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Contested Food

The Construction of Home and Consumer Studies as a Cultural Space

KARIN HÖIJER

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Education about and for the home has been part of the Swedish education system for over one hundred years, and Home and Consumer Studies (HCS) has been compulsory for all pupils since the common nine-year school system was introduced in 1962. For all this time food has been a central theme, however we know very little of what food means in this context. The aim of this thesis was to seek to understand the construction of food in HCS. This thesis consists of four papers that explore food in HCS from the perspective of teachers and pupils, the role of the classroom and how food in HCS is part of a larger cultural context. Observations and focus group interviews were used to collect data. The material consists of field notes from 13 days in three HCS classrooms and transcripts of focus group interviews with 25 HCS-teachers and 20 pupils. The analytical methods used were based on social constructionist assumptions which were supplemented by theories on culture, space and spatiality. Results show that teachers constructed both pupils' homes and society in general as deficient in relation to health. Their role, as public health commissioners, was to educate pupils about food on issues such as health and sustainability. Pupils relied on their personal experiences from home to make sense of food in HCS. To them, home was the authentic place for food where everyday life took place. Food in HCS on the other hand was de-authenticised and sometimes hard to make sense of. This meant that there was a limited shared understanding between pupils and teachers. A spatial analysis of the HCS classroom as a learning space for food showed that past ideologies and traditional power geometries were built into the physical layout and social relationships constructing the room. Food in HCS was found to reflect cultural values of the surrounding society at the same time as a specific HCS cuisine emerged. Food in HCS was thus constructed as contested in interaction between food, pupils, teachers and classroom as well as in relation to a wider context.

Keywords: Home and Consumer Studies, food, social constructionism, school, teachers, pupils, classroom

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To my family

List of Papers

This thesis is based on the following papers, which are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.

I Höijer, K., Hjälmeskog, K. and Fjellström, C. (2011). 'Food with a purpose'. Home Economics teachers' construction of food and home. *International Journal of Consumer Studies,* **35**(5): 514-519.

II Höijer, K., Hjälmeskog, K. and Fjellström, C. Fake food. Swedish pupil's meaning-making of Home Economics. *Submitted.*

III Höijer, K., Fjellström, C. and Hjälmeskog, K. (2013) Learning space for food. Exploring three Home Economics classrooms. *Pedagogy, Culture and Society.*

IV Höijer, K., Hjälmeskog, K. and Fjellström, C. What's for food in Swedish Home Economics? Food between educational visions and cultural meaning. *Submitted.*

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Contribution of authors

Paper I

Karin Höijer designed the study. Data was collected in cooperation with Christina Fjellström. Karin Höijer analysed the data and drafted the manuscript with continuous critical revision by Christina Fjellström and Karin Hjälmeskog.

Paper II

Karin Höijer designed the study. Data was collected with some help of Christina Fjellström. Karin Höijer analysed the data and drafted the manuscript with continuous critical revision by Christina Fjellström and Karin Hjälmeskog.

Paper III

Karin Höijer designed the study, collected and analysed the data and drafted the manuscript with continuous critical revision by Christina Fjellström and Karin Hjälmeskog.

Paper IV

Karin Höijer designed the study. Data described in paper I, II and III was used. Karin Höijer analysed the data and drafted the manuscript with continuous critical revision by Christina Fjellström and Karin Hjälmeskog.

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Preface

I started my academic studies in the humanities with a focus on ethnology. Ethnology has been described as concerning the study of humans as cultural beings and an ethnological exploration as an analysis of society in terms of culture and to understand individuals and groups as bearers and constructors of culture (Bringéus 1990). Furthermore, an ethnologist studies everyday phenomena in his or her own society to uncover deeper cultural patterns that say something about fundamental values and beliefs (Ehn and Löfgren 1982). A few years after receiving a bachelor's degree in ethnology I decided to acquire a second education and become a teacher of Home and Consumer Studies (HCS). As part of this education I was invited to an HCS classroom in September 2004. To visit an HCS lesson is to enter a space full of moving bodies, voices, scents, and familiar everyday household objects. Present during this particular lesson was a female teacher and a group of 11-year-old pupils, and they were baking scones. What stuck in my memory was an incident where a boy asked the teacher what scones were and why he was making them: the name had meant nothing to him and the introduction the teacher had held gave him few clues. That brief moment of interaction between pupil and teacher raised a number of questions in my mind which continued to simmer in my head as I realised through continued education that there is very little we know, academically, about HCS. This is my personal background for the present thesis.

1. Introduction

Background

Home and Consumer Studies (HCS) can be understood as part of the international field of Home Economics. Internationally however Home Economics usually includes a wider field than in the Nordic countries, for example interior design, sewing or child development (NCCA 2013, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador 2013). There are also other terms that are closely related to HCS, for example Domestic Science, Family and Consumer Sciences, and Human Ecology. In this thesis "HCS" refers to the Swedish school subject and "Home Economics" to the subject in an international context.

HCS is today a compulsory school subject for all pupils in Sweden and has been so since it was introduced as part of a common nine-year compulsory school system in 1962 (Hjälmeskog 2000, Lgr62 1962). The aim and content of the subject is expressed through a syllabus, and a national timetable states how many hours of teaching each pupil is guaranteed during the nine years, which today is 118 (Skollag 2010). Only a limited amount of research has studied this specific Swedish school subject, for example only four PhD theses have explored HCS (Nordin 1992, Johansson 1987, Hjälmeskog 2000, Petersson 2007). This will change in the future however as a National Graduate School (NFHK 2013) was established in 2011 with six PhD students dedicated to the study of HCS.

In the following HCS will be described with an historical perspective which illuminates the inception of the subject and why focus initially was upon life at home and nutrition. Thereafter follows a section on the research that has been done regarding Home Economics as education about food. The chapter will be concluded with a definition of the research questions and aims of this thesis. The introduction will show how the home and domestic cooking became parts of Home Economics education about food and that the research that has been conducted so far is scarce and also hard to get an overview of. It will also show that food as a core theme of Home Economics is taken for granted and that we know very little about the actors within this context, that is the teachers and the pupils, and how they perceive food in a Home Economics context.

Constructing the home and domestic cooking – an historical retrospective

The nineteenth century has been described by Hellspong and Löfgren (1974) as a time of transition, when pre-industrial Swedish society was dominated by agriculture, and self-sufficient households started to change into a society more like today's. Children were an important part in the agrarian production household, and they were taught skills for the household through participation and practice. According to Jansson (1993) a household's food production and consumption in Sweden by the mid-nineteenth century was intimately dependant on what was locally produced. The transforming society meant however that the household changed from being a production unit to a consumer unit (Hellspong and Löfgren 1974). Hellspong and Löfgren (1974) show that new gender ideals emerged in Sweden during the nineteenth century and that these norms spread through Swedish society in what they call a cultural urbanisation process. This process describes how urban and middle-class values and ways of life spread over the country. These new norms can be exemplified through the construction of "home". Frykman and Löfgren (1979) discuss the changing Swedish society towards the end of the nineteenth century and how middle-class living was changed radically. For the increasingly wealthy middle-class family the home became a place both for socialisation and demonstration of status as well as for privacy and recuperation, and the home was divided into public and private areas. It became the responsibility of men to earn money to sustain such a lifestyle through work outside the home and the responsibility of women to care for the home and family through domestic work. Also, with income came the possibility of employing maids and allowing the middle-class wife to distance herself from practical chores. This lifestyle, directed at creating a home and the construction of the domestic as feminine and private, spread over the country and towards the beginning of the twentieth century the housewife was also an ideal in high-income working-class families. Frykman and Löfgren (1979) writes:

> The dream of a 'proper' home and a better life was to a large extent managed by the wife. It became her task to keep the children healthy and clean and to put up a good front. In a society characterized by increasing geographical and social mobility, this front became very important. It was the symbol that signalled that this was a family that lived a respectable and proper life (p. 126, my translation).

At the same time there were discussions about education and the responsibility of the state, which is discussed by Johansson (1987) in relation to domestic science. The new scientific findings within the field of nutrition led the way for a new perception of practical food-related work where science and

theory constituted the base for domestic cookery, rather than practice. As Johansson's puts it, education became a prerequisite for domestic work. Starting in Germany, the scientific advances in the field of nutrition spread over the Western world (Levenstein 1980). Discoveries such as these have been pointed out as one reason why forerunners to HCS were introduced, both in Sweden and elsewhere. Mennell (1985) writes:

> Efforts to improve standards of domestic cookery were widely made in the late nineteenth century, and took official as well as voluntary forms. Many countries began to introduce cookery into their school curricula at the same time. Apart from the improving urge, this appears to have reflected growth of dietetic knowledge rather than any preoccupation with the aesthetic aspects of eating; and more generally it is to be understood as part of the wider tendency in industrialising societies to rely more on formal instruction in educational system in place of informal learning in the home for the transmission of knowledge from generation to generation. The Swedes led the way (p. 230).

According to Mennell, domestic cookery has had a very close association with women in most human cultures, and the differentiation between professional and domestic cookery was well established as early as the nineteenth century. This, he explains, had a lot to do with social differences. Both in Sweden and around the world domestic work and everyday cookery had been constructed as feminine and belonging to a private sphere. Johansson (1987) shows that women and housewives of this time were constructed in Swedish political debates as neglecting their responsibility to the family; it thus fell upon the state to educate for domestic life. Similar ideas have been described by Coveney (2000) as he describes how a scientific discourse of food and construction of women as a risk to their own children were arguments supporting the introduction of nutrition education in Australia. In Sweden, domestic education was established building on a base of economy, ethics, pedagogy and nutrition physiology (Johansson 1987). As domestic science became an academic discipline and a subject for education, it was also primarily women who were both educators and educated in this field. Hjälmeskog (2000) discusses what the purposes of the pre-compulsory school domestic education was, that is before HCS was introduced in 1962. She found three discourses which she calls "vocational education for women", "an education for women's mission in life", and "women's education for efficiency" (see chapter 4, p. 104-110). These discourses reflect the discussion of early domestic science as a less valued discipline that has strong gender connotations, which has also been brought forward by Belasco (2008) and Counihan and van Esterik (2008). As Hjälmeskog (2000) puts it:

> Domestic education is historically characterised by being aimed at providing girls with skills for their profession, vocation or to enable them to combine the housewife vocation with employment (p. 109, my translation).

It was in this context that domestic education for women and girls in Sweden began during the latter half of the nineteenth century.

The need for school as an established institution grows when, according to Lindensjö and Lundgren (2000), there is a separation of production and reproduction, as was the case in Sweden during the nineteenth century. Before this time most children in Sweden were taught the skills they needed through participation in the daily activities of the household; they were thus taught skills needed for work and everyday life at the same time as they were being fostered into the cultural values of society. The processes of production and reproduction were thus intertwined for a vast majority of children and only a few needed formal education. Production and reproduction was separated as Swedish society changed from self-sufficiency towards consumption, which meant that it was no longer possible for a majority of children to learn through imitation in their homes. Education and schooling was already present in Sweden at this time, but because there was a need to educate a majority of the population and not only a select few, education went through a 'second birth' process, as Lindensjö and Lundgren (2000) call it. This process was filled with discussions as to who should receive education, why the state should educate children and how such education should be held. For example, older girls in some schools in Stockholm were included in the cooking of food for the poor during the 1880's, which, according to Johansson (1987), led to the establishment of more school kitchens where education was combined with poor relief. This in turn led to demands for the state to take responsibility of domestic education. This education was subsequently included for the first time in the Swedish elementary education statute of 1897, at that time as an optional part of education for girls.

The education structure that emerged in Sweden during the nineteenth and twentieth century has been described as a part of the construction of the modern welfare state, where "equal education opportunities were seen as crucial in creating a fair and equal society" (Lundahl 2002b, p. 687). In relation to education for the home the discussion in Sweden thus concerned whether the subject was for boys as well (Hjälmeskog 2000). In the early twentieth century education in HCS was primarily for girls. Hjälmeskog (2000) mentions that some boys, for example prospective sailors or lumbermen, were considered in need of cooking skills and received some education, but for the most part HCS was for girls. During the 1930s and 1940s there were discussions of whether HCS education should also be for boys, and according to Hjälmeskog, these can be understood as part of debates relating to questions of population and an overall aim to strengthen the home and the family. The original aims with domestic education for girls to provide moral support for families had not been as successful as had been expected, which had led to a realisation that a home needed not only a mother and housewife but also a father. Initially this meant that from 1952 boys were provided with theoretical education in HCS and the division of gender was thus upheld,

where the role of the husband primarily was to support his wife in her household work. However, as the nine-year compulsory school was introduced in Sweden in 1962 education in "hemkunskap" (translating as "knowledge about and for the home", today's HCS) was mandatory for all girls and boys.

Home Economics as education about food

Since the late nineteenth century children in many parts of the world have been educated in Home Economics. In the western world the process and reasons for starting this kind of education has been described as similar to those in Sweden (Schweitzer 2006, Smith and de Zwart 2010), where knowledge about and for the home was considered to have a societal value. As it seems, research about this specific school subject has had a focus on the identity and philosophy of the subject (Grundy and Henry 1995, Smith and de Zwart 2010, McGregor 2011, Grönqvist and Hjälmeskog 2011, Benn 2009c, McGregor et al. 2008) and also on describing the identity of teachers (Pendergast 2001, Benn 2009b, Hjälmeskog 2003), nutritional knowledge of students training to become Home Economics teachers (Mullaney, Corish, and Loxley 2008) and their perceptions of the subject (Turkki 2005), the current state of the subject (Ma and Pendergast 2011), content of textbooks (Hokkanen and Kosonen 2013, Ju, Jang, and Yoo 2011), and Home Economics and gender (Arai and Ohta 2005).

Schweitzer (2006) claims that education about food is understood as a core theme of Home Economics worldwide. However, it is hard to get an overview of what research on Home Economics as education about food in schools has entailed internationally. This can partly be because the term "Home Economics" covers such a wide field, and also because there are so many other terms relating to this school subject. In Canada for example both "Human Ecology" and "Family Studies" are used, and in the United States the use of "Family and Consumer Science" is promoted. Having said that, some studies that has involved food as part of Home Economics education in schools has explored or argued for food skills, such as cooking, because of its relation to health (Fordyce-Voorham 2011, Stitt 1996, Seeley, Wu, and Caraher 2010). Some has also explored the relationship between nutrition knowledge and behaviour and Home Economics education (Suzuki and Rowedder 2002, McCullough, Yoo, and Ainsworth 2004, Bere et al. 2006, Øvrebø 2008, Kostanjevec, Jerman, and Koch 2011), and food education as part of sustainability (Dewhurst and Pendergast 2011). A recent study explored how Home Economics teachers and superintendents perceived Home Economics food and nutrition education in a Canadian province (Slater 2013). It was found Home Economics food and nutrition education was considered important for young people's health but that the subject was misun-

derstood by colleagues, that the curriculum was neglected (it had not been revised for the last 20 years), and that changes in the surrounding society, such as new food habits and decline in food skills, undermined the subject.

Seen from an international perspective it is thus hard to approach Home Economics as education about food as a coherent field. However, in the Nordic countries, despite some changes of name, there have been more similarities than differences. For example, between 1909 and 2009 there was formal collaboration through the Nordic Cooperation for Domestic Science (NSH) (Hjälmeskog 2009). In Denmark Home Economics has been a school subject for over a hundred years, and since 1971 also compulsory for boys (Benn 2009a). There has been education in school kitchens in Norway since the late nineteenth century, and in 1959 education became compulsory for all boys and girls, which it still is (Oppedal Olsen 2009). The subject is also a compulsory part of education for all pupils in Finland (Åbacka 2008). Home Economics has thus been a part of the education system in the Nordic countries for over a hundred years, and for at least the last forty years it has been compulsory for all pupils, both girls and boys. The similarities in conditions across the Nordic countries together with the collaboration that took place through NSH suggest that Nordic Home Economics education about food can be understood as a common context. The following section will therefore focus upon research on Home Economics as education about food conducted specifically in the Nordic countries.

Home Economics as education about food in the Nordic countries

According to Benn (1996) Home Economics education both in Denmark and elsewhere have been influenced both by being identified as an area for women, although directed to both girls and boys, and also by the fact that it is practised in a particular room: the school kitchen. In this way, *food* as core content became both the field of study and the material through which it was studied. Originally, the subject was based on a scientific tradition and had a focus on food as nutrition. This tradition was however questioned and from the 1990's and onwards an interdisciplinary approach to food, encompassing perspectives from natural science, humanities and social science, has been promulgated. The following section demonstrates the research conducted on Home Economics as education about food in a Nordic context.

In 1992 Elsa Nordin wanted to find out what curriculum and textbooks stated that pupils were supposed to learn about food and nutrition and also what knowledge and conceptions pupils had of some areas in food science and nutrition. She found that HCS as nutritional food education in Sweden was to be theoretically based in other school subjects (Chemistry and Biolo-

gy) while HCS was aimed at teaching pupils how to apply theoretical knowledge of nutrition, that is, to combine theory with practice. In interviews with pupils Nordin further found that it was hard for them to understand scientific concepts and that their knowledge about the nutritional value of foods was fragmentary. If scientific concepts of food are hard to understand, they might prove unusable in an everyday context, Päivi Palojoki (1997) argued. To be able to develop nutrition education she thus wanted to find out how people made food choices in everyday life at home and what nutrition knowledge they had. By interviewing 18 Finnish female homemakers Palojoki found that their everyday food choices were embedded in a complexity of different considerations influenced by cultural norms of what would be acceptable. For example, on an individual level homemakers had to balance a budget, which meant that the price of a product mattered a lot, or had to make choices based on how much time they had. In relation to the other members of their households homemakers took their taste preferences into consideration and sought to vary the households' meals in a way that everyone could enjoy. Relations outside the household were also important for everyday food choice, especially contacts with work, school and day-care centres and whether someone in the household ate part of the day's meals outside the home. Palojoki also found that rural homemakers devoted a considerable amount of time to producing their own food items, which urban homemakers did not do. The urban homemaker had to buy almost everything, while the rural homemakers grew vegetables in their gardens or picked berries in the forest.

Palojoki also studied how homemakers conceptualised "cholesterol" and "healthy diet" and found that although all participants had some factual knowledge regarding these concepts, it was mostly a fragmentary knowledge on the surface, without deeper understanding of what they actually mean, which reflects the findings about the pupils in Nordin's (1992) study. Palojoki (1997, 2003) argued that education in Home Economics aims at changing and promoting food choice and that this will be hard to do unless education is changed to resemble practices that pupils are used to from home. The homemakers in her study did not start with a nutrient and arrive at what food to cook; rather they started by considering a complex of aspects to reach a decision. Perhaps, Palojoki asked, Home Economics education was too focused upon nutrition, health and what to recommend? Instead it might be more understandable for students of all ages if education started with making a choice of food and introduced nutritional facts and concepts in relation to these choices at a later stage.

Jette Benn (1996) raised the question of whether Home Economics as education about food really should aim at changing food habits. So far, she claimed, Home Economics education in Denmark had been too focused on food from a science perspective. She suggested that the aim ought to be to prepare pupils on a more general and interdisciplinary level for everyday life

and not focus too heavily on nutrition education. She wanted to find out what education about food Danish pupils met with in the whole school context and studied both school meals and Home Economics education in order to identify what food contributes to schooling. Furthermore, she argued that there is a difference between food on a general level ("kost") and on an individual level ("mat"). On a general level food in Home Economics has three dimensions: nature, culture and society. On an individual level food is concrete, personal and here-and-now.

Benn wanted to study food in Home Economics on a general interdisciplinary level, from the outside, to explore the reasons for educating about food, how education was carried out and how it could be done. In relation to Home Economics she performed a survey, interviewed pupils and teachers and made observations in the classroom. According to the pupils Home Economics was about cooking, and the recipe had a central role. For the most part pupils were found to have positive opinions about Home Economics, but they described the introductory phase of the lessons, where the teachers introduced a theoretical part, as boring. Benn also found, in accordance with Nordin (1992) that the pupils had a poor understanding of scientific nutrition concepts. Most of all the pupils in Benn's study wanted to work with practical assignments in the classroom and be able to move around freely in a way that other subjects did not allow. Some pupils also wanted more influence over what to cook. Benn also found that pupils were deeply embedded in the cultural traditions of their homes when they were asked to describe their individual food choices. She argued that it was important that the cultural dimension of food in considered in Home Economics education in order to have pupils develop an awareness of their own underlying beliefs.

Although pupils and teachers in Benn's study agreed on how education was carried out in their descriptions of lessons, they had different views of what the education should be about. According to the teachers Home Economics education was about skills (methods and hygiene for example), knowledge (nutrition and concepts for example) and attitudes (to take responsibility for oneself and others in relation to food, health and environment, for example). Benn also found that there was a discrepancy between what teachers stated that education should be about (their view of teaching) and what they did (in practice). For example, a teacher could have an ideal view of learning but could teach in another way because of concessions they had to make to resources and other practical concerns. Also, the structure of the lessons where the teachers initially gave pupils a plan upon which the pupils acted, was closely related to a historic tradition, Benn claimed, which had much to do with a separation of theory and practice.

Following up on the interdisciplinary approach, Gun Åbacka (2008) wanted to evaluate education in Home Economics as part of promoting a sustainable lifestyle. She claimed that the process of learning begins at home and that this is also where children initially form cultural beliefs, and that it

was the task of Home Economics education to deepen children's knowledge and influence their beliefs. She wanted to find out what conceptions Finnish pupils acquire at home and in school on different issues that are part of a sustainable lifestyle, food being one of them. A one-year intervention programme was developed based on contemporary theories of learning. Thirty pupils were recruited and interviewed before they had Home Economics education. Fourteen pupils followed the usual local school curriculum while sixteen were educated according to the intervention program. As the year passed all pupils were interviewed again in order for Åbacka to evaluate the effects of instruction. Among other things Åbacka found that despite education, most of the pupils had a poor understanding of scientific nutrition concepts and how to apply them in practice. She concluded that the pupils in her study had not been given enough education to develop a deeper understanding of the skills they had acquired at home and that education in Home Economics needs more time and more relevant teaching methods; otherwise pupils will remain skilled but without any deeper understanding.

Lindblom, Erixon Arreman, and Hörnell (2013) recently explored the formal structures affecting HCS. For example, they found that a large number of HCS teachers lack formal qualifications, that some schools lack fully equipped kitchens to teach in, and that lessons often were too short (under 120 minutes) to do justice to the character of the subject. Factors such as these, they argued, could have implications for pupils' learning which in a long perspective could be harmful for public health.

Education about food in HCS is considered to be concerned with everyday life, that is, the aim is not to educate for a professional life as chefs but rather to educate pupils so that they are able to cope in everyday life at home and with family. As we have seen there have been arguments that food education in Home Economics should not be too focused on nutrition, but rather approach food with an interdisciplinary perspective and also consider cultural and social perspectives. In the next section I will therefore look at what food from a cultural and social perspective could entail.

Social and cultural perspectives on food as part of everyday life

According to Mary Douglas (1972) food is a cipher that can be picked apart and analysed. She found it to send messages about "different degrees of hierarchy, inclusion, exclusion, boundaries and transactions across boundaries" (p. 61). She focused on a particular social system: the home (more specifically a middle-class family in London), and analysed food categories as being able to define what a "meal" could be. She suggested that there is a specific order for meals (breakfast-lunch-dinner) and also a specific order

within a meal (e.g. first, second, main, sweet). She showed that the way meals are patterned reveals how we divide time into weekdays, weekends and holidays and that "meals are ordered in scale of importance and grandeur through the week and the year" (p. 67). Anne Murcott (1982) suggested that the distinction between weekdays and non-weekdays was a result of industrialization and that the pattern of food throughout the week embodies the different activities of family members. During weekdays there are more activities beyond the home, such as school. Her studies in Wales furthermore indicated that everyday food does not have to be a cooked dinner, which is as a "proper meal" consisting of meat and two veggies; rather it can be in the form of "supper" which is something lighter and less extensive than the cooked meal. In exploring the practices of the domestic dinner in Norway Bugge and Almås (2006) found that a dish that is considered proper to serve on a Monday often is not possible to serve on a Sunday. The distinction between weekday and non-weekday food not only concerns dinner. Findings in a British study on breakfast (Dickinson et al. 2001) suggests that there are differences between what and when to eat, and who to eat with, in relation to breakfast on weekdays, weekends and holidays. The Swedish meal pattern was described in a Nordic study as typically consisting of breakfast – mid-morning snack – hot lunch – mid-afternoon snack – hot dinner, and sometimes a late-evening snack (Kjærnes 2001). This is also the meal order recommended by the Swedish National Food Agency (Livsmedelsverket 2005) of three main courses and 1-3 snacks spread evenly over the day. Food thus helps to culturally and socially structure our everyday life and separate weekdays from weekends and holidays.

Everyday food, especially dinner, has been constructed as an important part of family life, as a time to sit down and share a meal together, and there have been concerns that this practice is in decline (Murcott 1997, Holm 2001a). A decline of the family meal has been described as "gastro-anomy" (Fischler 1980), which means that we experience a growing anxiety as we no longer get the cultural clues as to what food to eat. Murcott (1997) questions whether there really is such a decline and proposes that the idea of a family meal is a cultural construction as one generation mourns past generations, and that there is little historical evidence to support claims of its reversion. However, a Nordic study (Holm 2001a, b) found that people in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden eat together with family on an every-other-day basis, which indicate that eating practices are a social and significant event at home. The specific social dimension of family meals has been described with the term "commensality" (Sobal 2000, Grignon 2001, Sobal, Bove, and Rauschenbach 2002). This means that the everyday meal at home has been recognised as an important component of family food culture, which has a function of reflecting social positions and social roles. In a family commensality describes the socializing aspects of food, which I will return to below when I discuss children and food.

Traditionally, everyday cookery has been constructed as feminine and belonging to a private sphere (Mennell 1985). Taking a family and household perspective Marjorie deVault (1991) demonstrated that, despite the growing involvement of men in household work, women had a socially constructed responsibility to feed their families and through this practice to produce both family and home. These responsibilities can include incompatible demands, as have been discussed by Marianne Ekström (1995), and everyday food rules has also been described as harmful to women's social status (Counihan 2008). The Nordic countries have been described as having a strong ideology of gender equality (Ekström and Fürst 2001) and HCS as a subject which, although traditionally being female gendered, has a pronounced aim to educate for gender equality (Petersson 2007). Lupton (1996) showed that there was a relationship between culturally dominant assumptions around masculinity and femininity and individuals' food habits and preferences where masculinity for example involves eating food that others have cooked while femininity involves cooking for others. Nevertheless, a study (Ekström and Fürst 2001) found conflicting reports from men and women in Sweden as to who does the cooking, resulting in 114 per cent of informants stating that they were responsible. One reason for this could be that the answers reflected how men and women experienced themselves as active – the construction of oneself as responsible for men communicates gender awareness, while it for women communicates feminine identity. Everyday food thus has strong gender connotations, and much research has explored how food is part of the construction of a female and male gender and how food is gendered.

Domestic life and everyday food practices and their relationship with gender are important and have been the focus of much research. In Sweden for example Monica Petersson (2007) explored the construction of gender of girls and boys in HCS. Because gender issues relating to domestic life and food already have attracted so much research I have chosen not to focus on this particular issue in this thesis but rather to explore food and social constructions on a more general level.

Research has displayed how everyday food communicates cultural values and structure, for example as gender. Some research has investigated how women navigate to challenge these cultural constructions in their everyday life. Carole Counihan (2008) for example, found that by rejecting cooking as a pillar of one's own identity, Mexican-American women were able to dispute traditional cultural constructions. To change and oppose established cultural rules may not always be easy, as a study from Norway show (Bugge and Almås 2006). Here, the intention was to investigate eating patterns and change among young Norwegian mothers. It was found, among other things, that their choices to a large extent were a result of cultural limitations, of conformity and conventions, rather than individual choice.

Both classic and contemporary food research in the social sciences has thus demonstrated the importance of food and how cultural beliefs constitute

the way we think about food. Explorations of everyday food have also revealed how both family, home and identity are constructed through food practices. However, there have been relatively few studies dedicated to exploring children and childhood in relation to food. And even where studies have explored the relationship between children and food it has mostly been with a focus on adult informants (Lupton 1996, Palojoki 2003), with some exceptions (e.g. Roos 2002, Christensen 2003, Johansson et al. 2009). Because education about food in HCS revolves around children, it is important to explore how children and food has been researched.

Children and food

The home has been pinpointed as the location where children's socialisation begins (Lupton 1996, Meiselman 2009). The term "socialisation" is not unproblematic, however. Corsaro (2005) discusses two different models of the socialisation process, which he calls the deterministic model and the constructivist model. With a deterministic model the child plays a primary passive role and, Corsaro argues, is constructed as given the task to internalize the society he or she was born into. Although there is some recognition in this model of children's agency, it is limited to how children participate and reproduce culture and fails to acknowledge how children contribute to cultural change. With a constructivist model the child is believed to be active in constructing his or her social world and his or her place in it. Applying a constructivist model of socialisation in food studies thus means to attribute "children with the status of social actors – people who do things and have things to say, people who can tell us about their lives as children" (James, Kjørholt, and Tingstad 2009, p. 4). The view of the socially constructed childhood and children as active participants has been developed within the expanding field of social studies of childhood (e.g. James, Jenks, and Prout 1998, Halldén 2003, Prout 2005).

Food studies that have employed a constructivist model of childhood and also engaged children as informants has provided perspectives on how children construct identity (Christensen 2003), especially in relation to age (Cantarero 2001, Roos 2002, Ludvigsen and Scott 2009), and also how they express care through food (Kaplan 2000). Further, studies with children in Denmark (Christensen 2003) and the UK (Caraher, Baker, and Burns 2004) suggest that children indeed are involved with and interested in cooking both at home and in school, although another British study reported that only very few children were active cooks at home (Curtis, James, and Ellis 2009). Studies has also indicated that children in the USA, UK and the Nordic countries are well aware of what is considered to be healthy and unhealthy food and the relationship between diet and health (Roos 2002, Johansson 2006, Johansson et al. 2009, Ludvigsen and Scott 2009). Interviews with

British children (age 3-15) demonstrated that taste was paramount for their food choice and also that the actual choice of food that children could make was restricted through cultural beliefs about what is suitable food for children (Ludvigsen and Scott 2009). Both Gun Roos (2002), in interviews with American children (age 9-11), and Anna Ludvigsen and Sara Scott (2009), interviewing British children (age 9-15), found that children had clear stereotypical beliefs of girls preferring healthy food and boys preferring junk food, even though they themselves all said they preferred junk food, if they had the freedom of choice. Helene Brembeck (2009) suggests that food that Swedish children like is pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs, tacos and pasta and that parents offer this kind of food to please their children. Her study with immigrant children showed that foods such as these were constructed as typically Swedish from their point of view – it was Swedish normality from the perspective of immigrant children. These children were given agency within their families to decide normality and Swedishness. According to Brembeck this agency was derived from the expertise the children acquired through conquering language, having school lunches with peers, being educated in HCS and overall being engaged in a wide sense with Swedish food culture.

In a recent book James, Kjørholt, and Tingstad (2009) stated that we know rather little about children's own views of food and how they construct their world through food. At the same time there is a public concern for children's health in terms of obesity, eating disorders and distorted body images. With more research seeing children as active participants in food practices it might be possible to find new ways to educate for health.

Research questions

As we can see, previous research, both internationally and specifically in the Nordic countries, on Home Economics as education about food has focused upon the subject from a general perspective or specifically on learning in relation to food. Food is fundamental to everyday life, and for over a hundred years it has been considered important that children learn about food in school. As education concerns learning it is not strange that previous research has been aimed at developing an understanding of how learning about food occurs in order to find new and better strategies for teaching. We can also see that food is part of the construction of everyday social and cultural life but that there is a gap in our understanding of children's views. Because food is a fundamental part of our lives it is thus important to understand food not only from a perspective of learning but how *food* is constructed as part of a Home Economics context and as part of the Home Economics classroom. How do teachers and pupils make sense of HCS, and how do they make sense of food in this specific context? We can also see that previous research

on Home Economics as education about food has recognised food as culture without really exploring food as culture in a Home Economics context. This raises the question of how food in an HCS context can be understood as part of a larger cultural context? There has also been some acknowledgement that the classroom is an important component of Home Economics, but I have found no research exploring this particular location. What does the specific context of an HCS classroom mean for how the subject and food is perceived? Food is a core content of HCS, yet we know very little about how it is understood and constructed. The overall research question for this thesis is thus to understand what food is in this subject.

Aims

The overall purpose of this thesis was to seek to understand the construction of food in HCS. In order to undertake this primary aim, the following questions were addressed:

- How do HCS teachers make sense of and manage their being teachers in this particular subject and how do they talk about food and home (paper I).
- How do pupils talk about HCS in general and specifically food in HCS (paper II).
- How can a classroom be understood and explored when studying children's learning about food in the HCS classroom (paper III)
- How can foods talked about and chosen in HCS be understood as a relationship between structural processes and the individual and collective agency of teachers and their pupils (paper IV).

In addition to the primary aim a secondary aim was to find out how food has been constructed in the HCS syllabuses to better understand this in relation to how teachers, pupils and classroom construct food. This will be presented as a tentative analysis in chapter two, and it should be noted that this analysis is preliminary and has not been submitted as a peer-reviewed paper yet. It does however contribute to our overall understanding of the construction of food in HCS, which is why it is included in this thesis.

2. The knowledge area of food and meals in the Swedish syllabus

As demonstrated in the introduction there have been arguments for approaching food in Home Economics as interdisciplinary, rather than focusing too much on nutrition. Have ideas such as these had any impact on the Swedish syllabuses? By choosing the six syllabuses that HCS has had since its inception in 1962 and re-reading them several times, both in their entirety and with special attention paid to sections regarding food, a tentative analysis was formed. The analysis suggest that the HCS syllabuses can be understood in three phases and that there indeed has been some change of perspectives. In this chapter I will use "Home Economics" to denote the Swedish school subject before it changed name in 2000.

Phase one: 1962-1980 – a scientific perspective on food education

In phase one (Lgr62 1962, Lgr69 1969, Lgr80 1980) Home Economics predominantly had a scientific perspective on food as nutrition. The first syllabus (Lgr62 1962) for example contained several instructions for the teacher on what should be included, e.g. nutritional groups, nutritionally complete food, nutritional needs, nutrition of common food stuffs and preparation of nutritionally complete meals. When the nine-year school system was introduced in Sweden in 1962 there was a central national school administration and detailed National Curriculum (Lindensjö and Lundgren 2000, Lundahl 2002a, Jarl, Kjellgren, and Quennerstedt 2007), and the Home Economics syllabuses from the 1960's (Lgr62 1962, Lgr69 1969) were lengthy, with many examples of how teachers could plan their work. The syllabuses of phase one had a focus on rationality and in 1962 and 1969 also included detailed instructions for the teacher, as the following example shows (Lgr62 1962):

> As the rudiments for the work have been learned it can be varied, for example through the following order:
> * after a brief instruction single pupils or groups of pupils cook a meal from a cookbook on their own;

* groups cook meals of their own choice from a given food stuff;
* ingredients for a meal are noted on the board, measurements are proposed by the pupils with help from what they have learned about calculation of proportions, after which the meal is cooked;
* they put together a meal on their own and are responsible for shopping, organization and implementation (p. 337, my translation).

Throughout the phase-one syllabuses the term *kost* was used to denote the area working with food. *Kost* translates as both 'food' and 'diet' and was used in the syllabuses mainly to indicate nourishment, as is seen in this example (Lgr69 1969):

> The teaching shall thoroughly illuminate the significance of nutritious food for our general condition and efficiency and in connection therewith provide knowledge about our nutritional needs and different nutrients, their presence and role (p. 161, my translation).

By the 1980's the governance of the Swedish education system was inefficient, and a change in education policy from centralism to decentralisation took place (Lindensjö and Lundgren 2000, Lundahl 2002a), which could be seen in the HCS syllabus from 1980, where teachers were given the responsibility of interpreting national aims instead of just following detailed instructions. This syllabus was saturated with ideas of rationality as well as a concern for both the individual and the general public, and although there were many topics to cover (e.g. good food habits, the days' meals, planning and cooking nutritious meals, the costs of food) there was only a limited amount of instruction for the teacher. For example, teachers were advised to collaborate with science and physical education teachers concerning food and nutrition.

Phase two: 1994-2000 – a social perspective on food education

In phase two (Lpo94 1994, Kursplan 2000) food was predominantly conceptualised from a social perspective, and the term *mat* denoted the area working with food, now together with 'meals' which further stressed the commensal aspects. Although both *kost* and *mat* have referred to food, they have had a somewhat different meaning. *Mat* has been described as being more prosaic than *kost* (Ekström 1990) and to connote the practical and cultural dimensions of food on an individual level (Benn 1996). *Kost* on the other hand can be perceived as food on a societal level (Benn 1996). With a social perspective food was conceptualised for example as a tool to learn about democracy and equality as well as the importance of food for community and health. The responsibility of teachers to interpret national aims was in-

tensified in the National Curriculum of 1994 (Lpo94 1994, Backman 2011) as they were given increased freedom to choose the best methods to attain goals, and this freedom was further developed when the syllabus was revised in 2000 (Kursplan 2000). For example the term "hygiene" was not used in this syllabus; instead it was possible for the teacher to interpret "an understanding of the everyday actions and habits importance for economy, environment, health and wellbeing" (p. 19) as a way to incorporate education on food hygiene. It was also the individual teacher's prerogative to interpret writings such as "be able to plan, cook, arrange and evaluate meals with consideration for economy, health, environment and aesthetic values" and choose whether education should be about nutrients on a detailed level or on a general level as to what healthful food could be. This followed a general transformation of the Swedish public sector and its governance which stressed local decision-making, competition and choice and individual agency (Lundahl 2002b).

With the revision of the syllabus in 2000 Home Economics (Hemkunskap) also changed its name to HCS (Hem- och konsumentkunskap), as a reflection of the subjects more expressed orientation towards consumer issues (Prop 2000).

In an official government report (SOU 2007) HCS was one of the subjects that were criticized for being too general and not providing enough tools to assist teachers in planning the methods and content of their teaching.

Phase three: 2011 – scientific and social perspectives on food education

Food in the syllabus of phase three (Lgr11 2011) could be described as an amalgamation of the previous syllabuses which involved both a scientific and a social perspective. For example, as in phase one pupils should learn about nutrients on a science-based level, that is, "individual needs for energy and nutrition, such as for sports, and also how meals can be composed to satisfy different needs" (p. 44) and also, as in phase two, develop socially and culturally oriented knowledge, such as "knowledge of cultural variations and traditions in different households" (p. 43). The Swedish Education Act (Skollag 2010) and National Curriculum (Lgr11 2011) were recently revised, and it has been argued that the ideological shift in education politics that took place during the 1980s and 1990s (Lundahl 2002a) continued with a standards-based curriculum (Sundberg and Wahlström 2012). The goal syllabuses for home economics of phase two were criticised for being too ambitious in that they contained too many goals relative to the number of hours the subject had in the timetable (SOU 2007), and the National Curriculum of

2011 could be interpreted as a step back towards more detailed descriptions and directions, with fewer goals.

3. Theoretical perspective

This thesis is primarily aimed at understanding what food is in an HCS context and the units of analysis were food, teachers, pupils and the classroom. To understand how teachers and pupils make sense of food, a social constructionist perspective was adopted. This was supplemented by theories on culture, space and spatiality. Together these form the theoretical base for this thesis.

A social constructionist perspective

According to Burr (2003) social constructionism is an approach that has many different descriptions, which makes it impossible to define a single feature that can be said to identify a social constructionist position. Contemporary social constructionism has been described as informed by ideas from many original thinkers, such as Lev Vygotsky, Ludwig Wittgenstein, George Herbert Mead, Harold Garfinkel, Erving Goffman and Michel Foucault (Gergen 2009, Lock and Strong 2010) and is used as a theoretical tool in many disciplines. However, there are some fundamental assumptions that most social constructionists agree upon, and adopting a social constructionist perspective entails following one or more of them. These assumptions are an amalgamation of resemblances found across the thoughts of many scholars. The pivotal assumption for these ideas is that what we take to be knowledge of the world stems from social interaction (Gergen and Gergen 2003) and a major contribution to the interest in social constructionism was made by sociologists Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their book *The social construction of reality* (1967). Because there are differences between different social constructionist approaches, it becomes important to define what this perspective has meant for this thesis.

One assumption that has been adopted is that knowledge is constructed by people (individually or socially) rather than just simply being received from an instructor or another source. For a social constructionist this means to recognize agency as a central feature of being human (Guptill, Copelton, and Lucal 2013). As people behave in particular ways they also shape the social world in which they live, and some patterns persist because they are continually reproduced by human action, which means that we construct an understanding of our world in social interaction with others and ourselves (Burr

2003, Gergen 2009, Lock and Strong 2010). Because social constructionism emphasizes agency, this approach in food studies has commonly focused on how people make sense of food and how these meanings relate to practices and relationships (Guptill, Copelton, and Lucal 2013). In the present thesis it is a central understanding both that teachers and pupils socially construct how they perceive HCS and food and also that they have agency and thus the capacity to negotiate these meanings.

A social constructionist commonly assumes that we construct meaning in socio-cultural processes that are specific to particular times and places (Burr 2003, Gergen 2009, Lock and Strong 2010) and that "meanings of particular events, and our ways of understanding them, vary over different situations" (Lock and Strong 2010, p. 7). This means to assume that pupils and teachers probably understand food and food practices differently in different contexts, for example at home or in school, and also that the meaning that food has to them in HCS varies over time as they keep re-constructing their understandings.

Social constructionism has been described as anti-essentialist. Burr (2003) describes this position as insisting upon being critical toward taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world, for example by being ever suspicious of our assumptions about how the world appears to be. Gergen (2009) explains that this leads to a celebration of critical reflexivity:

> We must be prepared to doubt everything we have accepted as real, right, necessary or essential. This kind of critical reflection is not necessarily a prelude to rejecting our major traditions. It is simply to recognize them as traditions – historically and culturally situated; it is to recognize the legitimacy of other traditions within their own terms (p. 12-13).

There has been a lot of disagreement stemming from the anti-essentialist position. The debate has concerned ontological and epistemological issues explained as realist/relativist positions which revolve around the question of whether it is possible, with a social constructionist standpoint, to assume and theorize a world independent of our representations of it (Nightingale and Cromby 2002, Burr 2003, Fopp 2008). According to Burr (2003) most social constructionists can be described as relativists: they support the belief that even if an external world exists (a "real" world) it is inaccessible to us, we only have access to our representations of the world. This means that social constructionism is concerned with epistemological issues: what can we know about the world? The relativist position has been explicated and defended by Gergen (Gergen 2001, 2009). He argues that we know the world through language and that "the moment we begin to articulate what there is – what is truly or objectively the case – we enter the world of discourse, and thus a tradition, a way of life, and a set of value preferences" (2009, p. 161). A relativist position, as discussed by Gergen, does not deny the possibility of a

"real" world; however, when we try to describe it we fall back on traditions of construction, which has been described as an agnostic position with respect to ontology (Nightingale and Cromby 2002, p. 703).

It is the meanings that pupils and teachers associate with food in an HCS context that are of interest in this thesis. Gergen (2009) explains that what two people see with their eyes might be the same, for example they might both see a plate with pasta Bolognese, but what this *means* to them might be different, which may lead them to approach the world in different ways. For one person this plate might evoke childhood memories of cooking together with a family member, while it for someone else might be appalling because he or she is a vegetarian. The same food can thus be constructed in a myriad of ways. A social constructionist approach was chosen because it provides an analytical framework through which it is possible to see food in HCS as socially constructed meaning. Wortham and Jackson (2008) have described education as a "set of processes that occur in events and institutions that involve both informal socialization and formal learning" (p. 107). This means that from a social constructionist perspective education is a process where various objects are constructed, such as a specific subject (HCS) or subject matter (food). This process is further understood to involve different mechanisms, such as interactional, social and cultural elements. A constructionist approach to education as described by Wortham and Jackson was employed for this thesis as it provided a tool for analysis, making it possible for example to illuminate how teachers and pupils construct distinctions between valued and devalued subject matter.

Cultural analysis as part of constructing food

Culture has been described as a central part of how people socially make sense of their world (Burr 2003, Gergen 2009). This means according to Gergen (2009) that our ways of understanding are embedded in cultural traditions and Burr (2003) states that all ways of understanding are culturally relative. Because culture is a key to understanding social constructions in HCS it is necessary to define what culture means in this thesis.

Culture is a concept that at first glance might seem self-evident considering what it entails and how it should be used. On second thought, though, it becomes clear that this is not the case. American anthropologist Clifford Geertz (2001) explains: "The trouble is that no one is quite sure what culture is. Not only is it an essentially contested concept, like democracy, religion, simplicity, or social justice; it is a multiply defined one, multiply employed, ineradicably imprecise" (p. 11). Rapport and Overing (2000) claim that there are multiple uses and meanings of the term 'culture', and it is not my intention to go into these here. Instead I will take a starting point in the perspec-

tives of some Nordic scholars to discuss how culture is conceptualised in this thesis.

Kirsten Hastrup (2004) discusses culture as something essentially human: as part of being social and always relating ourselves to other humans. The point is, she claims, that the world is not something neutral to us; we always understand it from one point of view or another. This cultural way of being in the world both prepares us for participation and understanding as well as for change. Hastrup explains that:

> Culture (in the singular with a capital C) is the common quality that among other things makes people organize themselves in different cultures (in the plural and with a small c) (p. 15, my translation).

This approach to culture suggests that there are subsystems, such as family and school, within a whole culture, and that there could be conflicting values between such subsystems of minority and majority groups: culture is thus often contested. Culture describes beliefs that are shared by a group of people and is also a reflection of contemporary society (Frykman and Löfgren 1979). In this thesis cultural beliefs are understood as a fundamental part of how people make sense of the world, which indicates that culture is part of a social constructionist perspective. Hastrup (2004) claim that the beliefs we have do not appear out of thin air but are rather formed by what we do and what we perceive as important and proper. In an ongoing process we thus construct an understanding of the world, reflect upon this meaning and when necessary adjust our beliefs. With cultural knowledge we are able to navigate in the world, and this knowledge is primarily acquired in practice. Depending on our interests we will assign different significance to what we consider important to know. This suggests that pupils and teachers may have different focuses on what is important in HCS.

According to Arvastson and Ehn (2007) it is important to distinguish between culture as a social phenomenon and analytical perspective. Culture as a social phenomenon entails understanding humans as collective constructors of cultural beliefs in different groups. This means for example to perceive people coming together in an HCS classroom as collective constructors of HCS – together they socially construct what HCS is, and also what food in HCS is. By observation it is then possible to see what values they share or do not share, what the commonalities and differences are, both within the group and in relation to others. Culture as a social phenomenon is thus an integral part of the social constructionist approach I have assumed in this thesis. Culture as an analytical perspective means taking a step back and examining the constructions through which the world is understood. However, beliefs underpinning food practices are often tacit and unspoken, which makes studying them less than straightforward (O'Doherty Jensen 2003). To be able to analyse and discuss the construction of food in HCS on a deeper

level from a cultural perspective I have chosen to concentrate on two analytical concepts: the culinary triangle of contradictions and the concept of cuisine.

The cultural practice of classifying and the culinary triangle of contradictions

As humans we are constantly involved in a process of sorting and classifying new experiences, knowledge and realisations to make sense of them (Bringéus 1990). Perhaps this classification practice is especially important to us when it concerns food, as humans are omnivores, meaning that we can eat almost everything and also have a freedom of choice (Fischler 1980). We are rather particular about food choice, however, and make use of both physical and cultural considerations when making them (Rozin 2005). The classification of food is thus closely related to food choice and identity. As education in HCS in part is concerned with making choices –letting pupils get experiences from making them and learning from the consequences of their choices (Kursplan 2000, Lgr11 2011), it seems that the classification of food is also part of HCS education about food.

Many studies have explored people's food choice to be able to make cultural beliefs and constructions of identity visible. For example, an American study found food to be classified into opposing pairs such as like/dislike, healthy/unhealthy, convenient/not convenient or fresh/processed, which, together with consideration for cultural heritage and personal food rules, made up a complicated system for food choice (Furst et al. 2000). Personal food systems such as these have been found to be subject to change in the light of new knowledge (Connors et al. 2001). The tension between personal food choice and cultural rules that Bugge and Almås (2006) exposed has been discussed by Counihan (1992) as examples of how cultural values support social hierarchy. By studying food journals of American college students she found that men's adherence to rules made sense as those rules reinforced their privileged status, while the same rules worked to subordinate women. Studies such as these illustrate that food choice is both an individual affair and a constrained and controlled one at the same time.

Palojoki (1997) studied how Finish homemakers made food choices and found them to be embedded in a complexity of considerations. To make this complexity visible and discussible Warren Belasco (2008) has suggested a culinary triangle of contradictions (see *Figure 1*). This triangle captures, what he claims, the three forces pulling at people when food choices are made, and ordinarily these choices are made mostly in consideration of identity and convenience and to a much lesser degree in relation to responsibility (see Table 1 for an overview). Of these three forces it might seem that identity is the one most closely associated to cultural construction; however it is

possible to see that both convenience and responsibility are also cultural constructions. For instance Belasco discusses the global food chain in relation to convenience, although in an HCS context convenience can be related to factors much closer to home. Examples of questions could be: What is the budget for a semester? How is food purchased? Are there political guidelines to adhere to? How long is a lesson? How does food promote the development of skills? All these examples illustrate how HCS is culturally constructed through ideological and pedagogical beliefs. Similarly, responsibility is also invested with cultural value, as one of the goals of teaching HCS is stated to be to teach for responsibility. The point is that the culinary triangle of food captures the multitude of factors that are involved in everyday food decisions, and also show how considerations of identity are accompanied by other deliberations.

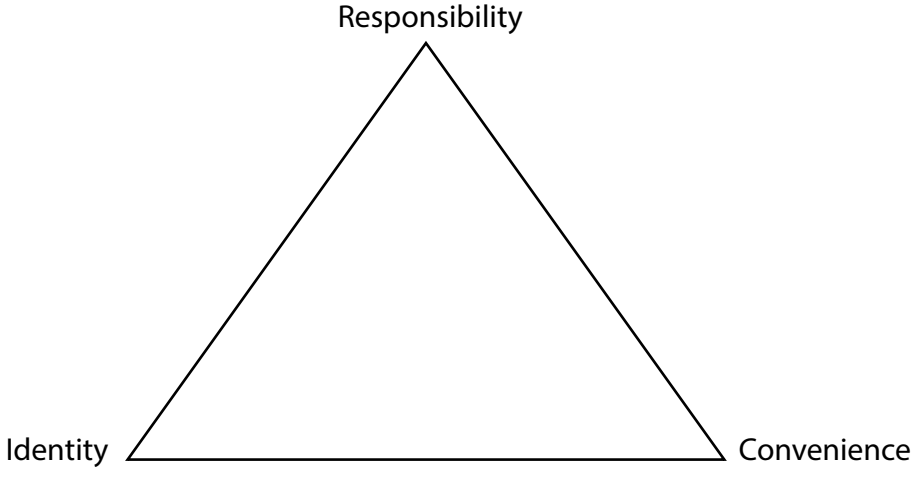

Figure 1. A culinary triangle of contradictions (reprinted with permission from Warren Belasco).

By conceiving of the classification of food as cultural practice it becomes clear that what might be thought of as an individual's personal choice to construct and express identity is in fact to a great extent a result of negotiations of many cultural beliefs (Bugge and Almås 2006). Even so, food has been described as significant for expressing who we are and also to affirm belonging, both on a national and individual level (Fischler 1988). A recent study indicates that the Swedish national food culture is varied compared to other Nordic countries (Mäkelä, Kjærnes, and Pipping Ekström 2001). For example, breakfast can be either a sandwich, cereals, porridge or yoghurt. The snacks we consume between meals usually contain coffee or tea and either a sandwich or a sweet pastry. Further, our main hot meal of day usual-

ly consists of a pan-fried meal of minced meat on weekdays and steak, roast or joint on Sundays, accompanied by potatoes. The three most popular dishes were *falukorv* (a Swedish sausage), minced meat in sauce and pizza. The study also shows that of the Nordic populations, Swedes were most inclined to prefer raw vegetables, especially tomatoes, cucumber and lettuce, with their meal. This suggests that if I choose to eat pasta Bolognese with tomatoes on the side on a Wednesday I am, among many things, expressing my identity as a Swede.

Table 1. *The three variables of the culinary triangle of contradictions and what they involve*

Identity	Convenience	Responsibility
Personal preference Pleasure Creativity The sense of who and where you are Taste Family Ethnic background Personal memories Ideas and values Practices Rituals Etiquette Symbols Art	Price Availability Ease of preparation Energy Time Labour Skill	Personal, social, physiological and political consequences of one's actions. Being aware of these consequences. Short-term and long-term consequences. Being aware of the relationship between nature, animals and people as well as the distribution of power and resources.
What, where and how do people eat – and don't *eat? How do people represent, play with, and think about their food?*	*What does the global food chain involve?*	*How did a particular food get to a specific place? (the past) What are the consequences of choosing this particular food? (the future)*

Theories on how we as human classify and choose food illustrate the complexity involved in everyday food practices. For this thesis Belasco's culinary triangle of contradictions supplied a way to make sorting and choosing comprehensible and discussible in an HCS context.

The concept of cuisine

Cuisine is a term that can refer either to some sort of elite or gourmet food, or to a specific set of protocols that are shared in a specific setting (Belasco 2008). In this thesis the interest is directed at cuisine as a set of protocols and at a theory that describes how certain components together capture distinct and particular culinary practices. Through such a theory it can be possible to gain a deeper understanding of food in HCS.

An understanding of the universal components of cuisines, or culinary systems, has been developed by Elisabeth Rozin (2000). She has suggested that there are three such universal components: (1) basic foods, (2) culinary techniques, and (3) flavour.

Basic foods are those that are most commonly chosen within a group and they tend to be conservatively maintained. For example, in Sweden potatoes could be considered a basic food because it has been shown to be the one we most commonly choose (Mäkelä, Kjærnes, and Pipping Ekström 2001), although we live in a society of affluence and can choose among a vast variety of foods. What we select as basic foods depends on many variables, Rozin explains (2000). For example climate, ease of production, cost of import, nutritional benefit, availability or social sanction.

The second component that Rozin identifies as part of a cuisine is culinary techniques. These are the practices of manipulation that we choose to transform basic foodstuffs into something we consider proper to eat. Rozin divides these techniques in three general categories: (a) processes that change the physical properties of a foodstuff (for example chopping), (b) processes that alter the water content of food (for example marinating), and (c) processes that change foods chemically (for example by applying heat). Initially every culture has selected basic culinary techniques based on environmental factors, the nature of the ingredients to be processed and the general level of technology. In Sweden this has for example resulted in the practice of pickling herring.

The last component of cuisines that Rozin identifies is that of flavour: "the deliberate modification of the taste of cooked food in addition to whatever flavor is provided by the foodstuffs themselves and the cooking techniques by which they are prepared" (p. 135). In relation to basic foods and culinary techniques, Rozin suggests that flavour principles are those that are most capable of providing a cultural label for the food of any group. For example, the same basic ingredients and techniques might be used in different cultures, what distinguish them from each other are the flavours they use. Rozin divides flavour systems into four categories: (a) fat and oils (for example olive oil or butter), (b) liquid components (for example stock or milk), (c) ingredients that provide additional flavour (for example onions, parsley or spices), and (d) condiments (for example mustard). With Rozin's understanding flavour becomes the most culturally significant component, and she suggests that cultures that to a large extent depend on plant or vegetable foods have more pronounced seasonings than cultures with a heavy consumption of animal foods, such as in northern Europe, where we have more underplayed flavouring principles.

Through combining theories of cuisines suggested by Peter Farb and George Armelagos (1980) as well as Elisabeth Rozin (1982, 2000), Belasco (2008) adds two more components to the theory of cuisine: (4) manners and (5) food chain.

A set of manners concerns the socially constructed principles for what is acceptable behaviour in relation to food. For example whether to eat on the floor or at a table, to use one's fingers or a fork, to eat from a casserole or a plate, to eat together or separately.

The fifth component, food chain, is suggested by Belasco to relate to how food moves from farm to fork for a specific group of people (a process called *från jord till bord* in Sweden).

The construction of a cuisine as a set of protocols specific for a particular group of people can be understood as closely related to the classification and choices that people make, where the classification can be seen as a process while cuisine is the framework within which a classification process takes place. Cuisine has not been part of the analysis for this thesis, but does nevertheless offer an interesting framework for discussion in relation to the construction of food in HCS.

Space and spatiality

Benn (1996) claimed that the Home Economics classroom is a particular place that has influenced how the subject is conceived. However, there have been no studies exploring how this particular location can be understood. One way is to approach the classroom as both physical location and social relationships and understand it as space in the terms suggested by geographer Doreen Massey (Massey 1994, 2005). Massey (1994) has argued for an understanding of space and place in terms of social relations, especially in connection with the construction of gender and identity of place. In 1994 she described space as having both spatial form and social content: it comprised both geography and social relations, and she described place as a specific geographical location with a specific collection of social relations which extend beyond the location. Later (Massey 2005) she has argued that there is no real difference between space and place: both are constructed as geographical locations and social relations in constant flux. Massey argued that the alternative approach to space which she advocated involved recognising space as the product of interrelations, as a sphere in which distinct trajectories coexist, and that this was always under construction. She wrote "perhaps we can imagine space as a simultaneity of stories-so-far" (2005, p. 9).

The classroom has commonly been considered a background phenomenon in educational research: as a backdrop for social interaction (Cosgrove 2004, McGregor 2004a) that is bounded and pre-given (McGregor 2003). As such the classroom has been taken for granted, either by being ignored or conceived of as fixed (McGregor 2003). More recently there have been ideas to incorporate a spatial perspective in educational research, taking influence from research within what has been called "the spatial turn" (Cosgrove 2004, Massey 2004, Gulson and Symes 2007). Aaron M. Kuntz (2009) claims that

fuel for a spatial turn was provided by Foucault who in 1986 wrote "we are in an epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed" (Foucault 1986, p. 22). The "spatial turn" meant a renewed interest in spatiality and a significant re-thinking of space itself (Cosgrove 2004). Space had previously been described as absolute and treated as an objective phenomenon closely associated with a temporal perspective. With the spatial turn "absolute" was traded for "relative", and space was conceived of as a function of processes. The conceptualization of space and a spatial perspective for this thesis has been especially influenced by geographer Doreen Massey (1994, 2004, 2005) and educational researcher Jane McGregor (2003, 2004a, b, c, d). McGregor (2003, 2004a, b, c, d) has studied schools as a workplace for teachers within a framework of spatiality. She claimed that schools are neither fixed nor static, but rather sites for intersecting networks or relations, technology and practice, and that those extend beyond what is seen as the institution. With such a spatial perspective (Clarke 2002, Cosgrove 2004, Gulson and Symes 2007, Gildersleeve and Kuntz 2011) physical locations, for example a classroom, can be perceived of as being both physical environments and social relationships constructed by people and objects alike. Research adopting a spatial perspective assumes that understanding is constructed in multiple spheres, which underlines the importance of context. Further, social relationships are assumed to be continually re-constructed and re-established making change integral to educational institutions (Kuntz 2009).

According to McGregor (2003, 2004c) schools are not isolated from the rest of society and thus cannot be described in terms of boundaries. With a spatial perspective the focus is directed towards an interest in social interactions with place and how they are embedded in larger networks of meaning, described also as trajectories, which stretch far beyond a particular physical location. For this thesis a spatial perspective provided a way to explore HCS classrooms beyond merely geometrical relationships and temporal beliefs. With a spatial perspective space is a product of bundles of trajectories that meet at certain nodes in complex networks (Massey 1994). These bundles consists of relations that are embedded in material practices that have to be carried out (Massey 2005). McGregor (2004a) explains that:

> Space is taken to be more than merely a backdrop to social interaction, but as *created* through interaction with the social. This is based on a conception of social life as relational but still materially-embedded in the 'physical world'. Human use, organization and imagination thus create social space which is simultaneously material and social (p. 13, italics in original).

This means that past ideologies and practices are built into the physical structure of classrooms – a classroom becomes a space where past practices

and social relations are materialized and also where past practices are repeated. With a spatial approach the understanding of networks, or trajectories, are fundamental as space itself is conceived of as connections which are constituted in interaction, "from the immensity of the global to the intimately tiny" (Massey 2005, p. 9).

There has been some concern among researchers over the terms space and place and their relation to each other (Gulson and Symes 2007, Cresswell 2009, Gildersleeve and Kuntz 2011). Aron M. Kuntz (2009) for example chose to "define *space* as the social meanings produced and interpreted in material environments, which I in turn define as *place*" (p. 357, italics in original). However, as the original intention in including a spatial perspective in this thesis was to find a way to conceive of both people and location as socially constructed an understanding of space and place as interchangeable was adopted.

Theories of space have provided a way to perceive the classroom beyond boundaries and rather as a particular location, or node, part of a web of trajectories. In this understanding of the classroom, however, I also wished to consider objects, such as food and appliances, as participants in the construction of meaning. Ideas to ascribe agency to both humans and non-humans, subjects as well as objects, have been proposed by the sociologist Bruno Latour and Actor Network Theory (ANT) (Clarke 2002, McGregor 2004c, Verbeek 2005). However, the idea to assign equal agency to both humans and non-humans has caused some concern. Dave Elder-Vass (Elder-Vass 2008) therefore suggests that human and non-human agents both have agency but with different causal powers. "We achieve symmetry in the treatment of human and non-human actors, not by treating them all in the same terms, but by treating each in the terms that are appropriate to its own particular structure and properties" (p. 469). By adopting this view of agency in relation to human and non-human agents in this thesis it is assumed that food and other non-human objects in HCS have agency and thus contribute to the construction of meaning in the classroom; however, they do not have the same powers as humans, such as to be interested.

4. Methodological considerations

This study has been conducted through what can be described as focused ethnography (Wolcott 1990, Knoblauch 2005) in an interpretive research process (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). Ethnography, in the approach used in this thesis, is conceived of as a process and not merely a matter of methods (Wolcott 1990). Throughout this process there has been an ongoing internal intellectual dialogue in relation to different analytical theories on what culture in general is with the aim to attempt to portray specific aspects of HCS. This, claims Wolcott (1990) is what *ethnography* is. I have thus sought for ways to make sense of meaning-making in relation to food in HCS by locating myself as researcher, designing research, collecting and interpreting material and producing texts in an iterative cycle. A traditional view of ethnography is that it for example involves long-term field visits and is time-extensive. In the case of the present study however a less time-consuming approach was used in the form of *focused* ethnography (Wolcott 1990, Knoblauch 2005) (which also has been described as *micro* (Wolcott 1990, Bryman 2008) or *specific* ethnography (Wolcott 1990)). The underlying rationale for doing ethnography – to do cultural interpretation – is the same in both traditional and focused ethnography. With focused ethnography attention is directed towards a particular setting "by giving emphasis to particular behaviour in particular settings rather than attempting to portray a whole cultural system" (Wolcott 1990, p. 64). In the case of the present study this meant that rather than studying HCS as a whole, the focus was directed at meaning-making in relation to food in HCS. It was thus focused aspects of a field that was the concern for this particular ethnography (Knoblauch 2005). I wanted to explore the cultural construction of food in HCS, and Anderson (2005) argues that cultural constructions are "comprehensible when one knows what the constructors know, and understands the limits and possibilities they face" (p. 244). A focused ethnographic approach thus seemed well suited.

Methodologically there have been two parallel processes: one for gathering data and one for analysing this material, as is illustrated in Table 2.

Data gathering was initially broad and explorative with observations to find ways to proceed, which was followed by focus group interviews with pupils and teachers. Formal data gathering thus began in early 2007 with brief fieldwork and concluded with focus group interviews with teachers in the spring of 2009. This work resulted in three different data sets that was

analysed both separately and in conjunction with each other with the help of different analytical theories.

The analytical process also began in 2007, initially as a search for and trial of different analytical theories. A set of analytical tools and theories within the umbrella of social constructionism was found to be the most fruitful choice to make sense of the data gathered. In this process the final analysis was commenced with the last gathered material.

Table 2. *Summary of data gathering methods, material and analytical theories*

Paper	Data gathering methods	Material	Analytical theories	
I. Food with a purpose	Focus group interviews Photo elicitation	Teachers (25)	Content analysis Matrix development	Social constructionism
II. Fake food	Focus group interviews Photo elicitation	Pupils (20)	Content analysis Matrix development	
III. Learning space for food	Observations	Field notes Photographs Classroom plans	Spatiality	
IV. What's for food in Swedish HCS?	Focus group interviews Photo elicitation Observations	Teachers (25) Pupils (20) Field notes	Food classifications Culinary triangle of contradictions	

Although the overall aim for this thesis was clear from the onset, it was not equally obvious how to gather material. One concern in choice of methods was to find ways to make the voices of people involved in HCS heard, that is to make beliefs and understandings of teachers and pupils visible; another was to find a way to understand HCS as a context for food. One way to address these concerns was to undertake observations.

Observations

Knoblauch (2005) writes that in order to focus the researcher has to have prior familiarity with the field. Initially this meant that my personal experiences of being a pupil in HCS and teacher student guided the investigation. However, it was important to get a deeper and more structured knowledge of the context, which led to observations. According to Patton (2002) there are several advantages with direct and personal observations. For example, with observations it is possible to capture the context in which people interact, to move beyond the selective perceptions of others and to see things that may escape awareness among people in the setting. Observations were carried out

in two steps. The first step was carried out over three days in a small rural town in a school with one HCS teacher and one classroom. This school was given the name Slope Hill.

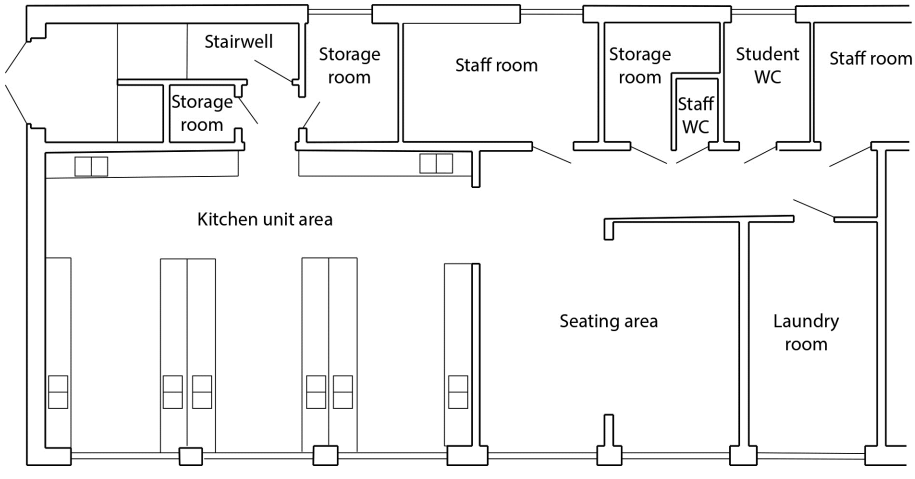

Figure 2. Drawing of the Slope Hill HCS classroom

The aim for observations during this fieldwork was to gain a broad knowledge on food-related activities in the classroom and insights on how observations may be carried out. First-hand experiences in combination with reflection and introspection are important parts of field research (Patton 2002). Field notes taken in this rural school were thus developed into a comprehensive observation narrative which formed the base for discussions with colleagues and also informed how the investigation was to proceed. For example, to gain variation in the material there was a wish to continue making observations in a school in an urban environment, preferably with more than one teacher and classroom.

Both schools, Slope Hill and Park City, were found on the Internet, where all Swedish municipalities have their own websites listing all their schools, both those that are run by the municipality and those run independently. Both Slope Hill and Park City were schools run by the municipality which was considered appropriate as a majority of the schools in Sweden are run this way (Skolverket 2011a).

One aspect that needs to be addressed when doing fieldwork is entry to the field, which has been described to have two parts: the first involves negotiation with gatekeepers, in this case teachers, and the second involves actual physical entry (Patton 2002). At Slope Hill negotiations were carried out by telephone with the teacher (who was given the name Anna) and the physical entry to the field occurred the same day as the first observations were carried out. Although Anna welcomed me to observe her classroom, she clearly stated that she was uninterested in why I wanted to do them. Alt-

hough physical entry to the field was quite easy, it was harder to establish trust with Anna, which led to some of the reflections and introspections being concerned with how to ease entry during the second part of the fieldwork. After finding Park City on the Internet initial contact was again made by telephone. This time however we continued negotiations via e-mail and found a date in October 2007 when I could come to visit the teachers (given the names Betty and Caroline) at a time when there were no pupils present. By doing a pre-observation visit entry to Park City was made smoother as trust had already been established.

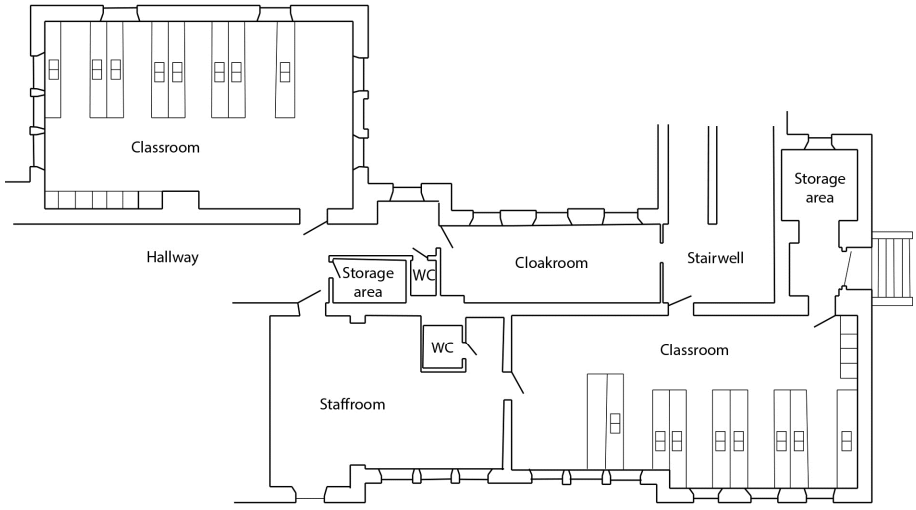

Figure 3. Drawing of the Park City HCS classrooms

The second step was carried out in November 2007 at an urban school which, as mentioned, was given the name of Park City, with two teachers and classrooms. When working with focused ethnography, it has been described as important to narrow focus early to gain more efficiency in the collection of data (Wolcott 1990). As the second step was begun the focus had consequently been narrowed to be directed at pupils and their food-related interactions. Observations were carried out over two weeks, meaning five days in each classroom.

Official numbers indicate that about 78 per cent of all HCS teachers in Sweden have formal pedagogic training (Skolverket 2012) but these numbers do not say how many of these have education specifically in the subject HCS. The education of the teachers, or the lack thereof, was not considered to be a selection criterion for observations, however; neither was gender. The teacher at Slope Hill, Anna, was trained as a teacher in HCS and had worked for over 20 years. The two teachers at Park City, Betty and Caroline, had worked as teachers for many years without any formal pedagogic training.

Traditional observations have been described as producing huge amounts of data that can be hard to manage (Denzin and Lincoln 2005). With a focused approach data are still intensive (Knoblauch 2005) but more manageable because of their focused nature (Wolcott 1990). Data for this thesis gathered through observation was collected over a total of 13 days in classrooms. An overview of the observations is found in Table 3.

Table 3. *Overview of teachers, pupils and food cooked during observations*

Group	School	Teacher	Group size	Ages	Boys	Girls	Foods produced
1	Slope Hill	Anna + a	12	13	8	4	All classes: Tex-Mex casserole and baked apples
2	Slope Hill	Anna	13	14	9	4	
3	Slope Hill	Anna + a	10	13	10	0	
4	Slope Hill	Anna + a	9	14	4	5	
5	Slope Hill	Anna	11	14	0	11	
6	Slope Hill	Anna	7	14	3	4	
7	Park City	Betty	12	14	5	7	Whole wheat tea biscuits
8	Park City	Caroline	12	11	5	7	Milkshake
9	Park City	Caroline	12	15	4	8	Different dishes
10	Park City	Caroline	12	11	6	6	Milkshake
11	Park City	Caroline	12	*	2	10	Whole wheat tea biscuits
12	Park City	Caroline	13	14	7	6	Whole wheat tea biscuits
13	Park City	Caroline	10	14	5	5	Whole wheat tea biscuits
14	Park City	Caroline	11	14	4	7	Whole wheat tea biscuits
15	Park City	Caroline	8	14	4	4	Oriental casserole
16	Park City	Betty	10	14	6	4	Oriental casserole
17	Park City	Betty	9	11	4	5	Graham buns
18	Park City	Betty	11	15	3	8	Different dishes
19	Park City	Betty	9	11	4	5	Graham buns
20	Park City	Caroline	12**	*	2**	10**	Minced meat pie
21	Park City	Betty	12	14	4	8	Oriental casserole
22	Park City	Betty	11	14	5	6	Saffron buns
		TOTAL	226		102	124	

a = assistant * = Preparatory class, different ages. ** = excluded from the total

Focus group interviews

Although I engaged in conversations regarding food with pupils and teachers, during observations there was never enough time for these to become more than tantalizing moments indicating that there was a lot more to find out. One way to gather high-quality and data-intense material regarding a specific issue is through focus group interviews (Patton 2002, Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005). This specific form of interviews has been described as a more formal version of everyday conversations (Kamberelis and Dimitriadis 2005) where interactions between participants play a vital part (Patton 2002). “Focus” in a focus group interview refers that the topic, the group, the

facilitation, the interaction and the use of time are all focused (Patton 2002). Given the focused nature of the present study, it made sense to use focus group interviews to elicit information from pupils and teachers.

Focus group interviews with pupils

The view of children and childhood in research has changed rather dramatically over the past 20 years (eg. James, Jenks, and Prout 1998, Corsaro 2005, Christensen and James 2008c), which for example has entailed researching *with* children rather than *on* children (Christensen and James 2008b). However, these advances do not indicate that there is a need for particular methods when researching with children. Instead, the challenge lies in how children are conceptualised by the researcher. In the present study I was interested in exploring how food in HCS was meaningful for children from their own perspectives. A set of five focus group interviews were held, as is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. *Overview of focus group interviews with pupils*

Group	Date	Participants		Ages	Moderator	Observer
		Boys	Girls			
1	November 3 2007	0	4	13-15	All: 1st author of paper II	1 & 2: Assistants 3-5: 3rd author of paper II
2	November 13 2007	2	3	15		
3	February 15 2008	4	0	15		
4	February 15 2008	0	4	14-15		
5	February 15 2008	2	1	14-15		
	TOTAL	8	12			

An interview guide with open-ended questions and a set of six photographs (which will be explained in more detail below under photo elicitation) was produced for a pilot interview. Four girls from different schools were recruited for the pilot interview and the consecutive interviews where held with children at Park City, where I also made observations. For the pilot interview I approached parents and children and told them about my research project, which led to all of the girls wanting to participate. The two HCS teachers at Park City were asked to help recruit pupils for the following focus group interviews. Through them, written information was handed out to pupils and their guardians, and the two teachers helped in facilitating the interviews by booking a room for the interview, communicating with their guardians and teachers, and collecting consent forms. The interviews lasted between 36 to 95 minutes and were digitally recorded. The interview guide used during all focus groups covered five thematic questions:

a. Tell me about a usual HCS-lesson
b. Tell me about when you cook in HCS
c. Describe what you think when you imagine that you are hungry and have to arrange for food
d. Look at the food in the photographs and tell me what you think
e. Do you think that the food you eat in HCS is a "proper meal"?

The pilot focus group was held in a home. The second interview was held in an HCS classroom and the last three in a conference room in the school administration area in Park City.

Focus group interviews with teachers

To elicit the views of teachers, another set of focus group interviews were held in the spring of 2009, as seen in Table 5. Homogeneous sampling was used for these interviews. This meant that although the participants shared familiar experiences in teaching in HCS, they were still strangers to each other (Patton 2002). As with the teachers involved in observations, formal teacher education and gender were not considered important selection factors; rather teachers who had experience from working in the HCS classroom were recruited.

Table 5. *Overview of focus group interviews with teachers*

Group	Date	Participants		Moderator	Observer
		Men	Women		
1	June 3 2009	1	5	All: 3rd author of paper I	All: 1st author of paper I
2	June 8 2009	0	8		
3	June 8 2009	0	6		
4	June 18 2009	1	4		
	TOTAL	2	23		

Based on their geographical proximity to Uppsala, where the interviews were to be held, 34 municipalities were selected and their websites searched for email addresses. Also, some email addresses of HCS teachers were received through personal contacts. A total of 385 emails were sent out with information about the study, a selection of ten different dates and times for interviews, and a request for participants. Many teachers wanted to participate, but because May and June is a very hectic time during the Swedish school year they were unable to. Some emails were returned because of errors, and 45 declining answers were received. A total of 26 teachers wanted to participate, and it was possible to find times and dates that suited 25 of them. Four interviews were thus scheduled and a few hours before the last

group, one participant called and cancelled. Through a personal contact I was able, by telephone, to reach an HCS teacher who was able to participate. I assumed the role of observer in all four focus groups, and together with the moderator we made an evaluation after the fourth group and determined that saturation had been reached. The interviews lasted about two hours each and were digitally recorded.

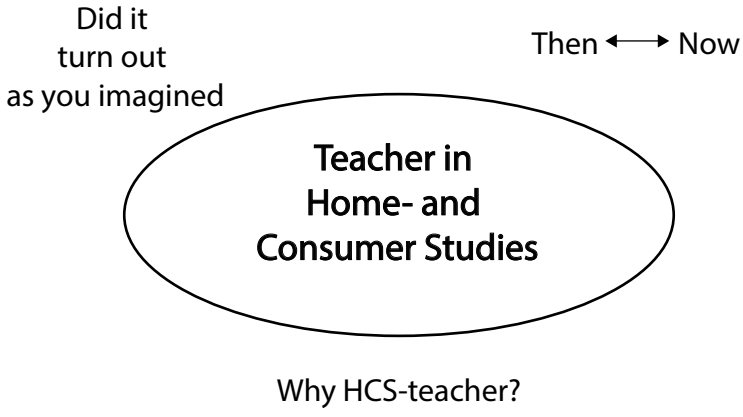

Figure 4. Visual interview guide 1: Teacher in HCS

An interview guide that covered topics of HCS, that I was interested in exploring, was developed. These topics were displayed as visual interview guides during the interviews to aid the moderator, the observer and participants (see *Figure 4* and *Figure 5*).

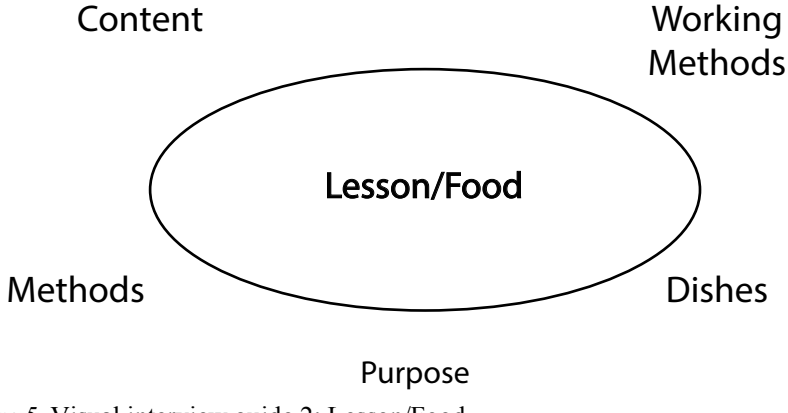

Figure 5. Visual interview guide 2: Lesson/Food

Photo elicitation

Photos were used during the focus groups interviews as a way to enrich and extend focus of the interviews (Cappello 2005). There are a variety of ways to use this visual method in interviews; they can for example be introduced as ice breakers (Epstein et al. 2006), be taken by the researcher (Harper 2002) or by the participants (Christensen and James 2008a, Parinder 2012). In the present study the photographs were taken by me. They depicted a) a bowl of sliced tomato, b) two peeled carrots, c) a plate of fish and chips, d) a plate of fried chicken, rice, peas, tomatoes and grated carrots, e) a plate of pasta Bolognese, and f) a plate of sliced steak, peeled potatoes, vegetables and gravy. The idea was to depict common food (a, b, d, e), "proper" or traditional food (f) and foreign food (c). The photographs were introduced towards the end of the interview sessions and participants were encouraged to talk freely around them.

Harper (2002) claims that deploying photos in an interview either works, or do not work, for rather mysterious reasons. Pupils were enthused by the photographs and engaged in rather lengthy discussions in relation to them. Teachers were more critical, however, and primarily analysed the photos from an aesthetic point of view. Images can be read either externally or internally (Epstein et al. 2006), that is, as what I see in the photo as opposed to what message this picture sends to me. Pupils primarily read the photos as messages while teachers primarily talked about what they saw. Photos have been used in several studies involving children (eg. Cappello 2005, Epstein et al. 2006, Christensen and James 2008a) and have been described as a good way to engage with children and to elicit their perspectives, perhaps especially when children are involved in the process by taking photos themselves. In the present study there was a noticeable difference between how pupils and teachers talked about the photographs; one reason might be that the children were excited to be asked to *do* something more than just answer questions (Cappello 2005). In the case of focus group interviews with pupils the photographs certainly worked to enhance the data and provided new insights into their perspectives. Although the desire was to understand meaning-making in relation to food in both the teacher and pupil focus group interviews, the photographs did not contribute any deeper insight in the teacher focus groups.

Methods of analysis

According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) qualitative interpretations are constructed, meaning that in a step-by-step process notes from observations and transcripts of interviews are transformed into public texts. In the present study all field notes and interviews were carefully developed or transcribed into detailed documents that formed the base for analysis. The analytical

process initially consisted of a search for theories that would help to make sense of the data. The final decision was to employ a social constructionist approach supplemented by theories on culture, space and spatiality, as this body of theories acknowledges the agency of all, including adults, children and objects and takes an interest in how meaning is constructed through social interaction.

Table 6. *Matrix for the teacher focus group interviews*

		What is constructed (object)			
		HCS	HCS teacher	Food in HCS	Home
How (mechanism) (in interaction with…)	Other HCS teachers	*Food as knowledge area to learn about other things*	*Role model*	*Healthy*	*Insufficient from a public health perspective*
	Parents	*Cooking*			*Unreliable support*
	Pupils	*Cooking*	*The fostering teacher for independent pupils*	*Tangible cooking*	*Unreliable site for practical homework*
	Colleagues	*Sometime lack understanding*	*The lonely teacher*		
	School	*Structural challenge*			
		↓	↓	↓	↓
Final themes		Food with a purpose	The fostering teacher with a public health commission	Tangible cooking	The deficient home (for preparing proper meals)

Teacher and pupil interviews were analysed with the same tools (paper I and II). This process can be described in a series of steps. The first step entailed careful verbatim transcription, which was guided by notes taken by the observer. These notes proved to be extremely valuable, as focus group interviews to a large extent involve more than one participant talking at the same time. Transcripts were then coded in categories and sub-categories in a software used for organising qualitative research data (Verbi software 2007). These codes were subsequently sorted into a matrix where both the object that was being constructed (what) and the social relationship in which it was being constructed (how) were captured (Wortham and Jackson 2008) (see Table 6 and Table 7**Fel! Ogiltig självreferens i bokmärke.**). This analysis

built on Wortham and Jackson's (2008) understanding of education as a process where various objects are (re)constructed, such as identity, subject matter and social structures.

Table 7. *Matrix for the pupil focus group interviews*

		What is constructed (object)			
		Home	Pupil	HCS	Food in HCS
How (mechanism) (in interaction with…)	Pupils	*Everyday life*	*Wants to be involved*	*A cooking subject*	*To follow a recipe*
	Teachers	*Future life*	*Follow controlled progression*	*Theory, routines and control*	*Represent an ideal*
	School	*Authentic*			*De-authenticised*
		↓	↓	↓	↓
Final themes		Everyday food-work at home	Theory, routines and control: cooking in HCS		De-authenticised food in HCS

According to Wortham and Jackson (2008) a social constructionist analysis presupposes, or assumes, that some things are solid. In analysis of teacher and pupil focus groups it was assumed that the objects (such as HCS teachers, pupils and food in HCS) and mechanisms (such as pupils, teachers and school) were stable aspects of the social world. In paper III the social constructionist approach was supplemented by theories on space and spatiality, which meant that certain trajectories were assumed as pivotal for the construction of the HCS classroom. The assumed trajectories were a series of relationships: the relationship and place of HCS in the curriculum, socio-economic relationships, the relationship between home and school, and, the relationship between teacher and student. Analysis further assumed that materiality, networks and power relations, as identified by McGregor (2004c), were core aspects of spatiality (see Table 8 for an overview of what was included in the analysis).

Table 8. *Matrix for the analysis of classroom*

		What aspect of the classroom is constructed (object)		
		Material	Network	Power
How (mechanism) (in interaction with these relationships)	HCS in the curriculum	X	X	X
	Socio-economic aspects	X	X	
	Home-school		X	
	Teacher-pupil		X	X

Table 7, above, was presented in paper II. Table 6 and 8 however were added to the thesis to further clarify the process of analysis.

For the last paper (IV) all data were included. It has been said that "qualitative work carries its meaning in its entire text" (Richardson and St. Pierre 2005, p. 960), so it made sense to analyse all the gathered material together. The term food was assumed to represent both foodstuffs (such as flour and butter) and food (prepared dishes). In a first step all material was read through several times and all occurrences of food were indicated with the help of MAXQDA (Verbi software 2007). The long list that this resulted in was sorted into categories based on what context they were presented in. For example pupils spoke about carrots, which were identified as a food in the first step, and sorted into the category "affordable" in the second step as they were given as an example of food that is cheap. Analysis revealed that all food that entered the HCS classrooms was chosen by the teachers, and it was concluded that it was primarily the classifications of the teachers that were seen in the analysis. For example, teachers spoke about minced meat, which was described as versatile (it could be used for many different dishes). Pupils related to and interpreted the foods that teachers had chosen, and it was found that they spoke about food in the same way as teachers, minced meat was thus explained as versatile by students too. This step of the analysis was inspired by classic structuralist approaches (Douglas 1972, Douglas and Nicod 1974, Furst et al. 2000). Ten categories of food were found (see Table 9 for an overview). The categories were subsequently analysed with the help of Warren Belasco's culinary triangle of contradictions (Belasco 2008) as to how they reflected issues of identity, convenience and responsibility.

Ethical considerations

Research that deals with cultural aspects of everyday life and uses interviews and/or observations as methods are consistently judged, when submitted to the Swedish ethical boards, as not being relevant for ethical vetting. Ethical

rules of the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet 2002) as well as the International Sociological Association (ISA 2011) were observed during the whole research process. The Ethical rules of the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet 2002) identifies four requirements for research: information, consent, confidentiality and use.

The information requirement states that the researcher must inform participants of the study about the purpose of the research and what it entails for the participants, for example by explaining if the research is harmful and where it will be published. In the case of this study teachers and pupils participating in the focus groups were informed about these issues in written form when they were asked to participate and also orally at the beginning of each session. At the schools written information was sent to headmasters and HCS teachers and pupils were informed at the beginning of each lesson. The HCS teachers at Slope Hill and Park City had also informed their pupils before my arrival.

Written consent was collected from all participants in focus group interviews, and the consent form was developed according to WHO's guidelines (WHO 2011, 2013). During the observations, however, no written consent was collected. Teachers invited me to follow them during their workdays, both during and between lessons. In conversations with pupils I asked for verbal permission to follow them around the classroom or stand close to where they were. Some pupils did not want me to observe them, which I respected. Most of the pupils were below 15 years of age, and it is recommended by Ethical rules of the Swedish Research Council (Vetenskapsrådet 2002) that special attention therefore be given to their rights. It was assumed in this study that their rights were respected and protected through the information that was given to them, their teachers and their headmaster.

The requirements for confidentiality have to do with whether or not people participating in a study can be identified by other people than the researcher. One way that this has been respected in the present thesis was by changing all the names of participants and schools. People participating in focus group interviews will necessarily not be anonymous to each other. In the pupil focus group interviews most of them either were in the same class or at least knew each other by name within the group. Most teachers did not know each other before the sessions took place, but introduced themselves and where they came from at the beginning of each interview. According to Bryman (2008) there are times when it is ethically preferable to choose individual interviews over focus group interviews, for example if the topics to be discussed are sensitive. For the present thesis it was judged that the topics were not sensitive.

The last requirement regards how data collected for research is used and clearly states that it cannot be used for commercial or other non-scientific purposes. Data collected for the present thesis has been used solely for this thesis.

In addition to these four requirements it is also relevant to discuss ethical issues of inclusion/exclusion in the present thesis. As focus group interviews were carried out with pupils at Park City it came to my attention that not all pupils had been invited – instead the teachers had taken the opportunity to sift out pupils who they thought would contribute the most, meaning be active in interviews. One way to interpret this could be that the teachers made decisions in their capacity of gatekeepers (Patton 2002) to the field of study. Pupils recruited from Park City had also been part of the observations, and initial negotiations about my role as observer had been with the teachers. It is quite possible that the teachers also assumed the role of gatekeeper in recruiting pupils for interviews. The exclusion of some pupils in this process can also be interpreted as a manifestation of the roles of teachers and pupils, where teachers have more power and agency, and thus as local ethical practice. Christensen and Prout (2002) have argued for ethical symmetry in research involving children. This means that the researcher assumes that the "ethical relationship between researcher and informant is the same whether he or she conducts research with children or adults" (p. 482). Even though such an approach was assumed in the present thesis, the established ethical practice at school was found to stand in the way. It can thus be concluded that more ethical concern could have been directed towards how children were included in the work of this thesis.

5. Results

I: Food with a purpose.
HCS teachers' construction of food and home

Paper I described how HCS teachers made sense of and managed their being teachers in this particular school subject and also how they talked about food and the home. Overall, some participants constructed HCS to be a subject with high status, while others had opposing views. What status the subject had was related to how they were treated by colleagues. HCS was further understood as a subject with many obstacles in relation to the organisation of school, mainly because of its practical character. Lessons were described as too few and too short, which meant for instance that the participants had to carry out work they would prefer pupils to do themselves, such as putting out ingredients. The analysis resulted in five abstract themes: "HCS is food with a purpose", "teachers with a public health commission", "the fostering teacher", "tangible cooking" and "the deficient home".

The first theme was called *HCS is food with a purpose*. This theme was explained by Kajsa, who had worked as an HCS teacher for 25 years:

> Although the subject is largely about food and cooking, it is food with a purpose, where each lesson is carefully planned and underpinned by genuine preparations.

This view was emphasized by other participants, who explained that food in HCS was at the core of the subject and had many different aspects that they needed to address, for example health, the environment, nutrition, economy, culture and equality. As Lovisa put it:

> Although we do not focus on cooking, it is rather that food and cooking are the road to this knowledge, as our educational tool.

This view of food became problematic in the relation to pupils and parents. Pupils were constructed as focused on each lesson being about cooking, and parents as expecting HCS to make their children good cooks. These anticipations from pupils and parents were described as frustrating to teachers when they planned their lessons. At the same time, the teachers perceived HCS to be a popular subject among pupils and as a subject where most pupils can

succeed. Participants explained that it is the practical work of cooking, where pupils use their senses and creativity and are able see what they are doing, that make HCS so popular. The participants had different strategies to teach food with a purpose. One teacher described how she worked with samples instead of full meals, and several others stated that they had to leave out some parts of the syllabus, such as housing, to be able to focus on health and nutrition.

The second theme was *teachers with a public health commission*, which captured how teachers constructed themselves as persons with an opportunity to show pupils a healthy alternative to habits learned elsewhere. The teachers described how they worked with health in different ways, for example in themes covering several lessons, or by replacing ingredients with more healthful ones. The commission to teach for public health was also described by some participants as a challenge, both in relation to pupils and to society.

The fostering teacher was constructed as a teacher who, in interaction with pupils, provided a socialising framework. This could mean adopting the role of an adult in relation to the pupils and fostering them to evince acceptable behaviour, for example not running in the classroom. The socialising dimension also entailed building a relationship of trust with pupils and gradually allowing them more freedom and, for example, gaining access to cupboards. The construction of the fostering teacher also entailed seeing themselves as role models who advocated different personal interests: some focused upon sustainability and the environment, some on health, and some on hygiene. The goal for the fostering teacher was to promote independent pupils that are empowered through their knowledge.

The fourth theme was called *tangible cooking* and depicted how teachers construct cooking as tangibly and concretely as possible in order for them to be able to treat it as factual. Cooking was thus talked of in terms of "instructions", "recipes", "utensils" and "methods" and to many informants the be-all and end-all of cooking in HCS was to follow instructions and know the utensils. This theme reflected the teachers' need to know what pupils have learned and how cooking in HCS is part of assessment and grading. To teach tangible cooking some participants described how they built up education in HCS as a progression that started with a focus on methods and utensils or with basic recipes that pupils were expected to learn by heart. The learning of utensils, for example, could be conceived through utensil competitions where a class was divided into groups that had limited time to fetch the utensils that the teacher asked for.

The final theme, *the deficient home (for preparing proper meals)*, related how the teachers constructed the home in relation to HCS. The home was thus talked of as being deficient, either as a place for unhealthy habits or with a weak socio-economic position. Unhealthy habits included children being allowed too many sweet foods and families not eating together. Therefore, some participants said, it was important to sit down and eat together in

HCS as it filled an important social function, although only one participant stated that she joined the pupils by the table. Few topics caused such a discussion among participants as the issue of practical homework. Most teachers agreed that they had pupils who did not have the right resources to be able to carry out practical homework, while some claimed that everyone eats at home, which also means that pupils can have assignments of this kind.

II: Fake food.
Swedish pupils meaning-making of HCS

In paper II the focus was directed at pupils with the aim to gain further insights into how they make meaning about food in HCS by looking at how they talk about this subject, especially in relation to food. Analysis revealed that it was impossible for participating pupils to talk about food in HCS without bringing in their own homes. This meant that food as part of HCS was constructed in relation to the home, which was reflected in three themes: "everyday food work at home", "theory, routines and control when cooking in HCS", and "de-authenticised food HCS".

The first theme, *everyday food work at home*, captured how the pupils constructed "home" to be the ideal and authentic food place for which HCS was a proxy. All but one pupil saw themselves as everyday cooks at home who were involved in all aspects of food-related activities. Some described how they cooked, alone or with their family, and some thought that they would cook more often if they did not have other activities that occupied their leisure time. Cooking at home was described as time-consuming as they had to plan and adapt recipes to the number of people eating, different tastes and sometimes different habits. Planning involved, for example, looking for recipes in different sources such as the HCS textbook, regular cookbooks or the Internet. Pupils also spoke of differences between weekdays and weekends: on weekdays they could prepare a pasta Bolognese while weekend cooking took more time, for example, making a roast. Cooking at home also involved two kinds of feeling security: familiarity with the room and self-confidence. These securities helped to construct the "everyday cook at home" that knows her/his own skills and has internal control. Cooking at home was everyday life here and now when they or their families were hungry or when they felt like it, which was in stark contrast to the future-orientation of HCS that they described. The home was constructed as the place where everyday life happened, where the pupils were involved in the mundane tasks of a household, while cooking in HCS was conceived of as belonging to their adult life when they would have their own household to be responsible for. This meant that although HCS was defined by the pupils as a subject that dealt with the skills you need at home (and not at work), the

"home" talked of in class was not the "home" pupils lived in right now. This example from the girl Maja captured what a majority of the pupils described in the focus groups:

> [HCS] is about those things that happen every day when you get your own family, when you come home and cook food, go and shop, do the dishes and things that have to do with HCS; an HCS lesson is useful for when you move away from home.

In contrast to the construction of self-confident and ideal cooking here and now at home, cooking in HCS was constructed as *theory, routines and control*. As the pupils described what they do in HCS it was apparent that each lesson followed a routine which started with the teacher providing a theoretical introduction, for example by talking about nutrition or hygiene. Other routines entailed washing hands, pulling back long hair and putting on aprons. These routines were only talked about in conjunction with cooking in HCS, which can be interpreted as being something these pupils' teachers included in their lessons. Further, teachers were constructed to be in control as they planned, chose recipes and made preparations before lessons, excluding pupils from the process. For example, teachers were described to make all the preparations, such as planning what the pupils were to cook, doing the shopping and putting out ingredients on a designated table. The teacher then presented the recipe to the pupils as part of the lesson routine. A majority of the pupils constructed themselves as involved cooks at home and stated that they wanted to be more involved in planning and choice of recipes in school. Most of the pupils also described how the involvement they were allowed in school usually came down to a choice between spices or topping on a pizza, and only rarely as a choice between different dishes. There was however one exception, Hanna, who explained that she was a vegetarian and thus was allowed a degree of freedom resembling that at home, as she could choose what to cook and get the ingredients she needed herself from the cupboard or refrigerator. Cooking in HCS was also constructed as controlled progression, as pupils were given more influence with age, rather than skill. While some pupils talked of this progression in positive terms since it offered a secure frame to work in, some talked of it more negative terms, as skills and knowledge acquired outside HCS could not be used in school but rather had to be adjusted to the teacher's expectations and planning. The controlled cooking in HCS was thus understood as being concerned with the teacher's ideas of right and wrong, and sometimes this made little sense to the pupils. The construction of cooking in HCS as full of theory, routines and control reflects an implicit understanding of a pupil's role as not having much agency. Cooking in HCS was seen as the teacher's territory that the pupils were expected to adjust to, in contrast to cooking at home, which had more to do

with pupil's everyday life. Hence, HCS pupils were constructed as visitors in the teacher's classroom.

The last theme was called *de-authenticised food HCS*. Food in HCS was primarily associated with the activity of the very hands-on practical activity of cooking. At the same time, there were elements that helped to make the food cooking in school be seen as different from what food and meals should be and were experienced in everyday life at home: it was constructed as de-authenticised. For example portions were so small that they were described to be more like samples and food was prepared in order to learn about different cooking methods and flavours rather than to be eaten with the aim of satisfying one's appetite. Pupils expected food in HCS to be equivalent to food at home, but were met with something different, and some also questioned how "real" dishes from other cultures were. Although the purpose of the study was not to study the construction of food in HCS from a gender perspective, it is interesting to note that the girls associated food with certain meals and time of the day in a way that boys did not. For example, food was related to different meals, such as lunch or breakfast, but they were unable to define food in HCS as belonging to those meals, which made this food strange.

III: Learning space for food. Exploring three HCS classrooms

The aim of paper III was to investigate how a classroom can be understood and explored with a spatial perspective when studying children's learning about food in HCS. A bundle of four trajectories was analysed based on three core aspects. The trajectories were the relationship and place of HCS in the curriculum, socio-economic relationships, the relationship between home and school, and, the relationship between pupil and teachers. The three core aspects of spatiality that were explored were materiality, networks and power relations.

In analysing the *material aspects* it was found that both the physical layout and design of the classrooms at Slope Hill and Park City were conducive to collaborative activities. All classrooms also held traces of previous syllabi that had regulations of a kind that are no longer part of the HCS syllabus. For example, the syllabus of 1969 stated that pupils should learn to take care of and decorate different rooms, which called for classrooms with access to both toilets and bathtubs. These past ideologies had not been stored away, but rather they were present at each lesson and as such part of the HCS classroom's spatial form. But even though classrooms at Slope Hill and Park City had similar physical environments, they were embedded in different webs of influences and interrelations. Both schools were located in communities with

a long and strong industrial history. The difference was that the city where Park City was located had made a successful transition from traditional to service-oriented industry while the much smaller and rural community where Slope Hill was located had not been as successful. For example, adults had to commute long distances to find work.

The HCS classroom signals a space for bodily movement and sensory experiences, and sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch are thus all parts of the material aspects. The classrooms at Slope Hill and Park City were stocked with ephemeral objects in the form of food items with a relatively short life span – they had to be used before a certain date or they would go bad. Movement and sensory experiences were also intertwined with expectations of and references to doing and the practical work of cooking.

By analysing the material aspects of the three HCS classrooms it was found that they construct a space for learning about food that is both stable and changing: there is a certain degree of durability owing to the physical layout of the rooms and the ideas built into them as well as a degree of impermanence based on short-lived objects such as food. Further, the unquestioned layout of the classroom formalises old pedagogical and ideological ideas at the same time as the sensory and ephemeral qualities of objects make the passing of time evident at each lesson.

With a spatial approach the understanding of *networks* (or trajectories) are fundamental as space itself is conceived of as connections which are constituted in interaction. The HCS classroom as a learning space for food could thus be seen as constructed from intersecting and overlapping relations and cultures which extend far beyond the classroom. The HCS classroom is thus conceived of as a node in a web of complex networks rather than a place with boundaries that need to be crossed. The social relations made visible at Park City had to do with comparisons between how things were done at home and in HCS and as parents' expectations: pupils spoke about their families while they cooked. At Slope Hill pupils spoke more broadly and more intimately, both among themselves and with the teacher and assistant, about their homes and families. The teacher and assistant at Slope Hill actively engaged in, and even initiated, conversations about individual students' lives at home, while the two teachers at Park City had a more detached approach and spoke about "home" in more general terms. A spatial perspective allows us to see that "home" is an integral part of cooking activities in HCS, and the networks at the two different schools result in a difference between the representations of "home" as well as ways of approaching "home" in the classroom. We could thus see that different teachers and pupils use the same physical space in different ways which influence what kind of learning space is constructed. Anna at Slope Hill constructed an intimate and safe space; Betty and Caroline at Park City constructed a space for distance and general conceptualisations of home. However, pupils at both schools constructed this

space as a node involving experiences from home to make sense of what they did in HCS.

The final aspect of spatiality that was explored was how relations of *power* intersect with the relationship and place of HCS in the curriculum and in teacher-pupil relationships. Immediately upon entering the HCS classroom, pupils at both Slope Hill and Park City were met with routinized rules regulating their behaviour. For instance they washed their hands, put on aprons and sat at specially designated seats. There were many examples of practices that cement the HCS classroom as primarily the teachers' domain. One was the restricted access pupils had to storage areas, freezers and refrigerators. These practices meant that the teachers had to make preparations for each lesson, which could entail dividing yeast into pieces or pouring milk into glass jugs. These preparations worked both to restrict pupils' access to certain areas of the classrooms, and also to make the food anonymous. The HCS classroom thus became spatially arranged in different areas for teachers and pupils and also as a place where food items look different compared to other places. Further, at all lessons but two the teacher had chosen what to cook, which resulted in a low level of involvement for the pupils. The power relations in the HCS classroom constructed a space for learning about food that can be described as regimental: space was rigidly organized for the sake of regulation and control and not for the sake of learning about food, far from pupil involvement, individualization and spontaneity. Space was drawn upon to maintain and reproduce relations which view children as subordinate to adults. For example, all three teachers scrutinized each kitchen unit towards the end of each lesson, checking drawers and cupboards while pupils stood and waited to be approved.

Power relations constructing the HCS classroom as a learning space for food were also found in the physical location of the classrooms within the schools. At Slope Hill the classroom was located in the basement, behind a worn white steel door surrounded by graffiti. At Park City the two HCS classrooms were located in a listed building across a busy street from the main school building. Also, all three HCS teachers had their working stations located in or near the HCS classroom, which distanced them from colleagues and made interdisciplinary work difficult. The location and state of maintenance of the HCS classrooms also indicates the position of the subject and its main knowledge areas as marginalized; for example, equipment at both schools was worn and sometimes broken. The marginalization and distancing of the HCS classroom is an effect of power relations that seem intertwined with the identity of the subject.

Power relations in the construction of the HCS classroom as a learning space for food were found to reflect traditional power geometries, both in the relationship between teachers and pupils and in the construction of the identity of HCS as a school subject.

IV: What's for food in Swedish Home Economics? Food between educational visions and cultural meaning

Paper IV explored foods talked about and chosen in HCS as a relationship between structural processes and agency. The aim was to uncover the complexity of educational visions and cultural meaning that is at play in relation to food in Home Economics by asking the seemingly simple question "What's for food in HCS?" The investigation was carried out with both structuralist and social constructionist perspectives and began with a comprehensive analysis of all data to find categories of foods. This investigation revealed that it was the teachers who chose what food to include (or exclude) from HCS and that pupils were left to interpret these food choices. An overview of the categories is presented in Table 9.

Table 9. *Ten categories of food presented in paper IV*

Category	Teachers	Pupils
Healthy food	*Not* chocolate milk drinks, chocolate sticky cake, soft drinks	Whole grain flour, vegetable fat, water, pasta, pork
Eco-friendly food	50 g minced meat for two pupils (instead of 150)	Lamb, fish
Basic food	Minced meat, chicken, quorn, meat balls, soup with bread, pasta Bolognese	Pizza, pasta Bolognese, pancakes
Quickly made food	*Not* proper baking (not enough time)	*Not* quickly made food (takes longer than at home)
Affordable food	*Not* pork, beef fillet (too expensive)	Carrots, minced beef, bell peppers *Not* fish, eco-products, tomatoes (too expensive)
Educational food	Baking powder, yeast, milkshake	Baking powder, yeast
Versatile food	Minced meat, fish, potatoes, chicken	Vegetables, minced meat
Ideal food	Homemade meat balls, homemade bread, baking powder, yeast	Milk for lactose intolerant, chicken instead of pork, quorn instead of meat
Traditional food	Cinnamon rolls	Meat, potatoes, sauce, saffron buns, gingerbread, meat balls
Likeable food	"Pupils have to learn to like everything"	Seasoning, topping on pizza, seeds on bread *Not* onions, apples

The categories were organised with the help of a "culinary triangle of contradictions" (Belasco 2008) to explore issues of identity, convenience and responsibility (see Table 1 and *Figure 1*). Belasco placed responsibility at the apex of the triangle and argued that it ought to be the strongest consideration when we make food choices, although in reality it might not be so. This was also the case when teachers and pupils spoke about and chose food in HCS, and as a reflection of this a culinary triangle of contradictions for HCS was produced with an inverted triangle (see *Figure 6*).

Identity has to do with personal preferences, a sense of who we are, our taste, ethnical background and gender. Food in HCS was constructed in relation to identity through the categories basic and traditional. Both teachers and pupils used the term *basic food* to describe what they did in HCS. One teacher described basic food as "food you should eat often", and a couple of pupils depicted it as "food that has everything that your body needs". Basic food illustrates how practices in HCS reflect national food culture. Food related to identity in HCS was also captured in the category *traditional food*, which described both old and new traditions. Analysis further showed how teachers sometimes involved their personal preferences when they made food choices; this was sorted into the *ideal food* category. For example several teachers agreed that homemade food was better than store-bought meat balls. One teacher said:

> The important thing is to communicate that food has to be cooked from scratch, with simple, good food, and you don't buy ready-made.

Ideal food was described by the pupils as personal food norms that a person has for religious reasons, nutritional needs or specific demands stemming from a vegetarian lifestyle. Pupils also spoke about *likeable food*, which meant that it was extremely important to them that they liked the food they used and cooked in HCS. As food choices for HCS were made by the teachers in my material, the pupils' possibilities of expressing their own personal taste was reduced to a choice between, for example, excluding onions from a dish or adding a certain spice. Most teachers stated that pupils would have to taste food with onions even if they did not like it.

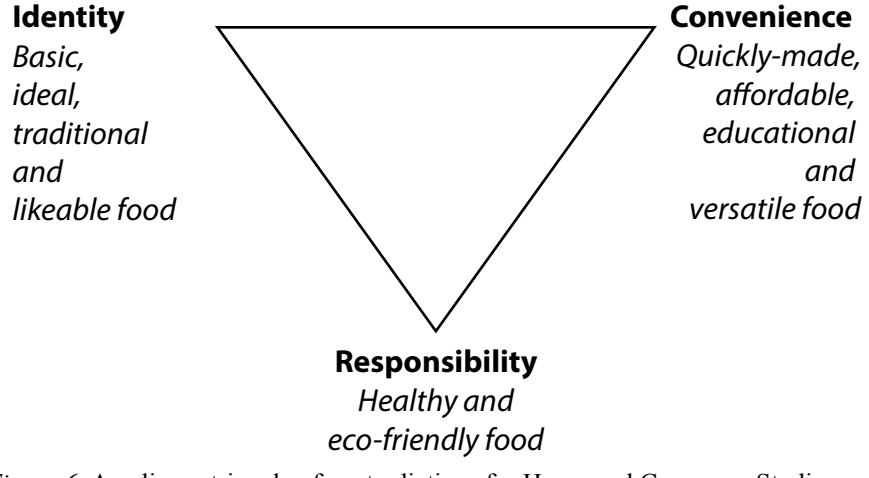

Figure 6. A culinary triangle of contradictions for Home and Consumer Studies

Convenience has to do with price, availability, ease of preparation, time and skills. The categories quickly made, affordable, educational and versatile

food comprised factors of convenience in relation to food in HCS. To teachers' food had to be *quickly-made* as the short lessons rarely allowed time for the different aspects they wanted to include. To some pupils, however, food in HCS was not quickly made when they compared it to everyday food made at home. Food was also spoken of and chosen as *affordable*. Some foods, such as beef fillet and beef sirloin, were unthinkable to teachers because they were too expensive. Pupils mentioned that their schools couldn't afford more expensive foods, and gave eco-products, tomatoes and fish as examples. Instead they worked with affordable food such as carrots and minced meat. It could be argued that all food in HCS is *educational*; however in the categories this referred to food that was primarily selected because of its educational properties, reflecting ideas of progression as a norm. The pupils had to start with simpler foods to let their skills develop, for example bake with baking powder before they bake with yeast. Food was also talk of as convenient when it was *versatile* and could be used for an array of dishes. For example, a teacher could choose minced meat and let pupils "do something" with it, meaning be creative and make different dishes. Minced beef was also versatile as it could be used even if you have different religious beliefs or convictions.

Responsibility has to do with ethical issues and being aware of the consequences of one's actions. Responsibility is both personal, social, physiological and political. Two categories reflected responsibility: healthful food and eco-friendly food. Teachers explained that everything they did was from a health perspective, and the food they chose was thus *healthful*. Pupils supported this belief: they were told that food in HCS was healthful and thus they interpreted most of the food in HCS as being just that. Both teachers and pupils also spoke of *eco-friendly* food and sustainability but talked of this factor as more of an ideal than an actual practice. For pupils this made little sense, and they described it as odd that teachers said that sustainability was important but did not reflect this in concrete food choices. Some teachers said that although they wanted to have eco-friendly food, it was not feasible due to practical difficulties.

6. Discussion

The construction of a deficient home and society in relation to health

Teachers in the present thesis constructed their role to be that of role models who have a public health commission: on behalf of the state it was their task to educate pupils about healthy alternatives. The deficiency they saw was not only in pupils' homes, but also in society in general, for example in the prevalence of processed foods. Thus, not only the home but also society was understood as deficient.

The construction of the deficient home made by teachers in this study and the reasons found in the original arguments for starting domestic education evince some differences, however. The original reasons for commencing education for and about the home to a large extent relied on arguments that constructed women and households as deficient, both in Sweden (Johansson 1987) and elsewhere (Crotty 1995, Coveney 2000). The idea was that as society transformed from a regime where children learned what they needed through participation in household activities into a regime where education was a prerequisite for both professional and domestic life (Lindensjö and Lundgren 2000), knowledge and skills concerning food were no longer sufficiently transferred from one generation to the next in a domestic context (Johansson 1987). Life at home and domestic cooking is still the focus of education in HCS. In the syllabus that was in use when data for this thesis was collected, the very first sentence set the scene for the subject: "The subject of Home and Consumer Studies provides knowledge about life in the home and family" (Kursplan 2000, p. 18) and in the present syllabus the first sentence reads: "Life in the home and in the family is of crucial importance for people" (Lgr11 2011, p. 43). How then can the "home" that teachers construct be understood? According to Shelley Mallett (2004) the term "home" can be defined in a number of different ways, one of them being as an ideological construct. For example, in Western contexts we expect that at a certain time in a young person's life it is appropriate to leave their birth family home. This expectation, Mallett explains, is premised on an idealized, ideological and ethnocentric view of home where it is thought of as a nurturing environment. From this perspective, then, it would be possible to interpret the deficient home that teachers spoke of as an ideological construct and not as a projection of the actual homes of their pupils. On the other hand, as

teachers spoke about the possibilities of giving out practical homework, it became apparent that it indeed was the actual homes of their pupils that they spoke of. Both in public debates at the time of the inception of education about and for the home, and in teacher's discussions in the present thesis it seems that the home is considered from a moral perspective. There is a difference, however. The deficient home of the nineteenth century was constructed based on perceptions of what a woman/mother ought to do (Frykman and Löfgren 1979, Johansson 1987, Coveney 2000) while teachers in this thesis based their worries on uncertainties in relation to socio-economic factors (could pupils' homes afford practical homework assignments?) as well as regarding what kind of support their pupils would get (parents would either interfere too much, or deny their children access to the kitchen). Similar concerns were reported by Home Economics teachers in Manitoba, Canada, who stated that there had been a decline in food mentoring at home (Slater 2013). The moral concerns of a deficient home have thus shifted focus, but the relationship between teachers and the private lives of their pupils can nevertheless described as precarious (Aldenmyr 2007). Taking the issue of practical homework assignments as an example, it has been argued that because they affect families' private lives there is no way to defend them ethically, unless families are involved very closely through the whole process of education (Kristiansen and Kristiansen 1997).

The construction of society as deficient can be seen not only among teachers in the present thesis. Because contemporary society is struggling with what has been described as an obesity epidemic, some attention has been directed to how this deficient society can provide young people with the skills and knowledge they need to live healthy lives (Lichtenstein and Ludwig 2010, Slater 2013). In such a deficient society it is for example claimed that children need to learn food skills, such as cooking (Seeley, Wu, and Caraher 2010, Fordyce-Voorham 2011). The deficient society is also constructed as having issues with how people can live sustainable lives (Åbacka 2008, Slater 2013). What is interesting here is that there seems to have been a shift in the public debate over the past hundred years, from constructing the home as deficient to constructing society in general as deficient. Education for and about the home is thus claimed to be needed, not only because households themselves cannot provide adequate skills and knowledge, but because society itself is under pressure. In such an era of deficiencies it can be argued that education has become pivotal for the health of both individuals and the environment. If this indeed is the case, it also follows that it is important to reflect upon what kind of education is needed and how much time it should be allotted. Home Economics teachers in Manitoba, Canada, struggled to educate properly, partly because of a lack of time given to the subject (Slater 2013); Åbacka (2008) argued that time was an issue in Finland too; and as early as 1992 Elsa Nordin claimed that nutrition education in Sweden needed more time. Swedish HCS has been allocat-

ed 118 hours in the national timetable, which means that out of nine years of compulsory education Swedish children have three weeks of education on issues that relate to everyday life at home (Hjälmeskog and Höijer 2006). This, of course, appears to be inadequate in relation to the task HCS teachers have been given through the syllabus and how they construct themselves as public health commissioners. The construction of a deficient home and society for public health emerges as a base upon which education about and for the home can be advocated for and defended, both today and throughout history. I argue that there is a need for policy-makers to consider HCS teachers as key stakeholders and HCS as a serious opportunity to educate Swedish children about everyday life.

The results of this thesis thus show that teachers construct both home and society as deficient in relation to health; they also show that pupils construct the home in a fundamentally different way, which I will discuss in the next section.

Pupils and the construction of food in HCS

To make sense of food in an HCS context pupils draw on their individual experiences from home. Food is an integral part of everyday life, and pupils are well aware that HCS education about food concerns these aspects of their lives. Because they anticipate HCS education to be about something they are already familiar with they also negotiate the meaning of the food they come in contact with in HCS in relation to that from their homes. And while they understand their homes to be the authentic food places where everyday real food is practised, they construct HCS in relation to this to be de-authenticised and fake. How is this possible?

A key to understand pupils' representation of food in HCS lies in what can be described as a tension between the informal context of home and the formal context of school. Palojoki (2003) conceived of these differences in terms of learning and argued that there are borders between home and school which are hard for pupils to cross. Without transparency between the different contexts, or worlds as she called them, pupils stand at risk of being left alone as learners. I propose that the tension between home and school should not be understood as different worlds with borders between them. Instead both home and school are part of pupils' spatial networks, which means that as pupils enter an HCS classroom for a lesson about food, they bring with them and are embedded in networks of meaning that are formed across contexts such as home and school. The informal context of home was primarily constructed by the pupils as a space where they are included in all aspects of food work. For example, all but one pupil saw themselves as able cooks at home, and although this did not have to mean that they actually did the cooking for their families, they did construct themselves as important and includ-

ed participants of their families. This means that food at home is understood as real and authentic because it is related to real life, which involves activities such as planning, shopping, cooking and cleaning up which pupils are part of. In contrast to this food in the formal context of HCS was constructed as detached and de-authenticised, which primarily has to do with the level of inclusion pupils experienced. In HCS pupils are not included in the process of planning and shopping but are left to execute the activity of transforming ingredients into meals, eating and then cleaning up after themselves. They are thus excluded from vital parts of what they understand as parts of food work at home.

Pupils experience themselves to have agency within the contexts of their own homes. However, when constructing themselves as pupils in HCS this possibility of having agency and negotiating meaning is subordinated to traditional constructions of schooling and pupil-teacher power relations. One exception was Hanna. She had access to refrigerators and cupboards and was also allowed to choose what to make more freely than the other pupils in this study. She was well aware that she was being treated differently and explained that this probably had to do with her being a vegetarian. In discussing the schooled child James, Jenks, and Prout (1998) point out that schools are unique in that they provide a singular possibility to manage and control a large group of the population and that assumptions about how children ought to be are expressed in the curriculum. Criticism of the lack of pupil involvement in HCS in national reports (Skolverket 1993, 2004) shows that there is a view of pupils in Swedish schools that values the perspectives and influence of pupils. Within the formal framework there should be room for pupils to draw on their own experiences, and this is expressed as a fundamental value in the Swedish curriculum, both in the one that was used when data for this thesis was collected (Lpo94 1994), and in the one from 2011:

> Teaching should be adapted to each pupil's circumstances and needs. It should promote the pupils' further learning and acquisition of knowledge based on pupils' backgrounds, earlier experiences, language and knowledge (Lgr11 2011, p. 10).

However, the results of this thesis do show that the experiences pupils already had about food were not seized upon and elaborated in the classroom. Paper II showed that cooking in HCS was understood as being framed by theory, routines and control, and food was hard to make sense of. And the results from paper III showed how the classroom as a learning space for food also was constructed as regulated. Space was rigidly organised for the sake of regulation and control and not for the sake of learning about food: it was far removed from student involvement, individualisation and spontaneity. The results of paper IV also underlined this construction: food choices were commonly made by teachers, which meant that pupils were left to merely

interpret these choices. Food in HCS thus became detached and "fake" because pupils' agency was not acknowledged and woven into HCS education about food.

With a constructivist model of childhood, children are understood as active constructors of their own social worlds (Corsaro 2005), which means that children not only make meaning about food in the contexts of their own homes but in many spaces, including Home Economics (Christensen 2003, Brembeck 2009). The implications of previous studies as well as results in the present thesis are that pupils are embedded not only in the cultural practices of their homes but also across their whole life courses. For example, they are active in constructing meaning with peers in school (Kaplan 2000, Christensen 2003, Persson Osowski, Göranzon, and Fjellström 2012). Because children are active constructors of their own social worlds, this also means that they not simply accept or internalize society and culture – instead they produce their own understandings to make sense of their world. This was illustrated by Roos (2002), who found that children were aware of gender stereotypes associated with food (that girls prefer healthful food while boys prefer junk food) but that this did not have to mean that they adhered to those stereotypical gender roles. The beliefs children have about food are thus formed by what they do in relation to what they perceive as important and proper (cf. Hastrup 2004); it is an active process here and now – it is part of everyday life. Education about food in HCS is not constructed by pupils to be concerned with their everyday lives here and now at home with their families. Instead they perceive this education to be aimed at their future lives as adults, which further adds to the construction of food in HCS as detached.

Even in the curriculum from 1969 (Lgr69 1969) there were writings that show that the Swedish school system has a strong belief in pupils as individuals. For example it said that the school must provide pupils with the opportunity to have influence over their own working conditions. Also, the syllabus for HCS from 1969 stated that teachers were to develop themes of study in relation to pupils' interests, experiences and problems. The belief in each pupil's capacity and the importance of grounding education in their experiences is thus a fundamental part of the Swedish school system. However, to pupils, food in HCS means that they are detached from vital parts of the food work process, and this detachment has to do with a lack of agency. For HCS education about food to be able to live up to the fundamental assumptions about pupils that are made in the curriculum and also to make sense from the perspective of pupils, they have to be attributed the status of social actors – not only in the syllabus and curriculum, but in concrete action in the classroom.

Social and cultural perspectives on food within an HCS context

Based on my results presented in the four papers I could see a specific way of choosing, using and talking about food in the HCS context. I have chosen to discuss the picture that emerged from this overall analysis using the concept of cuisine put forward by Rozin (2000), Farb and Armelagos (1980) and Belasco (2008). These scholars have presented cuisine as a way of distinguishing a specific culture or nation by looking at five elements: basic foods, culinary techniques, flavours, manners and food chain. However, I believe that these five elements can be used just as well when looking at a more specific area such as HCS. The HCS cuisine is thus part of the overall culture, although it represent a more specific culture, or one could say a certain subsystem. In this subsystem that HCS constitutes the cuisine proved to include the following elements (see Table 10):

Table 10. *The HCS cuisine*

Basic foods	Culinary techniques	Flavours	Manners	Food chain
Minced meat Chicken Quorn	Measurable and tangible	Bland rather than spicy: salt, pepper	Follow the recipe Walk in the classroom Collaborate Eat together at a table	Whatever is possible to buy within budget and from the specific supplier

The basic foods in the specific HCS cuisine are those that were most commonly spoken of and used by participants in the present study: minced meat, chicken breast fillet and quorn fillet or mince (paper IV). In the HCS-cuisine, culinary techniques are not easily identifiable as being expressly concerned with chopping, dicing or mixing, for example. Instead, any technique is possible, as long as it is tangible and measurable (paper I). Teachers construct cooking to be tangible: they need to be able to know what pupils have learned and hence also to be able to assess them. This is done by teaching pupils methods and utensils within a framework of controlled progression. Rozin (2000) states that flavours are the most distinguishing element of a cuisine: what separates the wheat-based dough turned into noodles in China and pasta in Italy is not the basic foods or the culinary technique used to make it. It is how it is flavoured. However, Belasco (2008) cautions against over-generalizing flavours, because there are so many different regional and individual variations. Nevertheless, in the HCS cuisine flavour emerges as bland rather than spicy: it is primarily based on salt and pepper and to a much less degree with spicy food. This is in line with the flavour principles Rozin (2000) identifies as typical of northern Europe: underplayed and less

salient than for example in India or Mexico. It was obvious in interviews and observations that pupils wanted to use their individual preferences for seasoning the food they cooked, but this was only rarely allowed. Instead, manners emerge as an important part of an HCS cuisine. Pupils are regulated and required to follow the recipe, walk in the classroom, collaborate etc. It is not surprising that manners stand out as important as the teachers understand themselves as fostering teachers who provide a socializing framework. Food chain, finally, concerns the specific infrastructure by which a group's food moves from farm to fork (Belasco 2008). The contemporary Swedish ideal might be to consume locally produced foods, which would mean a food chain that is relatively simple. In HCS, however, teachers are for the most part required to buy food from a supplier that has a procurement contract with the municipality. This means that they have to order food without much control over the food chain, which is a bit awkward given that they are supposed to teach about food. According to Belasco (2008) cuisines capture the expressive and normative functions of food. So, is there a specific HCS cuisine? My answer to that would be "yes". The HCS cuisine is mostly focused upon *how* food is cooked (culinary techniques and manners), but also involves *what*, particularly minced meat. The HCS cuisine shows how the dominant culture emerges and is part of HCS practice. In addition to this, culinary techniques, manners and food chain are specifically formed in relation to the particular demands of HCS as a school subject.

In paper IV a social constructionist approach was combined with traditional structuralist theories of classification. In this way it was possible to illuminate just how complex food is in HCS: no fewer than ten categories were found among the foods that pupils and teachers spoke about in interviews and used during observations. It may seem old-fashioned to employ a structuralist approach, but it has in fact been indicated that a combination of approaches such as was done for paper IV indeed manages to capture the dynamics of food. Or, as Guptill, Copelton, and Lucal (2013) put it: "the dialogue between these two perspectives reveals more than each could reveal on its own" (p. 10). What then was revealed? The first most obvious finding was not surprisingly that it was the teachers who had made almost all of the food choices. The question was, could they choose any food at all given that the syllabus does not say what foods to choose? The answer to that must be a distinct "no". Because teachers are embedded in the cultural and structural framework of school and society, their choices will also be a reflection of the culture and structure of which they are part. For example, the most common food item they chose and spoke about was minced meat. This has been described as one of the most popular foods in Sweden (Mäkelä, Kjærnes, and Pipping Ekström 2001). It is also relatively cheap and can rather easily be used for many different dishes. Another important finding was that both pupils and teachers spoke about the foods in HCS in the same way and associated them with the same meanings. Again, this is not surprising, because they are all participants

in the same cultural and social space. According to Rozin (2005) we are particular about food choice, and when we deliberate on what to eat, we employ both physical and cultural considerations. These considerations has been described as complex (Palojoki 1997, Furst et al. 2000), which is why the culinary triangle of contradictions (Belasco 2008) helped to make sense of the categories. Teachers and pupils construct food in HCS to be predominantly about health and thus be healthful: everything that is done in HCS is done from a health perspective. This underlying approach to food was also supplemented with a sustainability perspective. Together, they were spoken of as the base for food-related activities in HCS. This has also been explained by Åbacka (2008) as fundamental parts of what HCS education about food should involve. However, with the help of categories and culinary triangle of contradictions it was found that health and sustainability, both aspects of responsibility, were less prominent in relation to aspects of identity and convenience. Teachers believe that they educate about food in such a way that responsible pupils are fostered; however, when comparing this construction with the findings in paper IV and the HCS cuisine, it becomes obvious that other concerns take over. Issues such as convenience, assessment and the need to regulate pupils in the classroom overshadow the intention to teach for responsibility. Pupils are aware of these constructions and describe food in a more perspicacious manner than teachers. For example, they question whether food in HCS really is sustainable and the authenticity of food that is said to come from China. When teachers choose food to include in HCS education about food, aspects relating to health and sustainability are outnumbered by other considerations. HCS teachers thus want to educate for healthful and sustainable food; however, in relation to the social and cultural structures within which they practice, their work this is hard to realise.

HCS as education about food

Food in HCS is contested. By this I mean that pupils and teachers make sense of food in relation to HCS in such fundamentally different ways that there is a limited shared understanding. One example of contested food is in relation to the construction of the home that I have discussed previously. Another is that teachers perceive food in HCS as food with a purpose (paper I): through working with food pupils are given the opportunity to learn about health, economy, nutrition etc. Food is thus conceived of as an interdisciplinary field by the teachers. The tentative analysis presented in this thesis shows there was a shift in the Swedish syllabus for HCS as it went from a nutrition perspective to a social perspective on food in the syllabuses of 1994 and 2000 (Lpo94 1994, Kursplan 2000), which I interpret to be an effect of the discussions advocating an interdisciplinary approach to food in Home Economics education that emerged during the 1990's (eg. Benn 1996). This

interdisciplinary approach is the base for how teachers make sense of food in HCS. Pupils on the other hand associate food in HCS to be primarily concerned with cooking (paper II). Cooking is a term that has been defined in a domestic context by Short (2003, 2006) to be a complex combination of skills, abilities and knowledge that are contextual in nature. However, from the way teachers and pupils spoke about cooking I conclude that to them the term refers to the actual activity of transforming ingredients into a dish that is eaten, commonly by following a recipe. Cooking to learn skills for their future lives as adults is what food in HCS is about for pupils.

The HCS classroom is an integral part of teachers and pupils meaning making about food. By approaching the HCS classroom as space, that is, as both a particular physical location and social relationships (Cosgrove 2004, Gulson and Symes 2007, Gildersleeve and Kuntz 2011), a pattern emerges that illuminates the vital importance the classroom has. The layout and furnishing of the classroom (for examples, see *Figure 2* and *Figure 3*) signals that this is a space where bodies move and where physical activity is part of the lesson. Messages of inclusion, isolation and hierarchy are transmitted through the positioning of the classroom within the school and by the state of the appliances in the classroom. Power relations are constructed and maintained through the division of the classroom in different areas for pupils and teachers. Sensory experiences such as scents and the sensation of heat reveals that this is a room for food. These aspects, in conjunction with many more, construct the HCS classroom as a learning space for food.

Pupils are aware of the state of the classroom, they notice broken appliances and paint peeling from the walls. Some prefer to cook at home because they know where things are kept there, others like the pre-prepared and clean classroom where the can just go in and start cooking. For teachers the classroom is part of the HCS institution. This means that it takes a lot of time to maintain it properly, which colleagues often fail to appreciate. Much money is invested here and it cannot just be left, neither over holidays nor even after a single lesson. Special attention is needed before longer holidays, such as by Christmas and over the summer, to tidy and clean the entire classroom.

The spatial HCS classroom is constructed through a series of distinct trajectories (Massey 2005). These are relationships stretching far beyond the classroom that meet in this particular location to form a node. For example, it is the relationship between teachers and pupils or between HCS and the curriculum. At any given lesson a distinct bundle of trajectories coexist which means that the classroom is not fixed but rather constantly renegotiated. By exploring material, network and power aspects (McGregor 2003, 2004b,c,d) of the spatial HCS classroom I can see that the teacher and his or hers interaction with pupils is crucial for how the classroom is understood and consequently also for how food can be made sense of.

As I see it food is not only constructed as contested in the relation between teachers, pupils and classroom; it is an effect of HCS being part of a

wider context which I term cultural space. With cultural space HCS is conceptualised as a particular subject that is understood in specific ways through the beliefs that is shared by a group of people. The term culture here refers to the cultural way of being in the world that Hastrup (2004) has explained and encompasses both the beliefs that are shared by a group of people as well as the values that are held in contemporary society (Frykman and Löfgren 1979). A group such as pupils or teachers develop and negotiate specific beliefs of what HCS and food in HCS is, as we have seen. But not only the beliefs of teachers and pupils constitute HCS as cultural space: the values underpinning the syllabus are a vital part, as well as the values that colleagues, parents and other people somehow related to HCS have. In a complex network all these beliefs contribute to what HCS is perceived to be. And even though I have not explored the perceptions of for example policy makers or parents, I believe that they are tacitly incorporated through the constructions that teachers and pupils make and are expressed in the syllabus, for example. The interdisciplinary approach to food in HCS is one such value. Another is the philosophical epistemology of Molander (1996) that has been described as the fundament upon which the HCS syllabus builds. This epistemology can be described with the term "learning-by-doing" or "knowledge-in-action", which means that it is believed that pupils primarily learn if they are engaged in real-life-like situations (Skolverket 2011b).

In combination with cultural beliefs I conceive of HCS as space by drawing on the work of Massey (1994, 2005). To begin with I understand space as relationships that are created through social interaction, both between the people and stakeholders that I just mentioned, and also between material objects and people in the classroom as well as the physical location of classrooms and people interacting with and within it. Consider the difference between a female or male as a biological being and as a social construction in terms of gender. In a similar vein HCS as space is constructed socially in a process of negotiation, definition and reconstruction. Because space is understood as a process it is also constantly in flux: it is never finished or closed, and thereby change is embedded in the understanding of HCS as space. Another integral part of this understanding of space is that it is considered to be full of internal conflicts. In relation to HCS this has to do with conflicts over matters such as what the subject is and what food in HCS is. According to McGregor (2004a) past ideologies and practices are built into the physical structure of classrooms. This could for example be seen in the physical layouts of the classrooms analysed in paper III, which show that the layout and furnishing of HCS classrooms are taken for granted in an institutional pattern. This layout, where some areas are constituted as belonging to the teacher and others to the pupils, constructs a regulated room that is not organised for the sake of learning about food but rather for the sake of maintaining and reproducing relations that view children as subordinate to adults.

By combining culture and space in a common concept, *cultural space*, I argue that it is possible to get hold of all the contradictions and tensions that construct food in HCS as contested.

Relevance of methods

According to Patton (2002) social constructionists brought a new language and new concepts to distinguish quality, which has meant that issues of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability should be discussed.

Credibility has to with how believable the findings are. One way to do this is to actively involve the participants of a study and assess whether the interpretations the researcher has made accurately represent them (Creswell and Miller 2000). This was not possible in the work of this thesis, however; the results have been presented and discussed with other HCS teachers (for example at conferences) and pupils (on various occasions). Although not exhaustive, these discussions have given an indication of how credible my findings have been. Bryman (2008) also suggests the use of triangulation to establish the credibility of a qualitative study. This entails using more than one method or source of data. For the present thesis I used observations, focus group interviews and photo elicitation, and the combination of observations and interviews has been described as a good way to ensure credibility by Bryman (2008). It could be argued that the data for this study is small, with 13 days of observations and focus groups interviews with 25 HCS teachers and 20 pupils. Ethnographic fieldwork is more commonly carried out over a longer period of time. However, according to Patton (2002) the critical point is not the length of fieldwork but rather how well the purpose of the study and the questions asked are met: it should last long enough to get the job done. For the purposes of this thesis I argue that 13 days was quite sufficient, as similar patterns was observed. During the fieldwork, notes were taken. Many educational studies employing ethnographic methods use videotaping to document what happens in a classroom, which can be a way to capture non-verbal communications and emotions that field notes can miss (Hatch 2002). The reliability of field notes or videotape is not whether one or the other is used, but rather how well the method suits the study (Patton 2002). As time for fieldwork for the present study was limited and as I wanted the freedom to move around the room without interfering too much, the choice for the present thesis was field notes.

The number of participants in my focus group interviews was limited. The literature on focus group interviews (eg. Horner 2000, Patton 2002, Onwuegbuzie et al. 2009) often gives recommendations as to the size and composition of groups without recommending a total number of participants. However, focus groups produce high-quality data, as participants interact

with each other (Patton 2002), which can be further enhanced by conducting more than one session with each group (Horner 2000, Onwuegbuzie et al. 2009). Together with my supervisors I assessed that saturation was reached after all sessions had been held, that is: information occurred so repeatedly that we could anticipate it.

Mayall (2008) argues that there are inherent power relations between children and adults that cannot be ignored when conducting research with children. She suggests the use of conversation as method for data collection to hand over the agenda to children. According to Horner (2000), however, focus group interviews allow children to be relaxed and willing to share perceptions as they are with their peers. With adults, though, Patton (2002) claims that participants should share a similar background but be strangers to each other. For this thesis I used both conversations during fieldwork and focus group interviews to explore both students' and teachers' points-of-view. I also had peer groups when interviewing students, and groups consisting mostly of strangers when interviewing teachers.

Transferability concerns whether the findings apply to other contexts. According to Bryman (2008) qualitative researchers are encouraged to produce thick descriptions (Geertz 1973). The writing of a thick description entails the construction of interpretations in a series of steps, according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005). This process means first creating a field text, which is followed by a research text based on the field text. In a third step, the research text is recreated as a working interpretive document in which the first attempts to make sense of that which is being studied. Lastly, the writer produces a public text, which reaches readers. This method allows readers to make judgements about the possible transferability of findings (Bryman 2008). This thesis is based upon four papers which necessarily have been written with a limited word count; therefore it has been difficult to be elaborate and descriptive in these texts. It could thus be argued that it would be easier to consider the transferability of this thesis if I had chosen to report my research findings in a monograph. I believe that despite these issues it is possible to see that the idea of a subject or classroom as cultural space could be transferable to other school subjects and indeed other contexts too.

Dependability concerns how reliable methods are and conformability how objective the research has been. According to Schwandt, Lincoln and Guba (2007) dependability and conformability is established through an audit trail of two kinds. The dependability of a study concerns the quality of the research process and the idea is to submit data (such as field notes and transcripts) as well as a draft manuscript to peers to establish the merits of research. However, this has been described as very demanding for auditors and not a pervasive approach for validation (Bryman 2008). Data for this thesis has not been submitted for audit by disinterested experts. Conformability on the other hand is established through different expert reviews, such as a doctoral committee for a thesis and peer reviewers for papers (Patton 2002). The

papers included in this thesis has been audited by peers and has therefore been judged to meet the criterions for conformability.

7. Conclusions

The results show that food in a HCS-context is contested. Pupils understand food in HCS as detached in relation to their ideals, the home. Teachers on the other hand see food in HCS as an ideal in relation to a deficient home and society. For pupils, HCS is about the future, about their lives as adults, and not about their life here and now. Teachers believe that they have a mission to educate for public health by being role models and demonstrate healthy alternatives. The classroom is an important part of how HCS as a subject and how food in HCS is understood, and the teacher plays a key role in what classroom is constructed.

A specific HCS cuisine emerges in the results which shows that there are food practices that are particular to a HCS context. However, HCS is not only constructed as contested and specific in the relation between teachers, pupils and classroom; it is an effect of HCS being part of a wider context. HCS is thus a cultural space that is understood in specific ways through the beliefs that is shared by a group of people.

Although this thesis focused on meaning-making of food in HCS and not learning, the construction of a school subject as a cultural space described is an approach that can be useful for any school subject. Socially constructed beliefs are essential for which subject matter is considered as important, as well as for ideas on how education should be conducted.

8. Continued research

To further deepen the understanding of how HCS as cultural space is constructed it would be interesting to widen the scope and explore beliefs associated with HCS and food in relation to HCS in other contexts. Such as:

- For over one hundred years the Swedish state has considered it important to educate about food through the school subject HCS. It would be interesting to study how HCS and food in HCS is constructed by policy makers and other key stakeholders, for example with interviews or focus group interviews, perhaps also with a historical perspective.
- Food is a recurring theme in TV-programs, blogs, newspaper articles etc., but little is known of how HCS is constructed in media. A study could focus on a particular media, or specific period of time, or perhaps use a combination of those.
- Some pupils and teachers make film clips during HCS lessons and upload them on YouTube. A study could download all clips from a specific time and analyse them as part of a contemporary representation of HCS. Because YouTube film clips are publicly accessible, these offer a unique opportunity for anyone to see what happens in an otherwise closed environment.
- HCS-teachers and the relationship and position of HCS within the curriculum could be further studied with a mental map methodology (McGregor 2004d). By letting teachers draw mental maps of their schools it can be explored how they make sense of HCS as part of their workplace.
- Through focus groups or ethnological questionnaire it could be studied how persons who have finished their education about food in HCS understand this subject.

Svensk sammanfattning

Bakgrund och syfte

Hem- och konsumentkunskap (HK) har varit ett obligatoriskt skolämne för alla pojkar och flickor i den svenska grundskolan sedan 1962. Ämnets rötter sträcker sig till artonhundratalets samhällsförändringar och vetenskapliga framsteg, då de första stegen togs till att införa utbildning om och för hemmet med mat som centralt tema, både i Sverige och på andra platser runt om i världen. Mat handlar inte enbart om näringsämnen och att bli mätt för att överleva utan vi förknippar mat med en mängd olika saker. Till exempel kan mat markera skillnad mellan vardag, helg och högtider eller mellan dygnets olika delar. Vardagens måltider hemma med familjen har också visat sig vara en viktig del i en familjs kultur då sociala positioner och roller reflekteras. Historiskt har det även funnits en nära förbindelse mellan vardagsmaten i hemmet och kvinnor, medan professionell matlagning har förknippats med män. Dessutom finns stereotypa föreställningar om att flickor föredrar hälsosam mat medan pojkar föredrar skräpmat, som barn har visat sig vara medvetna om, även om de inte nödvändigtvis håller med om dem. Trots HK-ämnets långa historia vet vi inte vilka föreställningar lärare och elever har kring mat i relation till HK.

Det övergripande syftet med denna avhandling var att ta reda på hur mat konstrueras i ett HK-sammanhang genom att studera vilken mening elever och lärare skapar kring mat i relation till HK. Jag har även velat ta reda på hur klassrummet kan förstås samt hur mat i HK kan ses som en del av en större kontext.

Ett delsyfte har även varit att ta reda på hur mat har konstruerats i de sex kursplaner ämnet hittills har haft (1962, 1969, 1980, 1994, 2000 samt 2011). Genom att läsa igenom kursplanerna flera gånger, både i sin helhet och med särskild fokus på de delar som handlat om mat formades en preliminär analys. Denna visade att kursplanerna kan delas in i tre faser. Den första omfattar kursplanerna från 1962 och 1980. Då användes begreppet ”kost” och mat betraktades främst ur ett vetenskapligt perspektiv med fokus på näring. I den andra fasen ingår kursplanerna från 1994 och 2000. Då användes begreppet ”mat”, tillsammans med måltider, och ett socialt perspektiv på mat kom fram. I den tredje fasen ingår kursplanen från 2011. Då sammanfogades vetenskapliga och sociala perspektiv på mat.

Teoretiska utgångspunkter

För att förstå hur mat blir begriplig för elever och lärare användes ett socialkonstruktionistiskt perspektiv som kompletterades med teorier kring kultur, rum och spatialitet.

Två personer kanske ser samma saker med sina ögon, till exempel en tallrik med spaghetti och köttfärssås, men denna tallrik kan betyda helt olika saker för dem. En person kanske förknippar denna tallrik med nostalgiska minnen av att laga mat tillsammans med någon i familjen, en annan kanske blir äcklad eftersom hen är vegetarian. Samma mat kan på detta sätt konstrueras på en mängd olika sätt. Socialkonstruktionism brukar beskrivas som ett paraply under vilket en mängd olika inriktningar samsas som har det gemensamt att de vilar på några grundantaganden. Ett sådant antagande som även anammats i denna avhandling är att kunskap konstrueras av människor snarare än att vi bara får den från en lärare eller någon annan källa. Oavsett om det gäller vuxna eller barn så betraktas de som aktiva medskapare, dvs. människor som gör saker och har saker att säga, människor som kan berätta om sina uppfattningar och som konstruerar vad världen betyder. Det här brukar beskrivas med begreppet agentskap. Ett annat antagande har varit att vi konstruerar mening i processer som är specifika för särskilda tider och platser, alltså att lärare och elever skapar olika mening kring mat i olika sammanhang, såsom i skolan eller hemma. Ur ett socialkonstruktionistiskt perspektiv uppfattas utbildning och undervisning som en process där olika objekt konstrueras, till exempel ett specifikt ämne (HK) eller ämnesområde (mat). Denna process förstås i sin tur involvera olika mekanismer, exempelvis interaktionella, sociala eller kulturella.

Kultur kan förstås som både ett socialt fenomen och som ett analytiskt perspektiv. Som *socialt fenomen* beskriver kultur hur vi konstruerar vår värld. Kultur kan då ses som något grundläggande mänskligt: som en del av att vara social och att ständigt relatera oss själva till andra. Poängen är att världen inte är neutral för oss: vi förstår alltid världen ur ett eller annat perspektiv. Inom en övergripande kultur finns subsystem, såsom skolan, och det finns ofta motstridiga kulturella värderingar mellan olika grupper. En kultur kan sägas beskriva de värderingar som förenar en viss grupp i förhållande till en annan grupp. Som *analytiskt perspektiv* handlar kultur om att ta ett steg tillbaka och undersöka de konstruktioner genom vilka världen förstås. Dessa konstruktioner är ofta outtalade och till och med omedvetna, därför valdes två specifika analytiska begrepp för att synliggöra mat i HK: den kulinariska triangeln för motsägelser och det kulinariska systemet.

Varje gång vi gör ett matval görs det under inflytande av en mängd olika hänsyn, viljor och omständigheter som tillsammans utgör en mycket komplicerad väv. Den kulinariska triangeln av motsägelser (se *Figure 1*) är en mo-

dell som kan användas för att göra denna komplexitet synlig genom att frågor om identitet, bekvämlighet och ansvar fokuseras och diskuteras (se Table 1).

Det kulinariska systemet kan beskrivas som en sorts regler som tillsammans beskriver specifika kulinarisk vanor inom ett visst område eller inom en viss grupp. Detta system omfattar fem olika element: (1) basmat: den mat som är mest vanlig att välja, (2) kulinariska tekniker: de olika tekniker som används för att omvandla råvaror till något ätbart, (3) smaksättningar: det som används för att förändra smaken på mat som redan är tillagad (4) seder: de socialt konstruerade principer vi har för vad som är acceptabelt uppträdande i samband med mat, samt (5) livsmedelskedjan: hur mat för en viss grupp förs från jord till bord.

Den sista pusselbiten i denna avhandlings teoretiska ramverk handlar om rum och spatialitet. Genom att uppfatta rummet som spatialt, alltså som relationer och förändringar, snarare än som något absolut och färdigt, blir det intressant att studera vilka relationer som tillsammans konstruerar HK-klassrummet. Med ett spatialt perspektiv på klassrummet uppfattas det som ett ställe där nätverk av relationer, tekniker och praktiker möts. Dessa nätverk sträcker ut sig i rummet långt bortom klassrummets väggar vilket innebär att en analys behöver ta reda på vilka relationer, eller banor, som konstruerar rummet samt vilka spatiala aspekter (till exempel makt eller materialitet) som är intressanta att undersöka.

Metod och material

Denna avhandling kan ses som en fokuserad etnografi. Det innebär att intresset har varit riktat mot att undersöka en specifik del av HK ur ett kulturperspektiv och att metoder som fokuserar på vissa specifika delar därför valts (för en översikt se Table 11).

Observationerna utfördes i två steg. De började med tre dagar i ett HK-klassrum där syftet dels var att få kunskap om vad som kan observeras och hur observationer kan utföras. Detta gjordes på en landsbygdsskola som gavs namnet ”Slope Hill” i avhandlingen (se *Figure 2*). I ett andra steg utfördes observationer under två veckor, tio skoldagar, på en stadsskola som gavs namnet ”Park City”. Här fanns två HK-klassrum (se *Figure 3*) och två HK-lärare. Här fokuserades observationerna mot elever och deras matrelaterade interaktioner. I Table 3 återfinns en översikt över elevgruppernas storlek, antal pojkar och flickor samt vilken mat man tillagade.

Observationerna följdes av fokusgrupper. 20 elever (se Table 4) berättade om HK-lektioner, att laga mat i HK, om vad de tänker på när de föreställde sig att de var hungriga och skulle laga mat, om vad de såg på fotografier och om de tyckte att maten i HK var riktig mat. I fokusgrupper med 25 lärare (se Table 5) användes visuella frågeguider (se *Figure 4* och *Figure 5*) som lades fram på bordet. Dessa handlade om att vara lärare i HK samt om lektioner

och mat. För att berika fokusgrupperna användes metoden fotoelicitering, dvs. sex fotografier på mat visades och deltagarna uppmuntrades att tala fritt kring vad de såg.

Table 11. *Metoder, material och teorier för analys*

Artikel	Insamlingsmetod	Material	Teori för analys	
I. Food with a purpose	Fokusgrupp Fotoelicitering	Lärare (25)	Innehållsanalys Matrisutveckling	Socialkonstruktionism
II. Fake food	Fokusgrupp Fotoelicitering	Elever (20)	Innehållsanalys Matrisutveckling	
III. Learning space for food	Observationer	Fältanteckningar Fotografier Ritningar av klassrum	Spatialitet	
IV. What's for food in Swedish HCS?	Fokusgrupp Fotoelicitering Observationer	Lärare (25) Elever (20) Fältanteckningar Fotografier	Matklassificering Den kulinariska triangeln av motsägelser	

Fokusgrupperna analyserades med innehållsanalys som ledde fram till att matriser utvecklades (se Table 6 och Table 7) som visade vad som konstruerades (t.ex. mat i HK) och i vilken social relation detta konstruerades (t.ex. i interaktion med elever). För analys av klassrummet identifierades fyra relationer/banor som på olika sätt konstruerade tre olika spatiala aspekter av rummet (se Table 8). Slutligen analyserades allt material för att identifiera vilken mat elever och lärare pratade om och valde. Dessa delades in i kategorier och analyserades i relation till den kulinariska triangeln av motsägelser.

Resultat

I artikel I beskrevs lärares uppfattningar av att vara lärare i HK samt hur de konstruerar maten och hemmet. Fem övergripande teman kunde ses i analysen. *HK är mat med ett syfte* fångade hur lärare ser på mat i HK som ett verktyg för att lära sig om till exempel hälsa, miljö, näring, ekonomi, kultur eller jämställdhet. Mat i HK handlade inte enbart om att laga mat, förklarade lärarna, även om de upplevde att både elever och föräldrar tror att det är matlagningen som är central. Det framkom även att lärarna hade olika strategier för att undervisa om mat med ett syfte. Temat *lärare med ett folkhälsouppdrag* beskrev hur lärarna såg sig själva som personer med uppdrag och möjlighet att visa elever hälsosamma alternativ till vanor de lärt sig utanför HK. Detta uppdrag upplevdes som en utmaning, både i relation till elever

och till samhället i stort. *Den fostrande läraren* sammanfattade hur lärarna erbjuder elever ett socialiserande ramverk, till exempel genom att anta rollen som vuxen och fostra elever om vad som är acceptabelt beteende, eller genom att gradvis ge eleverna mer frihet och tillgång till olika delar av klassrummet. Målet för den fostrande läraren var att fostra självständiga elever. Det fjärde temat *mätbar matlagning* beskrev hur lärare konstruerar matlagning som något som går att bedöma. Genom att konstruera matlagning som instruktioner, recept, redskap och metoder var det möjligt att se vad elever kan och inte kan. Mätbar matlagning handlade om att se kunskaper som en progression där elever till exempel börjar med enklare recept. *Det bristande hemmet (för att laga riktig mat)* fångade hur lärarna pratade om hemmet som bristande antingen när det gäller osunda matvanor eller socioekonomisk position. Här framkom även de starkaste diskussionerna när lärarna pratade om sin syn på praktiska hemläxor.

Artikel II handlade om elevers syn på HK och mat i HK. I analysen framkom att elever förstår mat i HK i relation till sina egna hem, vilket fångades i tre teman. Det första temat, *vardagsmat hemma*, beskrev hur elever ser sig själva som delaktiga i alla matrelaterade aktiviteter i hemmet. Hemmet konstruerades som det ställe där vardagen sker ”här och nu”, medan matlagning i HK var riktat mot vuxenliv och framtid, vilket innebar att det hem som HK utbildade för inte var deras nuvarande. I kontrast till det ideala hemmet konstruerades matlagning i HK som *teori, rutin och kontroll* där det är läraren som bestämmer vilket reflekterade en underförstådd syn på elevens roll som utan någon större grad av agentskap. Detta innebar för eleverna att de måste anpassa sig till läraren. *Oäkta mat i HK* fångade hur eleverna förväntade sig att mat i HK skulle vara som hemma, men möttes av något annat. Det handlade bl.a. om att mat inte lagades för att man skulle bli mätt och att det var små portioner.

I artikel III undersöktes hur HK-klassrummet kan förstås. De tre spatiala aspekterna materialitet, nätverk och makt undersöktes som konstruerade av fyra olika relationer/banor. Dessa var HK-ämnets relation till och placering i skolan, socioekonomiska relationer, relationen mellan hem och skola, samt relationen mellan elev och lärare. Genom att undersöka *materiella* aspekter av HK-klassrummen fångades hur olika relationer/banor konstruerar ett ställe för lärande om mat som är både stabilt och föränderligt. Det fanns t.ex. en viss grad av varaktighet i rummens utformning och i de pedagogiska tankar som byggts in i dem, liksom en del obeständighet i kortlivade ting såsom mat. Aspekten *nätverk* visade hur HK-klassrummet skapas som en nod, eller en punkt, i ett större sammanhang där många olika relationer samverkar. HK-klassrummen på Slope Hill och Park City liknade t.ex. varandra rent layoutmässigt, men konstruerades på väldigt olika sätt genom de nätverk i vilka de ingick. Analysen visade bland annat att eleverna på båda skolorna aktivt skapade klassrummet i relation till sina erfarenheter hemifrån och på så sätt tog med sig hemmet in i HK. Lärarna på Park City konstruerade ett

klassrum som var distanserat från elevernas hem, medan läraren på Slope Hill skapade ett intimt och tryggt ställe. *Maktaspekter* beskrev hur HK-klassrummet skapas som ett ställe för lärande om mat präglat av traditionella maktgeometrier, både i relationen mellan lärare och elev och i konstruktionen av HK-ämnets identitet. Exempelvis skapade lärarna vissa områden för sig och andra för eleverna och använde på så sätt klassrummet för att upprätthålla och återskapa synen på elever som underordnade vuxna.

I artikel IV var syftet att synliggöra den mångfald av utbildningsvisioner och kulturella meningar som finns i relation till mat i HK genom att ställa den enkla frågan ”Vad blir det till mat i HK?”. Tio olika kategorier (se Table 9) av mat framkom i analysen och dessa relaterades till den kulinariska triangeln av motsägelser. Utifrån detta ritades en kulinarisk triangel av motsättningar för HK (se *Figure 7*).

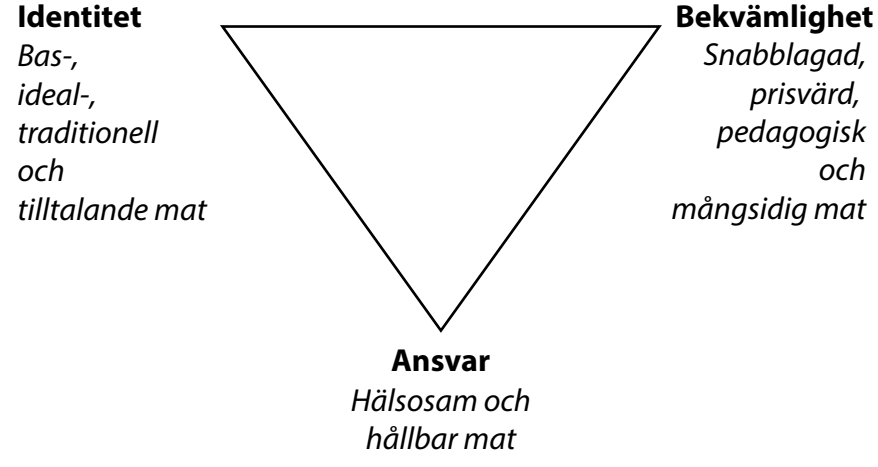

Figure 7. En kulinarisk triangel av motsättningar för HK

Identitet har t.ex. att göra med personliga matpreferenser och etnicitet. Både elever och lärare beskrev maten man gör i HK som basmat, alltså sådan mat man äter ofta. Ibland inverkade lärarnas personliga ideal på vilken syn de hade på mat och även vilken mat de valde till undervisningen, t.ex. att hemlagad mat är bättre än halvfabrikat. Traditionell mat handlade både om nya och gamla traditioner, t.ex. kanelbullens dag. För eleverna var det viktigt att maten smakade gott, de ville ha tilltalande mat. *Bekvämlighet* handlar t.ex. om pris, tid och kunskap. Snabblagad mat handlar om att mat valdes med hänsyn till lektioners längd. Maten behövde också vara prisvärd, t.ex. så var det otänkbart att använda oxfilé. En del mat valdes specifikt med tanke på de pedagogiska tankar som läraren hade och förknippades med progression. T.ex. valdes bakpulver före jäst. Mångsidig mat var sådan som kunde användas till många olika rätter, t.ex. köttfärs. *Ansvar* har t.ex. att göra med att vara medveten om konsekvenserna av sina handlingar. Lärarna berättade att

allt de gör i HK görs ur ett hälsoperspektiv, och eleverna tolkade all mat i HK som hälsosam. Både elever och lärare pratade om miljövänlig mat som ett ideal mer än som praktik.

Slutsatser

Resultaten visar att mat i en HK-kontext konstrueras som omstridd. Elever förstår mat i HK som oäkta i förhållande till sina förebilder hemmen. Lärarna å andra sidan förstår mat i HK som en förebild i förhållande till det bristfälliga hemmet och samhället. För elever handlar HK om framtiden, om deras liv som vuxna och inte om deras verkliga liv här och nu. Lärare upplever att de har ett uppdrag att utbilda för folkhälsa genom att vara förebilder och visa på hälsosamma alternativ. Klassrummet utgör en viktig del för hur HK-ämnet och mat i HK förstås och läraren spelar en nyckelroll för vilket rum som skapas.

Ett specifikt kulinariskt system för HK framträder i resultaten vilket visar att det finns matpraktiker som är särskilda för en HK-kontext (se Table 10). Samtidigt konstrueras HK inte enbart i relationer mellan lärare, elever och klassrum, utan det är en effekt av att HK ingår i en vidare kontext. HK är på så vis ett kulturellt rum som förstås på vissa specifika sätt genom de värderingar som delas av en grupp människor.

Trots att denna avhandling handlat om meningsskapande i relation till mat i HK och inte om lärande, så är konstruktionen av ett skolämne som kulturellt rum användbar även för andra ämnen. Socialt konstruerade värderingar är väsentliga för vilket ämnesstoff som anses viktigt, liksom för tankar kring hur undervisning bör utformas.

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