunities for students to understand who can be charged with political responsibility

The teachers rarely specified public opinions of issues that the news reflected. In addition, the teachers rarely described overarching ideological views that opposed each other. The same applied to which political actors were responsible for a policy that could be linked to issues depicted in the news, and possible political negotiation games behind official decisions. Concepts such as *political discussion*, *opinion*, *debate* and *negotiation* did not occur at all in the teaching. There is only one example out of 21 possible where one of the teachers acted as an opinion guide, that is, the teacher explicitly linked the news to political positions expressed publicly. However, there are also examples of teachers informing the students that things had been talked about, albeit without specification of what was being talked about. The teachers’ referencing was instead quick and sweeping.

In the teachers' speech, there is thus a lack of precise political terminology, which limits the students' possible political understanding. Being able to identify the actors behind political decisions, critically examine the delivered policies and understand their effects on how responsibility is distributed between the individual and society requires knowledge, such as that of institutions. Imprecise terminology can make that understanding difficult. For example, both teachers and students used the term "they", as in one of Mona's classes covering news about changes made by the Swedish unemployment fund. During the recession of 2010, larger groups of workers realised that they were not entitled to compensation and, in other cases, had to wait a long time for payment. In portraying the news, Mona states that "maybe they don't have enough resources, so it may be. And it may take a very long time before they make the decisions, there is a lot that has to work out all the way". The use of "they" can make it difficult to identify who is politically responsible, in this context, for the shortcomings that have arisen. Another example lies in the previous excerpt from Angela's teaching about the pension reform in France. Angela asks the students why "we need to bring in more taxes". One student replies, "Because then they can... spend more money on good things." Angela prioritised the follow-up question "What is a good thing?", before specifying who is hiding behind "them" and who possesses a redistributive policy responsibility.

5.4 Limited opportunities for students to develop their own views on political responsibility

The teaching in this analysis was dominated by reproducing questions, with almost no producing questions. Specifically, the six teachers asked a total of 89 reproducing questions in connection with 21 news stories, and only one producing question. The reproducing questions were mainly to prompt the students to reproduce factual and conceptual knowledge, though also information about the news the conversation revolved around. The questions were also focused on having the students reflect on the understandings of political responsibility that the teachers represented.

An excerpt from Christine's teaching is significant for the dominance of reproducing issues, and for the absence of opportunities to express one's own opinion about political responsibility. One of the TV spots discussed in Christine's class concerned a then-recent opinion poll of Swedish voters' party sympathies, in which the Sweden Democrats had made progress. The Sweden Democrats can be described as a conservative right-wing party that emphasises national unity. The political responsibility issue that we judged the news to concern was how social and individual responsibility should be distributed to prevent segregation. In the follow-up, Christine focuses her questions entirely on factual and conceptual knowledge, as well as memory questions about the content of the TV feature:

Student 1: SD (Swedish Democrats) became the second-largest party.

Christine: Mm... We had quite a lot of words there, I think. Social studies words... They still have a tailwind. They're doing pretty well right now. They were currently at 21.5%, which makes them the second largest party after the Social Democrats. Declaration... We heard the party leader explain what this was due to. What did he say he thought it was due to? Linus!

Student 2: It's more criminal gangs... that are going on. It becomes more criminal...

Christine: Yes.

Student 2: ...they think it's because of that...

Christine: Yes. That the media has talked a lot about gang crime, and then he links it to immigration and that people then feel that "no, enough is enough with all these worries. SD is the answer...because they discuss those issues quite a lot". He had three words: segregation, integration and migration. And those are the kind of words we use when we work with social studies. What is segregation? Do you know? Do you remember? If a society or an environment is segregated, what is it like? Do you remember? Lukas!

Student 3: Divided.

Christine: Split, yes! Exactly! For example, that in a city you can have a neighbourhood where there are quite a lot of immigrants, for example. Or there are quite a few people from another group living there.

The teachers also used factual reproducing questions to prompt the students to reproduce the teachers' own understanding of political responsibility. As previously noted, in most cases, teachers took a stand for social over individual political responsibility. In several cases, the positions were communicated as questions that the teacher ended with a dramatic pause, which gave the question an implicitly reproducing character. One example comes from Christine's teaching as well. A news item in one of the TV spots concerned a politically state-sanctioned decision that Swedish children would now be taught source criticism as early as preschool. Christine follows up the news report with a question, which we interpreted as supportive of social responsibility over citizens' ability to criticise sources: "One more thing, by the way. Preschool source is critical on the internet. It's good that they start early... I think...?"

6 Discussion and practical implications for educational practice

The aim was to investigate whether and how the teachers, through their teaching, provided students with opportunities to understand political responsibility. The news coverage was rich in possible learning. It can develop a habit of taking part in the news. The teaching itself provided the opportunity to practise the selection of news material, as well as to summarise news content in one's own words. In addition, the teachers' reproducing questions stimulated students to learn factual and conceptual knowledge. However, there were limitations to the opportunities for teaching to develop an understanding of political responsibility, which is anchored in central writings in the Swedish social studies curriculum.

One limitation was that not all the teachers taught all the news, with this teaching occurring in only just over half of the cases. In other cases, the news was allowed to pass without comment. However, individual variations between teachers are noteworthy. One tendency is that the three teachers who used TV news (Christine, Agneta and Karen) taught news to a greater extent than, for example, Ted, who used news for students' homework, and especially Lydia, who used news quizzes. Mona, who based her coverage on spontaneous conversations in the whole class, fell between them in scope.

Another limitation concerned the content of the news that was taught. In total, 27 of the 65 news stories (42%) that the teachers taught did not have the potential to open up understanding of political responsibility. This indicates that these teachers did not seek out news with the potential for learning political responsibility. The teachers' access to this particular type of news was, in turn, affected by the nature of the outlets from which the teachers chose to get the news.

Other restrictions concerned the teachers' own positions on political responsibility. The fact that the teachers primarily took a stand for social responsibility does not in itself have to be a problem. Rather, limitations arose from the teaching's lack of perspectives and synthesis, where social and individual responsibility relate to each other. This can contribute to students' understanding of political responsibility as being unnuanced or simplified. Without a contrasting individual responsibility, the power of social responsibility risks being made invisible, which also applies in reverse. Larger studies are needed to determine whether this dominance of social responsibility is a general pattern among teachers. If teachers generally portray news to a greater extent as social problems than as personal concerns, there is a risk that the opportunities for innovative thinking when developing solutions will be limited. A toned-down individual perspective can also limit the realisation that different individuals and groups have varying capacities for private responsibility. It can make the power that private initiatives may have for solving problems invisible. Furthermore, social responsibility risks becoming a hegemonic attitude to political responsibility that does not need to be justified. It can become a dominant attitude that is unconsciously reinforced by teachers' use of terms such as "one" in their positions for social responsibility.

It remains unclear how teachers' greater preference for social responsibility over individual responsibility can be interpreted. From one perspective, this preference acts as a reflection of the teachers' ideological outlook (Zaller, 1992/2011). However, it can also be a conscious didactic balancing of a news report that teachers perceive as personified (Stradling, 1994), or a society-oriented reaction to the external situation at the time (Crespi, 1997). However, there are few traces among the teachers in this study of a lived-out ideological conviction of responsibility, because most of the teachers were inconsistent in their ideology. Lydia's varying portrayal of responsibility based on the news about high interest rates on SMS loans in two different classes may indicate that teachers' attitudes towards responsibility are influenced by their perceptions of the needs of their students in a particular class.

Another point that can further hinder students from understanding political responsibility is teachers' unspecified terminology when they communicate about social responsibility. The teachers in this study rarely made society's institutional exercise of power explicitly visible, which may contribute to the notion of an anonymous, faceless power. In the teachers' speeches, there were indeed institutions, but there were no descriptions of their activities, laws or regulations. The ambiguity of this policy dimension can make it difficult to identify actors from whom it is rational to demand responsibility for a policy with undesirable consequences.

In summary, there are limitations in teachers' use of news coverage as an arena to train students on key aspects of the social studies curriculum, and which, in synthesised form, are integrated into what we refer to here as an understanding of political responsibility.

6.1 Conditions for the development of a didactic model for news coverage

Lastly, we outline the conditions relevant to the design of a didactic model for news coverage. The prerequisites of this model concern what students should be given the opportunity to learn, how they should learn it and why it is relevant to learn (Wickman et al., 2018).

Our overall conclusion is that students' opportunities to develop an understanding of political responsibility are limited by these forms of news coverage, as we have seen in this study. The fact that students' opportunities for political opinion-forming, an important ingredient to understanding, are neglected is another common international refrain for subjects that correspond to social studies

(Grammes, 2004; Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; LeCompte et al., 2017; Piedmont, 2020). However, we are convinced that it is possible to develop news monitoring with greater accuracy in the understanding of political responsibility. The first prerequisite is that social studies is perceived as a subject for education about and in politics (Atkin & Gantz, 1978; Hess & Torney, 1967/2007). A second prerequisite is that social studies teachers see the benefit of developing an understanding of political responsibility, especially given the concept's links to central parts of the Swedish social studies curriculum. A third prerequisite is grasping the point of developing this understanding within the framework of news coverage activities. Key to this prerequisite is to relate to news as political communication, rather than general knowledge (Jamieson & Kenski, 2017). A final prerequisite is that teachers develop readiness to transform news content into questions, and then into further questions of specific political responsibility. In this study, rudiments of such preparedness were visible. In addition, previous studies have highlighted the need to strengthen students' ability to distinguish political issues (Skolverket, 2012). This, in turn, requires the strengthening of teachers' abilities to distinguish political issues in news specifically. Meeting these four prerequisites can contribute to a clearer subject-specific identity regarding news coverage, something that has been called for in previous research on news use (Biser, 2008; Christensen, 2021; Hankala, 2011; Jakobsson & Olsson, 2023; Ryen, 2019; Sperry, 2006).

To further shape this didactic model, teachers need to relate to the understanding of political responsibility as a complex goal. News coverage with such an objective places different demands on planning and conditions than traditional coverage. Our study shows that news coverage is habitualised as an activity based on the principle of featuring as many news items as possible for a limited time. In reality, this leads to a lot of news being left untaught. The extent of untaught news is remarkable considering that coverage can occupy a fifth of class time. This tradition needs to be challenged by an attitude that is instead based on in-depth and quality learning, which may mean reconsidering the requirement for daily news.

When it comes to the teaching content, students need to touch base with all three dimensions of politics in a more explicit and comprehensive way, and preferably also with the literal concept of politics. In particular, institutions and their areas of responsibility need to be made visible, with previous Swedish studies pointing to visibility shortcomings in teaching Swedish students (Oscarsson, 2005; Skolverket, 2004). In this study, it was rare for teachers to systematically identify socially conditioned explanations behind events or explanations that can involve institutions, as the teaching pace was too tight.

Another premise concerns the role of teachers as opinion guides. Students need support in identifying key ideological dividing lines in their views of value conflicts about responsibility. The same applies to the identification of dividing lines in political opinion, which places demands on teachers' willingness and ability to change perspectives. The change of perspective also requires a conscious balance of attention given to social and individual responsibilities from the outside and the same news source, and to relate them to each other. Therein lies the essence of political understanding (Mills, 1971/2002). This understanding can be further deepened by highlighting the varying capacity of individuals and groups to take responsibility, which previous studies have also reported (Oscarsson, 2005; Skolverket, 2010). Developing a teaching model that responds to this learning gap should include elements that strengthen teachers' awareness of their motives for orienting themselves in certain ideological directions of responsibility depending on the news

content (Crespi, 1997; Stradling, 1994; Zaller, 1992/2011). Nuance and balance are necessary keywords in this regard.

A final condition for our proposed didactic model is that students are allowed to produce questions, which opens space for them to refine and nuance their own opinions in encounters with those of others (Fishkin, 2011). Our study confirms both Swedish and international studies that have also highlighted limited conditions for students' own opinion formation (Kahne & Middaugh, 2008; Liljestr nd, 2002; McCafferty-Wright & Knowles, 2016; McDevitt & Kioussis, 2006; Oscarsson, 2005; Skolverket, 2010). That there is talk during news coverage is obvious. In the teaching featured in this study, the talk seems to consist primarily of students' reproduction of news information, of factual and conceptual knowledge and of their teacher's understanding of political responsibility.

If we care about the legitimacy of the political system and perceive politicians' contempt and lack of trust in institutions and the possibilities of politics as problems, political responsibility needs an explicit place within news coverage activities. Against this background, it is essential that citizens understand political responsibility on an informed basis and are able to deliver feedback to the political system on that basis (Easton, 1965, 1953/1971). One ambition is to create a model, such as the one we propose, for systematic planning of news coverage that aims to develop an understanding of political responsibility. The next step is to test that model in practice and investigate its usability and transferability (Wickman et al., 2018).

6.2 Study limitations

This study is small in scale. Even if the sustainability of the results increases after comparison to previous research, it cannot be generalised. Further national studies are needed to determine the precise extent to which social studies teachers' teaching can be generalised to these teachers. There is also a need for international studies of how teachers in citizenship education subjects conduct teaching that corresponds to news coverage

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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