Benefitting from L1 while learning English in Swedish Schools?

A mixed methods study based on the responses of Swedish EFL teachers

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Abstract

Superdiversity has reached the EFL classroom and consequently language acquisition’s starting point has changed from one to various native languages. EFL teachers in Sweden meet a broad spectrum of students, varying from nearly bilingual when it comes to English, to students, who have to learn both English and Swedish from scratch. Meanwhile, the Swedish school system aspires to provide all students with an equal education.

In addition to the increasingly diverse student body, EFL teachers also face the dilemma of steering documents that can be perceived as favouring the traditional monolingual principle of language teaching, while at the same time EFL teachers are asked to support students’ development into plurilingualists that embrace linguistic and cultural diversity.

This thesis seeks to investigate EFL teachers’ reasoning concerning linguistic diversity and inclusion methods in the EFL classroom, as a part of school practice. Furthermore, this thesis aims to give a picture of the current situation in Swedish schools and seeks to find indications of whether further training is required in order to embrace the diversity of the globalized classroom. Mixed methods are used to examine the current situation and the results are based on the answers of 35 EFL teachers in Sweden.

The findings indicate that most EFL teachers rarely include students’ L1 in the EFL classroom and that the inclusion of students’ L1 is for many participants related with weaker proficiency in English. Additionally, the necessity of enhancing the benefits of translanguaging pedagogy for all students, and consequently further education for EFL teachers can be identified, because the very important aspect of identity that matters when it comes to school success has hardly been considered.

Keywords

Superdiversity, globalized classroom, EFL teaching, translanguaging pedagogy, L1, identity.
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1. Introduction

The necessity to learn English is omnipresent in our everyday life – for instance when searching on Google with the search phrase “Why learning English is important” countless articles, blog entries, commercials from language schools and essays on the theme pop up listing various comprehensible reasons. This easy to access fact certainly assures everyone that studying English is required in our globalized world and due to that, offers a major factor of motivation to learn the language. The “usefulness” of learning English is highlighted by Dörnyei (2009) who points out that “proficiency in this language is part of an educated cosmopolitan culture”.

Consequently, the question how to best teach English is doubtless an issue of high interest for language teachers, especially when considering the different approaches a language teacher encounters and is asked to apply during teacher training programs and in order to meet various school values during one’s career. Since the 1880s, the tradition of teaching English advocates “the monolingual principle” that promotes the avoidance of the mother tongue and first language (L1) application in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom (Howatt 1984 as cited in Cook, 2001). This principle seems to be embedded in the curriculum for English taught at Swedish Upper Secondary Schools (2011), which states that “teaching should as far as possible be conducted in English”. However, EFL teachers are facing a dilemma, because newer research, as for instance Astuti’s study from 2016 claims that strategic use of L1 helps to “build positive and encouraging relationships” with a second (L2) or foreign language. This strategic use can be for example explaining important points of the lesson in L1 or allowing students to say words in their L1 to encourage fluency and participation in the EFL classroom. Moreover, the Swedish National Agency for Education includes this theory in their steering documents as well, by declaring that “teaching should (…) give them [students] the opportunity to develop as plurilingualists” (Curriculum for English Upper Secondary School, 2011a). In particular, skills in different languages should interact and support each other in order to support students’ understanding and improve their development as recommended by the Council of Europe (CEFR) in 2001 and embedded in the Swedish steering documents (The National Agency for Education, 2011b). It has to be highlighted that the National Agency of Education changed the syllabus in 2011 to a more functional approach of language learning with “the (socio)linguistic needs” of the students in mind in comparison to the steering documents from 1994 (Hult, 2017).

Since the monolingual approach to EFL teaching and the task to support students’ development as multilingual seem to be contradictory ways of language teaching, which are both embedded in the syllabus, this research thesis is going to investigate the factual application of L1 in the EFL classroom in Sweden. Furthermore, acknowledging that almost one fifth of the students in the classroom have an international background and thus another L1 than Swedish, it will examine whether the existing gap between immigrant students’ and native Swedes’ efficiency in English is considered in the EFL classroom (Torpsten, 2018). Additionally, for this thesis, newer research in the field of language acquisition is taken into consideration, as, for example, Butzkamm and Caldwell’s findings from 2009 establishing that “the best natural model for L2 learning is the young developing bilingual”, applying skills in one language to help improve the other. To explain further, this research thesis attempts to find correlations between the different application frequencies of students’ L1 in the EFL classroom and 1) teaching experience, 2) percentage of
students’ considering another language than Swedish as their L1, and 3) the EFL teachers’ beliefs about whether including students’ L1 in the EFL classroom is beneficial for students’ language acquisition. In addition, this thesis is based on the observation that the English-only dogma has somewhat subsided in teacher programs. Likewise, the fact that the National Agency of Education changed the syllabus in 2011 to a more functional approach of language learning with “the (socio)linguistic needs” of the students in mind is implemented (Hult, 2017). Additionally, MultiLingual Spaces (2017-2020), an ongoing research program at Lund University, funded by the Swedish Research Council to focus on the learning and teaching of English in linguistically diverse classrooms in Sweden, is taken as a foundation for this thesis. In short, this study should help to gain understanding how EFL teachers reason about L1 application in the EFL classroom in order to show the requirement for an improved training for language teachers, filling the gap between research and actual teaching experience through benefitting from different perspectives. The following research questions will be addressed:

1. How do EFL teachers in Sweden include students’ L1 in the EFL classroom?
2. Under which circumstances do EFL teachers in Sweden let their students use their L1 knowledge to advance in English?
3. How do EFL teachers adjust their language bearing in mind the globalized classroom?

1.1 Background and literature review

In the following paragraphs, an overview of the theoretical framework for this thesis will be given. First, there will be a review of the research treating the globalized classroom as a result of the super-diverse society in Europe, in this case Sweden, and the resulting consequences for EFL teachers when it comes to language teaching. The connection between identity and language will be highlighted in the event of academical success. After that, research concerning code-switching and translanguaging pedagogy will be introduced in order to elucidate the theoretical foundation of this thesis.

1.1.1 The globalized classroom and identity

Globalisation, involving increased mobility of people, technologies and information networks, has reached the classroom and the result is a “dramatic increase in diversity”, even called super-diversity, which creates the need to update language use, especially when learning new languages (Bruen & Kelly, 2016). To clarify, the student body has changed in terms of “linguistic knowledge, cultural background and life-experiences”, and consequently the need for language teachers to adapt to the linguistic diversity of the classroom is an undeniable fact (Liddicoat et al., 2014; Sudherskan & Bruen, 2015).

On the one hand, Sweden has in 2018, as many times before, been pointed out as the country in the word with the highest proficiency in English as a second language according to a study conducted by Education First’s (EF). In addition, in 2006 Sweden was part of the Declaration on a Nordic Language Policy that stated its residents had English skills that allowed the parallel use of English and Swedish in research and education at university level (Nordic Council of Ministers). Those aspects seem to be generally viewed as the norm when it comes to English
proficiency in Sweden. Additionally, it is important to consider the fact that Swedes, especially students, are constantly surrounded by the English language for example through watching TV, clips on YouTube, listening to music or playing online computer games and that therefore EFL teachers can assume that their student body has a very high proficiency in English.

On the other hand, EFL teachers are meeting newly arrived students as a part of the globalized classroom due to the period of extensive immigration to Sweden over the last years, for instance, there were 149,028 asylum applications were filled in 2015 (Swedish Migration Board). According to the Swedish Migration Board, the largest part of those people immigrated from Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq and Iran, and according to EF’s report from 2018, all four countries have a very low proficiency in English. In fact, knowing that exposure to a language increases the likelihood of successful acquisition of this language, immigrant students from the abovementioned countries were generally less likely to be exposed to English in their birth country than Swedish students (Rong & Preissle, 2009). Equally importantly, more than 44% of the student body in the areas of the three biggest cities in Sweden, Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö, speak a different L1 than Swedish at home and according to the National Agency of Education and their latest statistics from 2018, in some areas this number has risen up to 70% (Ernius, 2018). To give an idea about the future student body and their L1s, it is interesting to consider that one third of the children that have been born in Sweden the last couple of years are speaking languages that are spoken outside the EU, like Arabic, Somali, Persian and Kurdish (Ernius, 2018).

Meanwhile, since the Swedish school system aspires to provide all students with an equal education the diversity of the student body has to be addressed, which includes Swedish students, some regarded as nearly bilingual when it comes to English, bilingual students of Swedish and a not Germanic language, and some newly arrived students that face the task of learning both English and Swedish from scratch as L3 and L2 (The National Agency for Education, 2011a). In other words, EFL teachers in Sweden meet a broad spectrum of students in the EFL classroom with the task of supporting every student to reach the goals of the curriculum in order to successfully graduate. A very important aspect that matters when it comes to school success is identity, and according to many scholars language and identity are “powerfully intertwined” (Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Raley, 2011; Norton, 2000; Palmer 2008; Sayer, 2013). With this in mind, EFL teachers need to foster students’ metalinguistic awareness by helping the students develop an understanding for language structures in all their languages, for example, by letting students explore differences in language use in society depending on which language is applied (García-Mateus & Palmer, 2017).

Although most of the studies named above have been conducted in the USA with Spanish speaking students in immersion classrooms, the results are somewhat transferable to the European context, bearing in mind that the Council of Europe pursued the establishment of linguistic diversity as an asset in education (COM 2003/499:9). Concentrating on Sweden, Norberg’s classroom studies from as early as 2000 about intercultural education emphasize the importance of recognizing identity in the multicultural classroom, which stresses that diversity should be acknowledged as “a ‘we’, where differences and sameness within and between cultures are recognized in all their complexity”. Moreover, Schmidt and Skoog (2017) underline that based on the curriculum of 2011, teachers in Sweden have to acknowledge the importance of providing
students with the “possibility of maximum cognitive engagement and maximum identity investment”. In particular, teachers in general have to focus on meaningfulness “for all student learning despite variation in language backgrounds” and function as the “vehicle” to invite all students to engage in learning and recognizing their language(s) as resource for learning (Schmidt & Skoog, 2017).

1.1.2 Code-switching and translanguaging pedagogy

Another aspect that arises more frequently as the result of the diversity of L1s in the EFL classrooms is the phenomenon of code-switching (CS), meaning the simultaneous use of two or more languages. As Deumert (2011) reveals, language learners in a multilingual group tend to develop strategies to comprehend demanding content by switching between their native and the targeted language in order to work together. In spite of the general conception that CS is problematic in the EFL classroom, especially when accessing students’ language proficiencies, the phenomenon occurs on a regular basis, as shown in the language application of students and EFL teachers (De Backer, Van Avermaet & Slembrouck, 2017; Horasan, 2014). Notably, a report from Swedish Schools Inspectorate from 2011 disclosed that around 50% of English lessons were conducted in English only and during the remaining 50% of lessons, EFL teachers applied CS. At the same time the students’ self-reports, included in the same report, showed that half of the students used CS in the EFL classroom, and those students estimated their EFL teachers to CS with 20% occurring in English lessons (cited in Källkvist et. all., 2017).

Metila’s study from 2009 explains that CS or allowing students to apply L1 in the EFL classroom supports a relaxed atmosphere that results in more active and better student performance. Moreover, EFL teachers’ strategic language switching gives students the opportunity to better grasp difficult content and challenging concepts of the targeted English language, due to the fact that students’ interest and the urge to understand can be increased by for example explaining a lesson task in the student’s L1 (Metila 2009). However, the common misinterpretation of the curriculum among EFL teachers is to use English only. This approach is endorsed by for instance Lundahl in 2012, who considers the application of L1 while teaching in the EFL classroom as less prestigious or even as a disruption. Specifically, justifications for the monolingual principle in the Swedish EFL classroom are the close linguistic relation of both languages, the broad exposure to English in Swedish media, and regular travels to English-speaking countries, which seem financially possible for many. However, the globalized classroom and especially “language-minorized” students, who use for example Arabic or Farsi on a regular base, besides Swedish, seem not to be considered in this reasoning about the opportunity to advance in the EFL classroom through the close relation between both Germanic languages (Källkvist et. all., 2017).

Furthermore, CS supports language acquisition regardless of the learner’s level: Källkvist’s study from 2013 discloses that Swedish university students interacted significantly more in English when challenging grammar was first provided using a comparative translation-equivalent model connecting to Swedish structures. In short, even students with a very good English proficiency can benefit from the strategical inclusion of L1.
This research essay seeks to highlight the students’ need to perceive language acquisition in the EFL classroom as meaningful, in order to stay motivated to successfully develop EFL skills (Dörnyei, 2009). One important factor in enhancing students’ proficiency is to further implement the knowledge among EFL teachers that different languages can coexist in the EFL classroom and that the acknowledgement of the heterogenous student body, with its variety of native languages is supporting students’ output (Garcia, 2012). To take the idea of CS even further, the term translanguaging has evolved, referring to bilingual people and their linguistic repertoire, which is seen as one connected unit to communicate as effectively as possible, as the norm (Celic & Seltzer, 2011). The main idea of translanguaging pedagogy is that “boundaries between languages are dynamic and permeable” (Vaish, 2018). Already in 1996, Gawlitzek-Maiwald and Tracy conducted a study that showed that “something that has been acquired in language A fulfils a booster function in language B”. As a matter of fact, many scholars are convinced that students are more likely to succeed academically when the opportunity to interconnect their languages flexibly is given (Bartlett & García, 2011; Calyani, de Courcy & Barnett, 2016; Durán & Palmer, 2014; Garcia & Kleyn, 2016; Gort & Sembiante, 2015; Palmer & Martinez, 2013; Palmer et al., 2014; Sayer, 2013; Velasco & Fialais, 2016). Indeed, most of the named research has been conducted in the USA with Spanish speaking students in immersion classrooms, and it has to be addressed that Swedish scholars are in the beginning of respective research. As one of the first project researching translanguageing in the Swedish EFL classroom, MultiLingual Spaces has to be named: This project is based on the assumption “that students do not de-activate their prior languages as they enter the English classroom, and that permitting references and comparison to prior languages can facilitate learning and yield more student communication” (Källkvist, et. all., 2017). However, it is a reasonable assumption that the evidence collected from translanguaging classrooms in the USA are transferable to the Swedish EFL classroom, while students’ output and communication in the targeted language increase when the whole linguistic repertoire is used as a resource (Garcia & Wei, 2014).

A further point that has to be highlighted in this context is the importance of not letting students perceive the school institution as monolingual per se. This is because negative connotations or ignorance towards other L1’s than Swedish are obstacles for academic success (Abendroth-Timmer & Breidbach, 2010) and can lead to exclusion and discrimination, giving students the impression that their cultural background is a burden to teaching (Bunar, 2010). Furthermore, according to Gogolin (1994), monolingual institutions are overwhelmed by having to cope with the growing linguistic diversity and as a result, they become dysfunctional. Henceforth, it is a given fact that the school institution, and for this thesis particularly EFL teaching, needs to adjust to the multilingualism surrounding us to embrace linguistic and cultural diversity.

1.2 Aim

This thesis seeks to emphasize the importance of educational institutions and especially language teaching where “school practices can influence the level of multilingualism and the attitudes towards multilingualism and multiculturalty of society as a whole” (Cenoz & Gorter, 2010). Investigating EFL teachers’ reasoning concerning linguistic diversity and inclusion methods in the EFL classroom, as a part of school practice, can give a picture of the current situation in
Swedish schools and may indicate whether further training is required in order to embrace diversity.

The expectation is that many EFL teachers are concerned about using other languages than English in the EFL classroom because the quality of teaching seems to be measured by the extent to which the monolingual principle is applied. Especially while having the Swedish classroom in mind, filled with students who could be nearly considered as bilingual. The adaptation to relatively recent migration, bringing various languages into the EFL classroom, is a challenge that seems not to be generally regulated. Hence, it can be assumed that EFL teachers, dealing with a student body that consists of more than 50% students that have a mother tongue other than Swedish, have found strategies to include all linguistic knowledge in order to conduct meaningful EFL teaching. Moreover, considering the fact that the English-only dogma subsides in teacher programs at Swedish universities, the expectation is that teaching experience and the teachers’ age correlate with a more flexible approach to language application in the EFL classroom. In short, the expected outcome of this thesis is that EFL teachers are reluctant to let go of the monolingual principle, and one reason for that is that general guidelines on how to involve linguistic diversity are not implemented, so that it seems better to simply use English.
2. Method and material

This section will explain the use of mixed methods, questionnaires, correlations and qualitative answers. Moreover, this part of the thesis will describe the operationalization of the variables.

2.1 Methodological decisions

This thesis is based on questionnaires that combine quantitative and qualitative research with the intention of shedding light on how EFL teachers reason about L1 use in the EFL classroom. Applying a mixed methods seems to be a suitable choice: On the one hand, the study benefits from concrete numbers, which allow the researcher to get an indication about how widespread the contrasting approaches are, to correlate L1 use with, for example, teaching experience and percentage of students that have different mother tongue than Swedish. On the other hand, focusing on the whys is necessary because it allows the researcher to gain information about how to improve as a teacher by learning from other teachers’ pedagogical perspectives and methods, and supports lifelong development (Scherp, 2003). In particular, by adding open questions to a quantitative survey, the opportunity arises to conduct research that gives insight to the teachers’ reasoning.

In this case, after asking the closed question: “In your opinion, does application of L1 help the students to learn English?” is followed by “if yes, could you list a reason/ reasons” or “if no, could you list a reason/ reasons”. Consequently, the mixed methods research allows a “multi-level analysis” and accordingly a deeper understanding for language teachers’ pedagogical views while assuring an “improved validity” and yielding more generalizable results (Dörnyei, 2007). Another aspect that lead to the choice of a mixed method study based on a survey is the set of time and length limitations of this project, offering the possibility to receive answers from a total of 35 EFL teachers, which is a large enough sample size to reach meaningful statistical significance (Dörnyei, 2007). Although the number of participants is not large enough to be generalizable for the whole EFL teacher body in Sweden, the results of the quantitative part will indicate trends, which will be filled with the qualitative answers to give more substantiate information.

The survey that was developed for this research study is addressed to EFL teachers in Sweden and has been distributed through Facebook, posted in two language teacher groups, one especially interested and involved with language teaching, in this case Språklärarnas riksförbund and the other Nätverk för lärare i engelska, a group networking and supporting each other in teaching English in Swedish schools. This post included some information about the author and the research project with a link to the questionnair. The questionnaire was designed in Google forms and includes twelve questions about L1 application in the EFL classroom. A combination of closed and open questions was included: 1) On what occasions students’ L1 is used in the EFL classroom. 2) The EFL teachers were asked for their opinion concerning whether students’ L1
inclusion in the EFL classroom helps students to learn English. 3) The EFL teachers’ estimation about the percentage of students in the EFL classroom that have a different L1 than Swedish was requested. 4) The participants were asked to specify what grades are taught by them. Additionally, the EFL teachers were asked about their teaching experience, gender and age. The responses were automatically transferred to Google forms resulting in pie charts, showing the answers to the quantitative part of the survey in percentages asking about L1 application and the grades they are teaching. The qualitative answers are shown in the free text beneath following the suitable charts. The questionnaire is attached in the Appendix.

However, the distribution of the questionnaire via Facebook may result in a non-representative respondent group and consequently in validity problems, due to the self-selection of participants and the potential overrepresentation of one type of EFL-teacher (Dörnyei, 2007). Furthermore, it has to be considered that only EFL teachers engaging in language teacher groups are given the possibility to participate, because members of those groups seem to be already more interested in latest findings about teaching while discussing and interacting with colleagues on social media. At the same time, collecting the data in this manner allows reaching EFL teachers who are interested in broadening their knowledge about language teaching, in a not too time-consuming way, considering the limited time available for this project. Likewise, it is important to highlight the opportunity to reach EFL teachers all over Sweden by using this form of distribution, without talking and thus influencing the participants in a certain direction, which may occur when collecting data through face-to-face interviews (Dörnyei, 2007).

The questionnaire was designed to give an as neutral as possible impression on the participant, not informing the EFL teachers about the author’s stance on the topic and giving as much response space to teachers in favor of L1 application in the EFL classroom as to those teachers devoted to the monolingual principle in order to reduce the impact of the observer’s paradox. Furthermore, the information given on Facebook introducing the survey was kept neutral as well, announcing interest in the globalized EFL classroom in Sweden.

The methodological prism applied in the analysis is based on constructivism, believing that “knowledge and existence are perceived and constructed through human interaction” (Jones, Torres & Arminio, 2006). Therefore, the significance of circumstances like age, the percentage of different L1 than Swedish among students, gender and teaching experience are correlated with use of students’ L1 to highlight the importance of human interaction as a factor in teaching and the perception of it. Even if the researcher is trying to be an objective observer, steering may occur by asking qualitative questions to ensure getting information about the research theme. This could conceivably result in participants tending to answer in a certain way to agree or show knowledge about the theme in question, even if they do not act or think as they respond. To clarify, Labov’s observer’s paradox has to be considered, as the data is not occurring naturally. However, the point that questionnaires elicit information about the participants in a non-evaluative manner has to be emphasized (Dörnyei, 2007).

To ensure that the data collection method will work, a small pilot study was conducted, sending out the survey to ten language teacher students, who are currently working as teachers in mostly Upper Secondary Schools in the Stockholm area (Gass & Mackey, 2007). Receiving responses from seven of them, it became apparent that the questions are comprehensible, and that the
questionnaire corresponds with the research questions. Discussing the questionnaire with a professional, who has been conducting surveys and presenting results of those since over ten years in order to get information about different age groups’ music taste, supported the calibration of the design as well, especially when it came to making the questions easy to understand and fast to answer, while allowing to draw the necessary information.

By using Google Docs for the survey, the storage of the data is neither a “logistic” or “ethical” issue (Dörnyei, 2007). Furthermore, the participants had been informed that their responses will be treated anonymously and that they will contribute to a study about L1 application in the EFL classroom in Sweden as the foundation of a magister thesis.

Moreover, the responses conducted by the closed questions of the questionnaire are analyzed as quantitative data. These replies are transferred into ordinal data offering information about different groups (students’ grades, teachers’ age, the percentage of Swedish as L1 speakers among the students, teaching experience, gender) in frequencies while the participants had mostly multiple choices to answer those questions (Dörnyei, 2007). Additionally, the data is treated by using descriptive statistics and analysis of variance (ANOVA) investigating more than two groups: L1 application in the EFL classroom is the “dependent variable” allowing the separation of the participants in four groups (frequently, sometimes, rarely and never). These groups are contrasted with the “independent variable”, in this case teaching experience, EFL teachers’ age, and percentage of students that have another L1 than Swedish, in order to examine if EFL teachers’ attitudes towards the application of students’ L1 are interrelated with those factors (Dörnyei, 2007).

To be able to perform the correlation tests the quantitative answers are converted into numerical figures: Frequency of L1 application in the EFL (1-4); Percentage groups of students with different L1s than Swedish (1-5); teaching experience (1-5) and EFL teachers’ age groups (1-5). The descriptive statistics and ANOVA tests are calculated in Excel in order to determine statistical significance of the correlations. In accordance with Dörnyei, a p value of 0.05 at most (p < 0.05) is required to display statistical significance. It should be noted that these correlation tests cannot be the prove that something is caused by something else, however these tests signify that there is a correlation between the independent and dependent variable (Dörnyei, 2007).

The quantitative results will be kept in mind while analyzing the qualitative answers given by the participants to “contextualize” and achieve a more substantial level of interpretation (Dörnyei, 2007). Thus, the opportunity for multiple level analysis is given allowing the researcher to contrast individual participant’s answers against the comparison groups responses. Moreover, the necessity for further investigation may occur while comparing whether the qualitative responses are in alignment with the quantitative ones in order to gain a better understanding in EFL teachers’ reasoning (Dörnyei, 2007).
2.1 Participants

The survey was designed for EFL teachers in Sweden and the majority (71%) of the participants teach at Upper Secondary School, while a little over 26% work with Grade 7-9 at Compulsory School and 3% of the participants teach in Adult education (Chart 1).

Furthermore, 67.6% of the respondents are female, 32.4% are male and one teacher chose not to answer the question, while the author did not include a third option in the questionnaire. In consideration of representativeness, the EFL teachers voluntary participating are closely representative of Sweden’s teacher body, in general, since 74% of all teachers in Compulsory School and 68 % of all teachers in Upper Secondary School are female (Holmström, 2016).

In the following, the participants’ age distribution is presented (Chart 2) to give a more descriptive overview about the sample used for this thesis, in order to relate to the actual EFL teacher body in Sweden.
In Table 1 this study’s sample is compared to the dates of The National Agency for Education published 2018 allowing an examination of the representativeness of the participating EFL teachers when it comes to age groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
<th>20-30</th>
<th>30-40</th>
<th>40-50</th>
<th>50-60</th>
<th>60-70</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>34.3%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td>12.03%</td>
<td>24.14%</td>
<td>32.84%</td>
<td>21.34%</td>
<td>9.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 – age-group comparison

The direct comparison of these numbers reveals that the sample for this thesis includes an overrepresentation of the age-group 30-40 years old EFL teachers by over 18% and an underrepresentation of EFL teachers in the age-group 50-60 years by around 10% and around 6% for the age-group 60-70 years old EFL teachers. On the other hand, the age-group 40-50-year-old EFL teachers is highly representative for the EFL teacher body in Sweden.

One reason for the overrepresentation and underrepresentation could be the distribution via Facebook, as mentioned above, only a part of the EFL teacher body are active members in those groups. Moreover, the likelihood of younger EFL teachers being engaged in social media groups seems higher considering that the implementation of social media in education has been growing over the last decade causing a paradigm shift in education, while some teachers are more reluctant to adopt this change (Peterson, 1999). This demonstrates that EFL teachers in the age-group 30-40 are familiar with the use of social media in their professional life, while the professional application of social media has been a part of teaching since their career started. Henceforth, the active membership in a Facebook group for teachers is a component in learning from others and sharing teaching experiences. The other reason for the discrepancies could be the self-selection of the respondents. As Nias (2005) reports novice teachers are more likely themselves to turn to colleagues to ask for support for themselves, because this group wants to develop into competent and effective professionals fast. Consequently, it could be assumed that younger EFL teachers, who have not worked as long in the profession, are more likely to tend to help an aspiring teacher out.

However, it has to be emphasized that this thesis seeks to understand EFL teachers’ reasoning when it comes to L1 application in the EFL classroom in order to give indications about further in-job education for EFL teachers in Sweden. Therefore, the necessity of gaining knowledge in EFL teachers’ reasoning, who are probably more likely to work in the profession for the coming years, seems very relevant for this matter, especially when considering the development of superdiversity in Europe and Sweden. In other words, even if the age-group of 30-40-year-old EFL teachers is overrepresented in the sample, the results of the study can still be valuable for the aim of this project.
3. Results

The results will be presented in several steps: Firstly, the sample distribution is discussed and after that the group classification is explained. Secondly, the descriptive statistics and two-way ANOVA correlation tests are presented. Moreover, the results of the follow-up questions are included to give a further insight into the EFL teachers’ reasoning concerning the inclusion of students’ L1 in the EFL classroom. Thirdly, the methods and occasions when the participating EFL teachers are using or letting the students apply L1 in the EFL classroom are displayed.

3.1 Group categorization based on frequency of L1 use / inclusion in the EFL classroom

Considering that L1 inclusion in the EFL classroom is seen as the foundation of this thesis and the main source of information to further understand how EFL teachers reason about a multilingual approach, they are asked to position themselves right at the beginning of the questionnaire. Those answers are selected to be the dependent variable of this study. Chart 4 shows that more than half of the participants answered that they rarely include or use students’ L1 in their teaching, which gives a strong indication of the still predominant monolingual approach to EFL teaching in Swedish schools, while the answer ‘never’ seems to be too harsh for the majority of participants. However, considering the qualitative follow-up question, nine participants explain why they never use students’ L1 teaching EFL but just 6 persons responded with never on the question of whether they use or include students’ L1 in the EFL classroom.

1) Do you include/use L1 (Swedish or if students have different ones) in your teaching?

Chart 4 – frequency of students’ L1 application / inclusion in the EFL classroom

To be able to perform correlation tests using the quantitative answers, the frequency of L1 application and integration in the EFL classroom is specified as the dependent variable. In detail, the participants are categorized in four groups according to the frequency of application and inclusion of students’ L1 (frequently, sometimes, rarely and never). With over half of the participants answering that they rarely use students’ L1 in the EFL this sample group is around
three times bigger than the other groups, while the other groups contain 6 (frequently and never) and 5 (sometimes) persons (Chart 4).

3.1.2 Reasoning concerning exclusion of students’ L1 in the EFL classroom

As mentioned before, nine EFL teachers gave further explanations why they never use or include students’ L1 in the EFL classroom: Two of the participants signify that there is no need for the inclusion of L1 due to the students’ age (grade 8 and 9 at elementary school or Upper Secondary School) and another EFL teacher pointed out that her/his students are more efficient in English than in for example Swedish, therefore all lessons at her/his school are taught in English.

Two other participants related to the monolingual approach of EFL teaching, answering that “English is best learned in English” or that they simply teach English. In a like manner, one EFL teacher refers to the curriculum, saying “the English classes should be given in English” while personally not believing that students or her/his teaching would benefit from using Swedish.

To cite another participant connecting to Krashen’s maximum input hypothesis from 1982, “you should learn the language actively using the language you learn. English lessons usually take place twice a week which is not enough. Students need as much input as possible. It wouldn’t be smart to reduce the time students are exposed to the language by using their mother tongue”.

One participant states that including students’ L1 in the EFL classroom “does more harm than good” because even if “the immediate effect may be positive (the students understand what you mean straight away), the negative aspect may be that the students prefer to revert back to Swedish whenever there is an issue, rather than them trying to formulate themselves differently in English”.

Finally, one EFL teacher argues that there are many different L1 in her/his classroom, which are not spoken by the participant, asking the question “why should some pupils have the privilege?”

3.2 Teaching experience

Teaching experience is positively linked with student achievement and attendance, and it has been found that more experienced teachers support greater student learning for their colleagues and school as a whole (Kini & Poldolsky, 2016). To relate to the aim of this study, teaching experience is seen as a factor that relates to when the individual studied to become a teacher, while the pedagogical ideology of the monolingual approach and the maximum input hypothesis have been predominantly taught at universities until the beginning of this 21st century (Lin, 2015). To clarify, there might be indications on the one hand that teaching experience is an aspect that is more effective to support students’ development in the EFL classroom. On the other hand, EFL teachers with more extensive experience might be more hesitant to using students' linguistic repertoire as a combined unit, because those teachers have been taught that the monolingual approach is the better one. Henceforth, teaching experience is selected as an important factor for this thesis and is used as the first independent variable for correlation testing (descriptive statistics and ANOVA).
In the following, the participants’ teaching experience (Chart 3) is presented to give a more detailed overview over the sample, showing that the main part of the participants, namely 80% have a more than five years’ experience, which is considered robust (Kini & Poldolsky, 2016). Additionally, the cohort’s cumulated teaching experience of 11.5 years is close to representativeness considering that according to the National Agency of Education teachers in Upper Secondary school have 12.7 years and teachers in Elementary school have 11.8 years of teaching experience on average (Läsår 2018/2019).

3.2.1 Correlation L1 use with teaching experience

The descriptive statistics associated with the frequency of L1 in the EFL classroom across their five levels of teaching experience are reported in Table 2. It can be seen that EFL teachers reporting to rarely or never use students’ L1 are associated with the numerically highest mean level of teaching experience (rarely: M=3.56 and never: M=3.8), while EFL teachers that include students’ L1 in their EFL teaching can be linked to a numerically lower level of teaching experience (frequently: M=2.5 and sometimes: M=2.4). In order to test the hypothesis that the level of teaching experience (1-3 years, 3-5 years, 5-10 years, 10-20 years and more than 20 years) has an effect on EFL teachers’ likelihood of integrating students’ L1 in the EFL classroom, a between-groups ANOVA is performed. Prior to operating the ANOVA, the assumption of normality was evaluated and established to be satisfied as the four groups’ distributions were associated with skew and kurtosis less than 2.0 (Schmider et al., 2010; Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.761</td>
<td>.495</td>
<td>-1.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>.894</td>
<td>-1.258</td>
<td>.313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>-1.068</td>
<td>1.156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>.837</td>
<td>.5122</td>
<td>-.612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: descriptive statistics teaching experience
The one-way ANOVA (Table 3) shows that there are no statistically significant differences between the EFL teachers’ frequency of applying students’ L1 in the EFL classroom and their teaching experience measured in years on the job, as determined by \( F(3,30) = 2.315, p=.0957 \). However, the small size of this sample may influence the results, considering that a \( p \) value of 0.09 indicates that there is less than 10% likelihood that the correlation occurs by chance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variations</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>( F )</th>
<th>( P )-value</th>
<th>( F ) crit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>10.173</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.315</td>
<td>.0957</td>
<td>2.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>43.944</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54.118</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 3: ANOVA teaching experience*

### 3.3 Percentage of students with another L1 than Swedish in the EFL classroom

The fact that all language production in the EFL classroom is always influenced by the individual participating student’s L1, has to be taken into account as an important aspect for this thesis. According to Grosjean (2001), the bilingual language mode makes it impossible for the mind to deactivate the language(s), which is/are not overtly applied. In other words, students’ different linguistic repertoires are in interplay in the EFL classroom and likely to exert influence on each other as well as subsequently on the output in English (Hülmbauer, 2009). Moreover, and as mentioned before, the proficiency in English can vary a lot, and students with Swedish as L1 are considered to have a higher likelihood of mastering English as students than those who have Arabic, Somali, Persian or Kurdish as L1. Henceforth, the percentage of students with another L1 than Swedish in the EFL classroom could be a factor that influences EFL teachers’ reasoning concerning the inclusion of students’ L1 and is selected as the second independent variable to perform descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA correlation testing.

The sample for this study is divided as most of the participating EFL teachers have less than 10% students with another L1 than Swedish in the EFL classroom, counting 40% while 17.1% replied that their EFL classroom includes more than 50% students that have a different L1 than Swedish (Chart 4). Considering the representativeness of the sample for this study, the average calculated on the participating EFL teachers’ answers showed that 21.9% students have another L1 than Swedish. In comparison to the official numbers of the Swedish National Agency of Education who states that 28.1% of all Swedish students in Elementary school are eligible to receive native language teaching in the school year 2018/19, while Arabic is by far the most taught language and 9.1% of students are taught in Swedish as a second language.
3.3.1 Correlation L1 use with percentage of students with another L1 than Swedish

The descriptive statistics associated with the EFL teachers’ frequency of including students’ L1 in the EFL classroom across the percentage of students having another L1 than Swedish are reported in Table 4. It can be seen that EFL teachers reporting that they frequently use students’ L1 are associated with the numerically highest mean level of students that have a another L1 than Swedish in the EFL classroom (frequently: M=3.5). However, EFL teachers that never apply students L1 are associated with a very close mean level of students with different L1 than Swedish (never: M=3.4) In order to test the hypothesis that the percentage of students in the EFL classroom that have a different L1 than Swedish has an effect on EFL teachers’ frequency level to integrate students’ L1 in the EFL classroom, a between-groups ANOVA is implemented. Normality for this could not be determined due to the deviant kurtosis levels, which are not in the range between -2.0 and 2.0 (Schmider et al., 2010; Table 4). The skewness and kurtosis statistics appear to be extremely dependent on the sample size, and considering that this study is conducted with a rather small sample size of 35 participants the one-way ANOVA testing is nevertheless performed (Table 5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.07</td>
<td>.403</td>
<td>-.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>.548</td>
<td>.608</td>
<td>-3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>.196</td>
<td>-3.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: descriptive statistics percentage of students with different L1 than Swedish

The one-way ANOVA (Table 5) resulted in showing that there are no statistically significant differences between the EFL teachers’ frequency of applying students’ L1 in the EFL classroom
and the percentage of students in the EFL classroom that have another L1 than Swedish, as determined by \( F(3,30) = 1.999, p=.1354 \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variations</th>
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<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F crit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>18.070</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>.1354</td>
<td>2.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>108.47</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: ANOVA percentage of students with different L1 than Swedish

3.4 Belief in a beneficial relationship between students’ L1 inclusion in the EFL classroom and students’ acquisition

As established before, the EFL teacher body is divided while one part believes that L1 application in the EFL classroom is beneficial in teaching, and the other part sees L1 as a hindrance in teaching EFL. However, newer research suggests that the use of L1 in the EFL classroom, especially transferring from one’s existing linguistic repertoire cannot cause any hinderance in language acquisition (Jessner & Cenoz, 2000; Bouvy, 2000; Herdina & Jessner, 2002). Some EFL teachers may still be influenced by Krashen’s 1982 maximum input hypothesis and the idea that the EFL classroom is the only context where learners can be exposed to EFL (McDonald, 1993). Consequently, EFL teachers’ beliefs about whether the inclusion of students’ L1 is helpful in supporting students’ language learning in the EFL classroom should influence the frequency of that integration in their EFL classroom and is therefore an important aspect of this thesis.

74.3% of the participants are of the opinion that the application of L1 in EFL classroom helps the students to learn English, while 25.7%, which equals 9 participants do not think that L1 inclusion has any beneficial impact on students’ language acquisition. In order to develop a better understanding, the participants were asked if they could list a reason/reasons why they consider L1 usage as beneficial or why they do not.

24 answers were received on the pro side, and the participants gave various reasons, but one answer acknowledged that research has shown that “it is not only bad” to use L1 in the EFL classroom but the person never does it because she/he “wants them to shower in English”. However, many of the answers are in line with the latest research, emphasizing the importance of learners being able to “make connections between L1 and L2”, and getting the possibility to “enhance their linguistic awareness”. One participant explains that “everything a student can relate to their L1 is easier to comprehend in their L2”. Another interesting aspect is that participants, who believe that L1 usage in the EFL classroom is favourable to students language acquisition, are of different opinions as to the level of proficiency the students have: some participant EFL teachers indicate that they have to use L1 because the “understanding is quite
low”, “lower levels students need to link knowledge from L1 to L2” or in other words “if they
don’t understand what I’m saying then I translate for them”, because “the students often shut
down when they don’t understand”. In contrast, other participants highlight that students are able
to “develop meta language which help the development of their English at a higher, more
academic level”.

The 9 participants, who see L1 application in the EFL classroom as not supportive of students’
acquisition of English specified various reasons: One teacher specified that “it’s easier for them
to understand new words and in which context they are used than translating them. Those who
translate work double and get frustrated when they can’t translate something”. Further, four
participants based their reply on the monolingual principle, stating for instance that “English is
best learned in English”, “full immersion works best”. Additionally, someone is of the opinion
that L1 inclusion is “only useful in monolingual classes”. “The good relationship with students in
English” is mentioned by two participating EFL teachers as a factor of establishing a classroom
climate that includes “the habit of always speaking English”, which “outweighs” the advantages
of L1 application in the EFL classroom. An interesting point is made by one participant who
explains that the students in her/his French classes use the interrelation between English and
French to better understand grammar and strategies, while the person does not believe in the
helpfulness of L1 application in the EFL classroom.

3.4.1 Correlation between L1 use and teachers’ belief about the benefits of
L1 inclusion

Table 6 reports the descriptive statistics associated with the EFL teachers' frequency of including
students’ L1 in the EFL classroom compared to their belief about whether L1 integration in the
EFL classroom is beneficial for students’ acquisition in English. It can be seen that EFL teachers
reporting that they never use students’ L1 are associated with the numerically highest mean level
of not believing in the benefit of L1 inclusion in the EFL classroom (never: M=1.6), while EFL
teachers who frequently use students’ L1 in their teaching in the EFL classroom can be linked to
a numerically lower level of not believing in the benefit of L1 inclusion in the EFL classroom
(frequently: M=1). A between-groups ANOVA is performed, in order to test the hypothesis that
EFL teachers who are of the opinion that L1 integration in the classroom is helpful for students
EFL acquisition are more likely to integrate students’ L1 in the EFL classroom. Again, normality
could not be determined because it is not possible to calculate a skew and kurtosis level for the
first group (frequently) while all members consider L1 application as beneficial. Additionally,
there are skew and kurtosis values that are above and below the range between -2.0 and 2.0
(Schmider et all., 2010; Table 6).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Skew</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>No value</td>
<td>No value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>.447</td>
<td>2.236</td>
<td>.447</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1.278</td>
<td>.461</td>
<td>1.085</td>
<td>-.942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>.548</td>
<td>-.609</td>
<td>-3.333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: descriptive statistics L1 application helpful for students’ acquisition
As mentioned before, the skewness and kurtosis statistics appear to be extremely dependent on the sample size, considering that this study is conducted with a rather small sample size of 35 participants the one-way ANOVA testing is nevertheless performed (Table 7). The one-way ANOVA (Table 7) resulted in showing that there are no statistically significant differences between the EFL teachers’ frequency of applying students’ L1 in the EFL classroom and their belief whether students L1 integration in the EFL classroom is helpful for students’ acquisition in English determined by $F(3,30) = 1.794, p=.1696$.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variations</th>
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<th>$F$</th>
<th>$P$-value</th>
<th>$F$ crit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>1.007</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.794</td>
<td>.1696</td>
<td>2.922</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>5.611</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>6.618</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: ANOVA belief in L1 integration in the EFL classroom is helpful for students’ acquisition

3.5 How do EFL teachers in Sweden include students’ L1?

The participants were given multiple options to answer on the question “if you use L1 in the classroom, on what occasions?” 30 participants chose to reply, which is in line with the 5 participants answering that they never use L1 in their EFL teaching. Chart 5 shows that grammar teaching and explaining vocabulary are the main teaching moments L1 is used by the participating EFL teachers.

3) If you use L1 in the classroom, on what occasions?
30 responses

Chart 5 – occasion on which L1 is used in the EFL classroom – just one choice possible
Since the questionnaire just offered the possibility to decide on one aspect of EFL teaching this question was followed up by an open question. The participants were asked on which other occasions they use L1 in the EFL classroom in order to support students’ acquisition of English. Further 21 answers were given, while many participants refer to students that have special needs and/or special accommodations as an additional factor to consider. Interestingly, EFL teachers who seem not to have positive attitudes towards students’ L1 use in the EFL classroom replied to this question, answers like “not really, at a high school level it is important to cut out the middle man”, “I don’t think so. I believe I try to avoid it as much as I can.”, “No, and when I teach more advanced students/classes I do not use Swedish at all”, “almost never, maybe in year 6 and 7” or simply “No” could give this impression. One EFL teacher’s answer could be understood as a guilty confession: “Yes, sometimes if they really do not understand”. Again, two EFL teachers point out only to use L1 in the EFL classroom when Swedish is L1 to all students. However, two participants relate back to research and emphasize the contrastive approach between students’ languages and English, for instance when “comparing cultural phenomena”.

4. Discussion

The correlation testing shows that there is no statistically significant correlation between the frequency with which EFL teachers include students’ L1 in the EFL classroom and their teaching experience, the percentage of students in the EFL classroom that consider another language than Swedish as their L1 nor the EFL teachers’ belief whether the inclusion of students’ L1 is beneficial for students’ acquisition.

However, this study revealed other interesting aspects that can be interpreted as implying a need to strengthen the relationship between translanguaging pedagogy research and the EFL teacher body in Sweden. This will be further discussed below by relating to the research questions one by one in order to give a closer insight in EFL teachers’ reasoning concerning students’ L1 in the EFL classroom.

4.1 How do EFL teachers in Sweden include students’ L1 in the EFL classroom?

This study shows that 85.7% of the participating EFL teachers include students’ L1 in their EFL classroom. Nevertheless, the majority (51.4%) states that they rarely use or let students apply their L1 in the EFL classroom, which gives a strong indication that EFL teachers view the inclusion of students’ L1 as something to be avoided in class. The findings based on the qualitative part of the questionnaire could suggest different reasonings among EFL teachers: First, the syllabus formulation “teaching should as far as possible be conducted in English” (The National Agency of Education, 2011a) seems to be misinterpreted in the way that English should be exclusively used in the EFL classroom. Especially, when considering that the monolingual approach of EFL teaching is in alliance with the outdated steering documents from 1994, while the syllabus for English focused on students’ communicative competence in English as a goal for language learning (Hult, 2017). Secondly, EFL teachers may view L1 use in the EFL classroom as less prestigious or even as a disruption based on Lundahl’s work from 2012, which was widespread among EFL teachers in Sweden and even used in didactic course for EFL teacher students. Thirdly, the monolingual principle found its justification among EFL teachers due to the traditional student body, which could benefit from close linguistic relation of both languages, the broad exposure to English in Swedish media, and regular travels to English-speaking countries (Källkvist et. all., 2017).

Another key point displayed by this study is that the majority of the EFL teachers, who integrate students’ L1 specify grammar teaching as the occasion when they use students’ L1 in the EFL classroom. In particular, one person states “I do believe certain grammatical terms will benefit the students, if they hear both the Swedish and English word for it, such as “ackusativobject” / direct object”. Hence, grammar teaching, using students’ L1 as a tool to save time, has been widely spread and accepted since the beginning of the 19th century in the method of the Grammar Translation Method (GTM) (Brown, 2000). Generally speaking, in the Swedish context, grammar teaching seems to be an acceptable teaching moment to fall back onto L1, because Swedish has traditionally been used to juxtapose with the targeted language in language teaching, and some universities used to emphasise GTM in their EFL teacher training programs (Hult, 2017).
Furthermore, this study found an implication that EFL teachers in Sweden interrelate the usage of students’ L1 in the EFL classroom with the needs of students that have a low proficiency in English. It also reveals that EFL teachers seem to have little knowledge about how to integrate students’ L1 to support their English proficiency. Given that, more than 30% of participants’ replies, on what additional occasions they use students’ L1 in the EFL classroom, are connected to students with special needs and/or weak performance in English. As well as, the impression evokes that EFL teachers who use students’ L1 in the EFL classroom feel the obligation to justify this inclusion. In detail, answers such as “I only use L1 if students really do not understand” or “it saves simply time” sound more like an excuse than a pedagogical decision.

The conveyed impression that the use of other languages in the EFL classroom is not valued by educational policies is in alignment with a study conducted by De Backer, van Avermaet and Slembrouck in 2017, because “falling back” to one’s L1 seems to be regarded as a failure. Correspondingly, participants, both favouring and opposing the inclusion of students’ L1 as a part of EFL teaching, emphasize that more advanced students do not need to include their L1 in the EFL classroom.

### 4.2 Under which circumstances EFL teachers in Sweden let their students use their L1 knowledge to advance in English?

As mentioned before, many of the participating EFL teachers draw a connection between low proficiency and students’ L1 integration in the EFL classroom. Only three participants explain how this integration could be used as an advancement in language teaching. Notably, one participant states that she/he is well aware of the research concerning translanguaging pedagogy, and its positive effects on language teaching, but this EFL teacher is of the opinion that using students’ L1 in the EFL classroom is not beneficial for her/his students, because Krashen’s maximum input theory from 1982 has more validity for this teacher.

In contrast, one participant explains the benefits of students’ L1 inclusion by, for instance, using comparative grammar, in order to enhance students’ linguistic awareness, which can result in the further development of students’ meta language. This participant emphasizes that meta language knowledge is an effect of students’ L1 integration in the EFL classroom that “will help the development of their English at a higher, more academic level”. Significantly, students that are given the opportunity to use their full linguistic repertoire can reach “superior cognitive gains”, because of the simultaneous activation of all languages that are at their disposal, showing that this participant’s answer is in alignment with Makalela’s study from 2015.

Moreover, the second EFL teacher highlights “fine-tuning” and “learning nuances” as a teaching moment that lets students grasp and conceptualize English better while contrasting with the individual L1. According to Hornberger and Link (2012), letting students use their L1 and its dynamic varieties as a pedagogical strategy fosters language and literacy development in the targeted language.
The third participant draws a conclusion by disclosing that “generally, it is easier to learn new things / increase one’s proficiency if the learners discover links and similarities between new material and pre-existing knowledge”, in this case students’ L1. This last answer can be related to Garcia’s study from 2014, which highlights that students in the EFL classroom benefit from first receiving all necessary information and knowledge for a particular task in the L1, which is their strongest language, and then continuing to work in English.

4.3 How do EFL teachers adjust their language bearing in mind the globalized classroom?

As mentioned before, more than 44% of the student body in the areas of the three biggest cities in Sweden, Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö, speak a different L1 than Swedish at home, and according to the National Agency of Education and their latest statistics from 2018, in some areas this number has risen up to 70% (Ernius, 2018). Consequently, EFL teachers in Sweden should recognize the need to adjust EFL teaching to those numbers, especially when considering the powerful interrelation between school success and identity as establish by various scholars (Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Raley, 2011; Norton, 2000; Palmer 2008; Sayer, 2013). However, only 20% of the EFL teachers participating in this study that include students’ L1 in the EFL classroom answered that they use students’ L1 in order to relate to students’ cultural background or existing knowledge in their other languages. One participant replies that she/he uses students’ L1 in the EFL classroom when “comparing cultural phenomena”. In fact, this reveals that one of the most important aspects of translanguaging pedagogy, namely students’ identity and the interrelation to their L1, is not taken into account by the majority of the participating EFL teachers.

Additionally, this study shows that EFL teachers who have the highest share of students with a different L1 than Swedish in their EFL classroom are divided in two groups, the ones who tend to exclude students’ L1 from their EFL teaching and the ones who frequently include native languages in their lessons. To be specific, EFL teachers that have more than 50% students in their EFL classroom, with another L1 than Swedish, state that they never include students’ L1. One of those EFL teachers neglecting integration of students’ L1 in her/his teaching states that there are “many different L1 in [the] class, however I do not speak them. Why should some pupils have the privilege?” To relate to Bunar’s study from 2010 and Abendroth-Timmer’s and Breidbach’s study from 2010, this utterance can be interpreted as a negative connotation or ignorance towards students’ L1, giving the impression that this part of the students’ identity has no part in the EFL classroom. With this in mind, the focus should be on the individual student’s need to further develop their EFL knowledge, and not on the EFL teachers’ knowledge of all native languages spoken by the students in the EFL classroom. Instead, the EFL teacher should encourage the individual student to use their L1 to make sense of their learning (Garcia & Sylvan, 2012). It has to be stressed that English should be used as the vehicle language in order to include all students later on in the process while the individual should use her/his linguistic repertoire flexibly to optimize learning.
The necessity of further educating EFL teachers about the benefits of translanguaging pedagogy is shown in that three EFL teachers explicitly state that they only use L1 when Swedish is the L1 of all students in the EFL classroom. Henceforth, students who could benefit even more of the inclusion of their L1 in the EFL classroom are not given the possibility to develop metalinguistic awareness, or simply experience a motivational booster through transferring existing knowledge in L1 to EFL.
5. Conclusion

In general, the majority of the participating EFL teachers are of the opinion that students’ L1 should rarely be included in EFL classroom. One reason seems to be their perception of the steering documents, as promoting the monolingual approach of EFL teaching. Another reason, that could be conveyed is the own picture of “falling back” on L1 as a failure or at least as less prestigious. Correspondingly, many participants interrelate the integration of students’ L1 with low proficiency in English. In addition, further investigations have to be conducted whether there is a misconception of the actual steering documents, or EFL teachers still relate to the outdated syllabus from 1994, or see a correlation between including students L1 in the EFL classroom and professional prestige.

Nevertheless, it has to be considered that EFL teachers in Sweden have traditionally met a student body with a high proficiency in English, and therefore the necessity of adjusting their teaching to the globalized classroom has not reached the practice in schools. Thus, this study has shown that only a few participants see the students L1 and their cultural background as a potential asset. On the one hand, steering documents and schools in Sweden construct plurilingualism and super-diversity as something positive. On the other hand, EFL teachers prefer the monolingual approach, which seems to be deeper rooted as a part of the “habitus” of language teaching and school as an institution (Gogolin, 1994). Consequently, the benefits of translanguage pedagogy with special attention to the individual student’s identity, through appreciating L1 as a resource, need to be further introduced to EFL teachers in Sweden. Henceforth, academic success and students’ identity are powerfully interrelated, as many studies have shown (Lee, Hill-Bonnet, & Raley, 2011; Norton, 2000; Palmer 2008; Sayer, 2013). Furthermore, the curriculum of 2011 establishes that teachers in Sweden have to acknowledge the importance of providing students with the “possibility of maximum cognitive engagement and maximum identity investment” and to invite all students to engage in learning and recognizing their language as resource for learning (Schmidt & Skoog, 2017). As mentioned before, the need of further investigation is a fact, because the scope of this study is rather small. However, this study indicates that the knowledge and expertise about how to include students’ L1 as an asset to EFL teaching needs to be expanded.

It has to be admitted that the results of the correlation tests were not statistically significant. Nevertheless, due to the time and length of this thesis the studied sample was quite small. With attention to the correlation between the frequency of integrating students’ L1 in the EFL classroom and teaching experience, a further examination with a larger sample size should be conducted. Hence, a less than 10% likelihood that this correlation occurred by chance was discovered by this study, which could be seen as an implication that a more flexible approach to language application in the EFL classroom may have been implemented in EFL teacher trainings over the last years.

Lastly, the globalized classroom with its linguistic diversity should be regarded as a source of further development for everyone, including the individual EFL teacher as well, because further knowledge into various native language results in further personal growth.
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Appendix A

Survey L1 application in the classroom

1. 1) Do you include use L1 (Swedish or if students have different ones) in your teaching?
   Mark only one oval:
   - Frequently
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

2. 2) If never, why?

3. 3) If you use L1 in the classroom, on what occasions?
   Mark only one oval:
   - Grammar teaching
   - Explaining vocabulary
   - Supporting students’ fluency (e.g. students are allowed to use a term in L1 when they do not know the English expression for it)
   - Relating to students’ culture backgrounds / existing knowledge (e.g. how would you call that in your L1)

4. 4) Are there other occasions you use L1 in the English classroom to support students’ acquisition?

5. 5) In your opinion, does application of L1 help the students to learn English?
   Mark only one oval:
   - Yes
   - No
6. 6) If yes, could you list a reason / reasons:


7. 7) If no, could you list a reason / reasons:


8. 8) In your estimation what is the percentage of students in your English classes that have a different L1 than Swedish?
   Mark only one oval.
   - less than 10%
   - 10% - 20%
   - 20% - 30%
   - 30% - 40%
   - 40% - 50%
   - more than 50%

9. 9) What grades do you teach?
   Mark only one oval.
   - Upper Secondary School
   - Grade 7-9
   - Grade 4-6
   - Adult education
   - Other:

10. 10) Teaching experience?
   Mark only one oval.
   - 1-3 years
   - 3-5 years
   - 5-10 years
   - 10-20 years
   - more than 20 years
11. 11) Gender
Mark only one oval.

- Female
- Male

12. 12) Age
Mark only one oval.

- 20-30 years
- 30-40 years
- 40-50 years
- 50-60 years
- 60-70 years