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Facilitating or compromising inclusion? Language policies at Swedish higher education institutions as workplaces

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Abstract: Research has suggested that Swedish higher education institutions' (HEIs') language policies may exclude some academic staff from work-related activities due to (dual) monolingual ideologies requiring one language at a time. This study, based on the analysis of twenty-one language policy texts, investigates HEIs' policies using a lens of inclusion at workplaces with linguistic diversity, drawing on concepts from diversity management and language policy for democracy of inclusion. All documents examined began with statements of HEIs' values relevant to the policies. Inclusion was seldom explicitly emphasized, although policies suggested ways to facilitate it. We argue that some of the approaches – namely, taking a top-down monolinguistic approach to language choice, requiring staff to be highly proficient in both Swedish and English, and offering unspecified language support – reinforce language-based in-groups and out-groups, likely compromising rather than facilitating inclusion. Another approach, emphasizing individuals' rights to choose what language they use, facilitates inclusion only if support is provided for everyone's understanding. Providing immediate language support and encouraging bottom-up, flexible language choice were less common approaches but seem particularly likely to facilitate inclusion. Our analysis suggests that policies prioritizing successful communication, not specific languages, facilitate inclusion and help employees develop job-related language and intercultural communicative competence.

Keywords: workplace inclusion; workplace language policies; linguistically diverse workplaces; higher education institutions as workplaces; critical language policy analysis

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Sammanfattning: Forskning har visat att språkpolicyer vid svenska lärosäten kan exkludera viss akademisk personal från arbetsrelaterad verksamhet på grund av (dubbelt) enspråkiga ideologier, som förespråkar användning av ett språk i taget. Denna studie, som undersöker språkpolicy-texter hos tjugoen svenska lärosäten, analyserar språkpolicyer på flerspråkiga arbetsplatser utifrån ett inkluderingsperspektiv. Studien bygger på begrepp från mångfaldshantering och inkluderingsdemokrati. Alla granskade dokument började med uttalanden om de värderingar vid lärosätena, som är relevanta för policyerna. Inkludering betonades sällan uttryckligen även om policyer föreslog hur inkludering kunde underlättas. Vi hävdar att några av tillvägagångssätten – nämligen enspråkigt ”top-down” förhållningssätt till språkval, höga krav på mycket goda kunskaper i både svenska och engelska, och ospecificerat språkstöd – förstärker språkbaserade in- och utgrupper, och bidrar troligen till att inkludering försvåras snarare än underlättas. Ett annat tillvägagångssätt, som betonar individers rätt att välja vilket språk de ska använda, underlättar inkludering, men endast om stöd ges för allas förståelse. Att ge omedelbart språkstöd i en arbetsrelaterad situation och uppmuntra ett flexibelt, ”bottom-up” språkval, var mindre vanligt även om det verkar underlätta inkludering. Vår analys tyder på att policyer som prioriterar framgångsrik kommunikation, inte specifika språk, underlättar inkludering och hjälper medarbetare att utveckla jobbrelaterad språklig och interkulturell kommunikativ kompetens.

Nyckelord: inkludering på arbetsplatser; arbetsplatsens språkpolicy; flerspråkiga arbetsplatser; lärosäten som arbetsplatser; kritisk analys av språkpolicyer

1 Introduction

Language policies at higher education institutions (HEIs) in Sweden, as well as in other non-English speaking countries, have received substantial attention in applied linguistics, mostly regarding their operations in research and education (e.g., Airey et al. 2017; Bolton and Kuteeva 2012; Hult and Källkvist 2016; Salö 2018). The attention to HEIs' language policies allows insights into the larger issue of how universities in these countries respond to the global spread of English in academia (Jenkins 2013), addressing such potential problems as domain loss of national languages in scientific fields (Ferguson 2007), neoliberal multiculturalism (Kubota 2014), and linguistic injustice (Soler and Morales-Gálvez 2022).

Swedish HEIs' language policies are decentralized and vary to a great extent due to the fact that there is no national ordinance for “what a language policy in higher education should look like or even cover” (Karlsson and Karlsson 2020: 68; Salö et al. 2022). Nevertheless, many Swedish HEI language policies, like those in

other Scandinavian countries, appear to share some commonalities, reflecting the struggle to achieve two goals. On the one hand, there is a desire to protect and develop the main national language from the threat of English (see Björkman 2014). On the other hand, high value is also placed on internationalization, which is uncritically linked to English and economic goals (Hult and Källkvist 2016; Salö 2018) and brings large numbers of non-Swedish-speaking international[1] academics and students to the country. HEIs try to resolve these two goals of internationalization and protecting Swedish through "parallel language use" of the local language and English, recommended by the Nordic Council of Ministers (Gregersen et al. 2018). Parallel language policy is often impractically top-down, however (Airey et al. 2017; Björkman 2014), with dual monolingual language choice (Holmes 2020, 2023) prescribing which language, mostly either Swedish or English, should be used for different functions (Hult and Källkvist 2016; Karlsson and Karlsson 2020).

Karlsson (2016) and Karlsson and Karlsson (2020) observed among others that HEI's language policies on administrative meetings may limit the inclusion of employees, particularly non-Swedish-speaking ones, depending on how and to what extent HEIs adopt the national language policy. Indeed, some ethnographic studies on language practices at Swedish HEIs report inclusion issues at workplaces (Holmes 2020, 2023; Negretti and Garcia-Yeste 2015; Salö 2022; Salö et al. 2022). In particular, findings by Holmes (2020, 2023) and Salö et al. (2022) suggest that limited inclusion may be related to language policies at HEIs. Similar cases of exclusion were found at HEIs and other multilingual international workplaces in Denmark and Norway (Kirilova and Lønsmann 2020; Lønsmann 2014; Lønsmann and Kraft 2018), suggesting that Swedish HEIs may illustrate challenges of inclusion at international workplaces in Nordic countries, where English functions as a lingua franca.

Our study seeks to expand on observations about inclusion in previous studies by directly addressing inclusion in relation to HEIs' language policies. We define inclusion as "involvement in work groups, participation in the decision making process, and access to information and resources" (Mor Barak and Cherin 1998: 52; Mor Barak 2017; Travis and Mor Barak 2010). For our investigation, we draw on the theoretical considerations for inclusion from the field of diversity management (Mor Barak and Cherin 1998: 52; Mor Barak 2017) discussed in 1.1, as well as Shohamy's (2006, 2015) conceptualization of language policy for democracy of inclusion, discussed in 1.4. With this inclusion focus, we investigate the policies broadly, including not only those about administration examined by Karlsson and

1 We use the term 'international' throughout this paper to describe non-domestic academics (i.e., those with an origin outside Sweden); it is intended as a description of their origin rather than of their academic reputation.

Karlsson (2020), but also areas considered by Salö et al. (2022) that are relevant to HEIs as workplaces with linguistic diversity, such as work-related language requirements and language support for employees.

1.1 Group identity and climates for diversity and inclusion at workplaces

The globalization of the economy has made workplaces in many countries increasingly diverse, including HEIs. Mor Barak (2017: 189–190) clarifies that diversity at workplaces is not about individual uniqueness but rather about "belonging to groups" and "employment consequences as a result of one's association within or outside certain social groups". One of the most serious problems associated with workplace diversity is the issue of inclusion, which refers to employees' sense of being involved in both formal and informal processes, including decision-making and even simple access to information (Mor Barak 2017; Mor Barak and Cherin 1998; Travis and Mor Barak 2010).

Mor Barak (2017) draws on social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner 1986) to explain the process that leads to exclusion. Crucially, people tend to classify themselves and others into in-group and out-group, usually based on social categories such as gender or race. In-group identification is only possible through comparison with an out-group, leading those that self-identify as group members to attempt to maintain positive group identity as superior to the out-group. Thus, the members of a group with higher social status may discriminate against and exclude those perceived to be out-group members, while members of the lower-status group are likely to make compensatory efforts to gain membership in the desired group (Tajfel and Turner 1986), which can affect their well-being negatively (Mor Barak 2017). Discrimination by the higher-status group may include "the distribution of resources and privileges … based on group membership", instead of individual "characteristics such as level of education, commitment and job-related skills" (Mor Barak 2017: 204).

To understand employees' perceptions of inclusion, Mor Barak (2017) introduces two constructs: *climate for diversity* and *climate for inclusion*. Climate for diversity refers to employees' shared perceptions of the extent to which their organization emphasizes representation of diverse groups and treats everyone in the same way regardless of their background (Mor Barak 2017: 491; McKay and Avery 2015). Meanwhile, climate for inclusion refers to employees' shared perceptions of the extent to which policies and practices recognize employees' unique qualities, facilitate "a sense of belonging", and encourage "involvement in organizational communication, decision-making processes and informal

interactions" (Mor Barak 2017: 491). Climate for diversity may therefore be considered as a matter of representation and opportunity (e.g., for advancement), while climate for inclusion may be considered as participation and belonging. Mor Barak notes substantial research suggesting that organizations that successfully create strong and positive climates for both diversity and inclusion allow employees to be part of workgroups and teams, with an equal chance for successful work performance regardless of their background.

Mor Barak (2017) proposes that the most effective, consistent way to achieve inclusion in the situation of workforce diversity and ultimately a supportive climate for diversity and inclusion should be "from the very top" of management including policy making, "reinforced by behaviors at all levels of the organization" (366). She characterizes inclusive leadership as recognizing individuals according to their skills and competence, valuing different perspectives, creating goals shared by all, and actualizing everybody's active participation in work activities.

1.2 Language as a diversity category for inclusion and exclusion in multilingual workplaces in Nordic countries

In multilingual workplaces, different language repertoires may contribute to language-based in-groups that have varying statuses. The statuses of the languages themselves are often connected to naturalized language ideologies, such as one-nation-one-language ideology and valorization of English for internationalization (Lønsmann 2014; Lønsmann and Kraft 2018; Lønsmann and Mortensen 2018). Dual or double monolingualism (Holmes 2020, 2023) also plays a role, dictating strict separation of two languages and regarding bilingual or multilingual competence as the ability to use each of two or more languages in a monolingual context. When monolingual contexts are valued in this way, language-based in-groups are especially likely to be created, with those who do not speak the language chosen in that context as out-group, threatening a positive climate for inclusion. However, the workplace's overall multilingual context means that excluded out-groups will vary depending on the requirements of the specific context.

For example, Lønsmann (2014) found that employees in a company in Denmark who did not speak both Danish and English fluently experienced exclusion. Thus, bilingual speakers constituted the dominant in-group, but out-groups varied by situation: internationals who did not speak Danish were often excluded from informal networks and socializing, potentially undermining their sense of belonging and thereby the climate for inclusion, and Danes with weaker English skills were excluded from some work activities, threatening both climate for diversity and climate for inclusion. Similarly, Lønsmann and Kraft (2018) report that, while

multilingual practices are crucial for workplaces with linguistic diversity, international companies in Denmark and Norway often favored local language native speakers. This resulted in the workplace hegemony of an in-group of local employees or other Scandinavian language speakers and exclusion of internationals with insufficient local language skills.

In a higher education context, speakers of the local language may likewise constitute a primary in-group, leading to exclusion of those who lack mastery of that language. In Sweden, Holmes (2020) reports exclusion experienced by three non-Swedish-speaking international academics. An international researcher noted that he could not join certain committees that he volunteered for because he did not understand Swedish. Even more alarmingly, emails from the building manager – relating to safety issues, for example – were in Swedish only, often resulting in his putting them aside for later. Meanwhile, Kirilova and Lønsmann (2020) found that although an international lecturer at a Danish university did not initially see himself being limited at work by not speaking Danish, upon reflection he acknowledged that speaking Danish was necessary for further advancement. The differential treatment of employees based on language skills is likely to negatively impact the climate for diversity, while the limits to involvement based on language skills is likely to damage the climate for inclusion.

While group distinctions and the exclusion of certain groups in multilingual workplaces largely involve naturalized ideologies and may be imposed from the top, we also observe voluntary, bottom-up inclusive strategies by those we see as members of the dominant group to include those who would otherwise be out-group (e.g., Holmes 2023; Negretti and Garcia-Yeste 2015; Salö 2015, 2022). Holmes (2023) reports that support staff composed emails in both Swedish and English to avoid excluding international faculty, although not receiving help or recognition for the extra work. Meanwhile, some participants in Salö (2015, 2022) and Negretti and Garcia-Yeste (2015) showcase flexible translanguaging between languages to include non-Swedish-speaking colleagues. Such approaches may allow the greatest inclusion, but require more effort by the in-group, and greater emphasis on including one potential out-group can result in exclusion of another.

1.3 Constraints on workplace inclusion at HEIs in local and national language policies

Workplace exclusion based on language as a diversity category at Swedish HEIs may be related to language policies (see Holmes 2020, 2023; Salö et al. 2022). Particularly, as Karlsson (2016) and Karlsson and Karlsson (2020) acknowledge, assigning Swedish as the natural language for administration may lead to the exclusion of non-Swedish-

speaking international academics from administration, preventing the top-down, consistent facilitation of positive climates for diversity and inclusion recommended by Mor Barak (2017).

Such possible exclusion at HEIs may be presented as inevitable (Karlsson and Karlson 2020) for compliance with the Language Act (Ministry of Culture 2009: 600), which associates Swedish with national responsibilities (Boyd 2011) and expects governmental bodies to operate in Swedish. Referring to *Språk för alla – förslag till språklag* [language for all - suggestions for language law, our translation] (Prop. 2008/09:153: 29–30), an accompanying document to the Language Act, Karlsson and Karlsson (2020) argue that, while HEIs are exempt from the act in research and teaching to allow global competition, their administration needs to be done in Swedish as it belongs to the Language Act's core areas.

However, a close reading of *Språk för alla – förslag till språklag* can yield an understanding different from Karlsson and Karlsson's. First, the Language Act's core areas include those subject to public access, such as "the political decision process, court proceedings, verdicts, minutes, decisions, regulations, activity reports and other similar documents" (Prop. 2008/09:153: 29, our translation). Thus, these core areas may not involve all administration at HEIs, but mostly written documents that should be accessible to the public. In addition, the document also specifies that communication within governmental bodies can take place in languages other than Swedish, for example in Swedish agencies abroad when some employees cannot speak Swedish. The document notes that "what can be expected concretely from individual authorities – e.g., universities and university colleges – may be decided partly based on the Language Act, and partly based on their special conditions" (30, our translation). Therefore, HEI policies that may constrain inclusion in administration through their monolingual approach may not be as firmly grounded as Karlsson and Karlsson (2020) suggest.

Moreover, besides the question of the extent to which HEIs' language policies should be based on the Language Act, the act itself has been problematized for inconsistency that may compromise national democracy (Boyd 2011). The establishment of the act was centrally motivated by the discourse of 'domain loss', the concern that Swedish should be protected from the threat of English, particularly in academic domains (Boyd 2011; Cabau 2011; Salö 2014). However, following market logic, its accompanying documents permit the use of English in HEIs' research and teaching, the key areas in which 'domain loss' is relevant. At the same time, its reinforcement of the status of Swedish in society overall may, as Boyd (2011) discusses, create "grounds for discrimination against people with first languages other than Swedish" (32). Moreover, the act's approach to multilingual Swedish society undermines the role of multilingualism for enabling communication (Boyd 2011). These concerns about Swedish society in relation to the

Language Act clearly apply to HEIs whose language policies incorporate the principles of the act.

1.4 Towards language policy for democracy of inclusion: Shohamy's (2006) expanded approach

The above discussion suggests challenges for language policies to facilitate inclusion while protecting against English linguistic imperialism (Phillipson 1992). In this section we consider how an expanded approach to language policy may begin to address these challenges. While language policy often promotes dominant social groups' interests, creating and maintaining social inequality (Tollefson 2006), language policies established by dominant social groups can be resisted in language practices and reclaimed to be democratic and inclusive (Shohamy 2006; Tollefson 2006). Discrepancies between declared language policy and *de facto* language policy mean that a language policy that seemingly intends to be inclusive, e.g., promoting multilingualism, can merely be 'lip-service' lacking specific plans (Shohamy 2006). On the other hand, actual language practice can be more aligned with bottom-up policy rather than declared language policy imposed by the nation or other higher authorities in neglect of real-life language situations (Baldauf 1994).

Building on Spolsky's (2004; also see 2022) broad definition of language policy as comprising language ideologies, language practices, and language management, Shohamy (2006, 2015) suggests an expanded approach to language policy, to envision how language policy can serve for democracy of inclusion in a multilingual community. According to her, language policy includes "mechanisms, policies and practices as well as the set of negotiations, conversations and battles that take place among them" (2006, xv). Mechanisms are devices such as language laws, rules, language educations and tests, and language use in public spaces, which create, perpetuate, and spread language ideologies that influence language practices. Mechanisms are often used by those in authority and power, since power grants greater access to different channels, knowledge of legal systems, and financial resources. Nevertheless, the hope for inclusive language policy lies in the fact that mechanisms "can be used by all groups in society, top-down and bottom-up" (54).

According to Shohamy (2006, 2015), in a democratic society, all who are affected by language policies should be able to participate in creating policy for greatest inclusivity. Language policies declared top-down often claim to include people through uniformity but are discriminatory in nature, privileging one group's variety over others. Instead, achieving democracy of inclusion in language policy requires intensive negotiation among people from different language backgrounds.

In addition, a democratic approach reconceptualizes language beyond named language boundaries, instead considering language in terms of repertoires facilitating communication.

1.5 Research questions

Extending previous research that has suggested that HEIs' language policies might contribute to the exclusion of some employees, the current study provides a critical analysis of how workplace inclusion in view of linguistic diversity is considered in language policy documents, or 'declared language policy' (Shohamy 2006). We investigate how the policies may facilitate or compromise positive climates for diversity and inclusion (Mor Barak 2017), addressing the following research questions:

(1) To what extent do Swedish HEIs as workplaces with linguistic diversity emphasize the value of workplace inclusion in their language policies?
(2) How do the policies likely facilitate or compromise inclusion? How do HEIs justify and motivate their policies relating to language choice, requirements, and support, which are relevant to inclusion?

2 Methodology

2.1 Materials

The analyzed material comprised all language policy documents from Swedish HEIs that were posted publicly or that were sent to us upon our request, for a total of 21 policies: eleven from universities, nine from university colleges (*högskolor*), and one from a department at Stockholm University, the one such example that was available to show how a HEI's policy is further developed for a specific work situation. Among the 20 HEIs, nineteen are public institutes; the one private institute, Chalmers University of Technology, is also financed by tax and governed by Swedish higher education regulations.

All documents are written in Swedish, with some HEIs also providing English translations. Although the first author has sufficient competence in Swedish to analyze the documents in Swedish, we used English translations for efficient analysis, as both of us have higher competence in English. To do so, we translated the Swedish-only documents, using Google Translate with edits by us. A Swedish native speaker who has worked as an academic at Swedish HEIs compared our final translations with the Swedish originals to ensure accuracy. We similarly

double-checked HEIs' English translations and edited one policy (Stockholm University) for analysis where the English translation did not match the original Swedish, since the Swedish version is considered the official version. We provide the Swedish versions of the extracts in our supplementary document available online.

The total length of the 21 documents in Swedish was 27,965 words (mean = 1,332), although length and amount of detail varied widely, e.g., with Uppsala University's at 3,255 words compared to Mid Sweden University's 343 words. Table 1 presents each document's publication year, as well as the source of the English translation. Some

Table 1: Information about the 21 language policy documents analyzed in this study.

HEI	Year published	English translation by:
Universities		
University of Gothenburg	2015	HEI
Karlstad University	2012/2016	Google & Authors
Linköping University	2010	Google & Authors
Linnaeus University	2014	Google & Authors
Lund University	2014	HEI
Malmö University	2018	Google & Authors
Mid Sweden University	2012	Google & Authors
Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences	2016	HEI
Stockholm University	2021	HEI
Umeå University	2019	HEI
Uppsala University	2016/2018	HEI
Colleges (*högskolor*)[a]		
Chalmers University of Technology	2013	HEI
Dalarna University	2013	Google & Authors
Halmstad University	2015	Google & Authors
Royal Institute of Art	2018	Google & Authors
Royal Institute of Technology	2010	Google & Authors
University of Skövde	2017	Google & Authors
Södertörn University	2011	Google & Authors
University of Arts, Crafts and Design	2016	Google & Authors
University West	2019/2020	HEI
Department		
Department of Public Health Sciences at Stockholm University	2019	Google & Authors

[a]Several university colleges have 'University' in their official English names.

HEIs provide two publication years when the documents were initially published in one year and revised in another.

2.2 Our approach and positionality

According to Tollefson (2006), research on language policy can be critical in three ways: being "critical of traditional, mainstream approaches"; "aim[ing] at social changes"; and/or being "influenced by critical theory" (42). Our approach to investigating HEIs' language policies is critical mainly in the second sense, with the intention to suggest changes to problematic policies (Shohamy 2006). To that end, as described below in detail, we read the material thoroughly to gain a fully developed understanding, based on which we critically examined and questioned naturalized assumptions.

Our own positionality naturally influences what we are likely to observe in terms of such naturalized assumptions. The first author's language repertoire includes Korean as the first language, English as the second, and Swedish as the third. She came to Sweden in 2017 and began to work at a college that year. The language situation at the workplace was intense for her as a newcomer, where full participation required Swedish competence. As she used English to work full-time, progress in learning Swedish was not as speedy or consistent as she expected, despite the strong wish to learn the language to be more included in the workplace. Her lived experiences of workplace language situations led to reflection on language-related workplace inclusion, giving her the initial impetus for carrying out this study.

The second author is a linguistically privileged speaker who grew up and works in the US speaking a variety of English that passes for 'standard' there. Research interests in language bias contributed to her interest in the project after hearing about the first author's experiences, in spite of her own lack of experience with Swedish HEI language policy. Given that her previous research has mainly attempted to combat forms of linguistic imperialism in the US, she was challenged to consider how resisting the encroachment of English can be balanced with facilitating inclusion in international workplaces. She has studied and used other languages previously, most notably German, Arabic, and now Swedish.

2.3 Data analyses

As presented in the introduction, we used inclusion at diverse workplaces (Mor Barak 2017) and language policy for democracy of inclusion (Shohamy 2006) as our theoretical lens for examining language policies, focusing on the extent to which and

in what ways the policies may support or limit employees' equal opportunity to get involved in work activities and decision-making processes at different organizational levels, as well as to have access to work-related information and resources (Mor Barak and Cherin 1998). We first engaged in inductive analysis to familiarize ourselves with the policies and then moved to deductive analysis through the theoretical lens.

First, we imported all documents into our NVivo project file and carried out conventional, inductive content analysis (Hsieh and Shannon 2005) to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content, familiarize ourselves with the textual features, and extract the relevant content for our research topic. Through the inductive analysis we identified six content areas, of which "values", "language choice", "language requirements", and "language support" were relevant to our study. "Values" was defined as the guiding principles the HEIs described as relevant to their policies. "Language choice" was used for all text explaining what language(s) would or could be used in a given situation, or how such a decision would be made. "Language requirements" was defined as statements about expectations or requirements for language skills, while "language support" included both support for achieving such skills and for any assistance provided where they might be lacking. We excluded from the data content irrelevant to academic staff as employees.

We then further identified subordinate areas in the four content areas. In this step, some content was double- or multiple-coded into different sub-areas. For example, "With good command of several languages, our students and staff become attractive and competitive nationally and internationally" by Umeå University was coded into both "promoting internationalization" and "multilingualism, linguistic diversity" under the content area "values".

The inductive content analysis was followed by a more focused, deductive analysis with our lens of inclusion. This stage focused on the four main areas identified through the inductive analysis that were relevant to addressing our research questions. Specifically, we observed the extent to which the policy documents emphasize inclusion and participation as well as how they may facilitate or compromise inclusion in their discussion of language choice, support, and requirements in different areas such as internal webpages for employees, general faculty/staff meetings, decision-making meetings, and documentation of decisions. In doing so, we critically examined discourse patterns, with close analysis of how HEIs interrelate different propositions to motivate and/or normalize inclusion or exclusion in their policies (see Crombie 1985 for semantic interrelations of propositions). For example, we observed that University West seemed to normalize exclusion through using the proposition "Ministry of Culture (2009: 600)

emphasizes the authorities' responsibility for use and development of the Swedish language" (1) as the (implicit) justifying ground for "Employees who are not fluent in Swedish have poorer opportunities to participate in the workplace" (3), positioning the exclusion of certain employees as inevitable. Meanwhile, we saw that Royal Institute of Art (3) assigned a means-purpose relation between the proposition, "it is important to think about which language you choose to speak" (means) and the proposition, "in order not to exclude anyone from the community of the conversation" (purpose), to motivate inclusive language choice.

Our analytic commitment involving both full, inductive understanding and deductive, critical evaluation of the policy documents required contextualizing and scrutinizing the policy documents by means of intertextual reading of the relevant literature (Björkman 2014; Johnson 2015), including Swedish laws as well as the studies reviewed in 1.1–1.4.

3 Findings and discussion

Most HEI policies have elements of both facilitating and compromising inclusion, with some more facilitating and others more compromising. We present our findings in terms of the research questions they address.

3.1 To what extent do Swedish HEIs emphasize the value of inclusion in their language policies?

Our inductive content analysis of the policies' opening statements commonly found explicit discussions of universities' values that were presented as related to their language policies. The two most highlighted values were "promoting internationalization" (mentioned in 85 % of the policies) and "protecting Swedish in accordance with the Language Act" (95 %). Other frequently mentioned values were "multilingualism and linguistic diversity", "correct and/or plain language use", and "public responsibility".

On the other hand, explicit mentions of inclusion and the related concept of workplace democracy as values, which can create strong climates for diversity and inclusion (Mor Barak 2017), appeared exceptionally only in University of Gothenburg's policy as seen in Extract 1, although the context of the statement suggests that it is focused on underrepresented students and staff and students with disabilities.

(1) [T]he University of Gothenburg is to be characterized by a work environment where respect of everyone's equal value is completely natural. The University is to work actively to promote equality and equal treatment through its activities. The University is to be accessible and inclusive for everyone… (University of Gothenburg, 2[2])

Interestingly, the emphasis on following the Language Act means that the need for access to important official documents is a value that HEI policies generally address, but mainly for the public; they do not necessarily address the need for all employees' equal access to the same information for workplace inclusion. As seen in Extract 2 below, HEI language policies stipulate that highly important information should be written in Swedish for public access as required by the Language Act.

(2) Pursuant to the Language Act, information about the University's activities that is intended for the general public is to be available in Swedish. The Act also entails that minutes from meetings, decisions, regulations, approved annual reports and similar documents that the University is obliged to produce, in compliance with administrative legislation, must be written in Swedish. The principal rule is also that other important documents which are dispatched, thereby becoming public documents, are to be produced in Swedish. (Lund University, 2)

Although producing important documents in Swedish for public access is important, it should also be noted that Swedish "may, in fact, have lost its importance as a means for inclusion" within HEIs as internationalized workplaces with linguistic diversity (Karlsson and Karlsson 2020: 82). Contrasting with their emphasis on equal information access for the public, various HEIs, according to their language policies, do not translate important documents open to public access into English or other languages (e.g., Royal Institute of Art), do in a limited way (e.g., Karlstad University, Linköping University, Malmö University, and Uppsala University), or often do not specify at all whether such documents would be translated (e.g., Lund University, Mid Sweden University, and University West). Consequently, non-Swedish-speaking staff may have no or limited access to their workplaces' important information, jeopardizing the climate for inclusion.

Returning to the more commonly explicitly stated values, the two most prioritized values, "protecting Swedish in accordance with the Language Act" and "promoting internationalization" seem likely to constrain the inclusion of employees. Specifically, to address these values, the parallel language principle (Björkman 2014; Bolton and Kuteeva 2012; Hult and Källkvist 2016) is invoked,

2 Page numbers are usually provided by HEIs; if not, we counted from the cover page.

making high competence in both Swedish and English an essential condition for being included in the work community, similar to the situation found by Lønsmann (2014) and Lønsmann and Mortensen (2018) at international companies in Denmark. The pursuit of internationalization and adherence to the Language Act can result in rationalizing and normalizing the exclusion of employees who are not highly competent in both languages, whether non-Swedish-speaking international staff or domestic staff with limited English competence. For example, although in Extract 3 Malmö University highlights the importance of an inclusive work environment 'regardless of language skills', the policy addresses this problem of language skills by presupposing that employees already have or will quickly acquire them.

(3) It is important to create a linguistic work environment that is welcoming and inclusive for all employees and students, regardless of language skills.[3] The university presupposes that all employees can use English in their daily work if necessary. It is also a wish that everyone who is not Swedish-speaking in the long run (within one or a couple of years) acquires at least so much Swedish that they can participate in the practical work in the department or division. (Malmö University, 2)

Both Swedish and international employees can be exposed to the possibility of exclusion or limited participation if they are not at least Swedish-English bilingual. While pursuing the value of internationalization, interpreted as requiring English (Hult and Källkvist 2016), for example, Swedish HEIs may create situations where local employees with limited English skills are excluded. Nevertheless, as acknowledged in policies at University West (Extract 4), Lund University, and Royal Institute of Technology, emphasis on Swedish competence is especially likely to restrict the participation of or even exclude international employees who do not speak Swedish from decision-making processes (as Salö et al. 2022 observe), thus negatively impacting the climate for inclusion, and damaging the climate for diversity by hampering representation and opportunities for advancement.

(4) Employees who are not fluent in Swedish have poorer opportunities to participate in the workplace and take on management assignments and assignments in the collegiate committees, which in turn can impair promotional opportunities. (University West, 3)

In the context of the policy documents, it is clear that the value of protecting Swedish in accordance with the Language Act is provided as a justified ground for lessening the degree of inclusion, especially through accepting the exclusion of non-Swedish-

3 All underlining in the extracts is our emphasis.

speaking employees from managerial and administrative assignments. University West, like most of the HEIs, begins their language policy by declaring that "The official communication language at the university is Swedish. The Language Act (2009: 600) emphasizes the authorities' responsibility for use and development of the Swedish language" (University West, 1). However, as we discussed in 1.3, governmental commentary accompanying the Language Act suggests that the degree to which the Language Act is to be complied with may be adapted as needed in different situations. Moreover, the Language Act may provide grounds for language-based discrimination (Boyd 2011) by privileging the first language speakers of the dominant language (Shohamy 2006).

3.2 How do the policies likely facilitate or compromise inclusion? How do HEIs motivate these policies?

As seen in the discussion of the first research question, inclusion did not appear to be one of the explicitly prioritized values in Swedish HEIs' language policies. However, a close reading of the policy documents shows how HEIs try to use language choice, requirements, and support so as to enable all staff and students to participate in work and study. We identified six approaches to try to facilitate inclusion:

(1) Providing immediate language support
(2) Encouraging bottom-up, flexible language choice
(3) Emphasizing individuals' rights to choose what language they use for speaking and writing
(4) Taking a top-down, monolinguistic approach to the parallel use of Swedish and English for different functions and situations
(5) Requiring staff to be highly proficient in both Swedish and English
(6) Offering unspecified language support

Interestingly, as we discuss below, although seemingly intended to increase participation and inclusion, options 4, 5, and 6 may actually compromise such goals. The third option – emphasizing individuals' rights to choose the language they use – can be helpful (Karlsson and Karlsson 2020), but is not unproblematic, as discussed below.

3.2.1 Facilitation

Here we present the three ways that we believe can help academic staff participate regardless of their linguistic repertoire, creating a positive climate for inclusion in

which staff with varying repertoires can be involved in communication at all levels, and a climate for diversity in which rules are applied consistently regardless of language-based in-groups. These approaches may be particularly effective because they make the distinction between Swedish-speaking and non-Swedish-speaking less important by helping all to work together for common goals, as recommended by Mor Barak (2017).

3.2.1.1 Providing immediate language support

The first approach provides the immediate language support necessary to get the work done. We highlight 'immediate' to contrast with support for learning the language, which by itself does not provide for immediate inclusion and thus can normalize exclusion until the language is learned sufficiently, as was seen in Extract 4 from University West's policy. Almost all documents recommended or required visual aids such as presentation slides or translations for Swedish documents in some situations or information on internal web pages in both English and Swedish. In particular, Uppsala University discusses the translation of important decisions for full inclusion of non-Swedish-speaking employees in administration, although writing in Swedish is mentioned as the primary option:

(5) Minutes of meetings must always be written in Swedish. If necessary, the chair can decide that the minutes will also be translated into English. In many connections, even an English summary outlining important decisions can offer participants who do not have a command of Swedish a better chance of being fully involved in the activities of the department/equivalent. (Uppsala University 9).

However, as discussed previously, this type of most helpful immediate language support for all employees' equal access to highly important written information, such as that from decision-making meetings, is often not proposed, and when suggested, is done in a limited or conditional way (Uppsala University, Karlstad University, Linköping University, Malmö University, and University of Skövde).

Important documents at HEIs are in principle public information and need to be written in Swedish to maximize public access to them according to the Language Act. However, they can still be translated for non-Swedish-speaking employees given that equal access to information is an essential condition for inclusion (Mor Barak 2017; Mor Barak and Cherin 1998). With recent technology development, translation may not be as costly or time-consuming as before.

In addition, providing interpreters to allow immediate and full participation by non-Swedish-speaking employees was suggested by two HEIs: College of Arts, Crafts and Design and Royal Institute of Art, as presented in Extract 6.

(6) At other joint meetings at the university where complex issues or topics that strongly affect employees' work situation or students' studies [are addressed], the university provides an interpreter or written translation. (Royal Institute of Art, 3-4)

Offering interpreters to private persons is prescribed by the Administrative Procedure Act (Ministry of Justice 2017) to secure democracy through everyone's equal access to information. There were five other HEIs whose policy documents mention the possibility of providing interpreters, but apparently only to external individuals. On the other hand, the College of Arts, Crafts and Design and the Royal Institute of Art seem to try to extend the principle to non-Swedish staff at HEIs. While HEIs are unlikely to have the budget to hire interpreters for all meetings that non-Swedish-speaking staff participate in, providing an interpreter for important large meetings can still be considered. Language policies can also suggest that Swedish participants with multilingual competence provide collegial support as interpreters as much as they can. What is needed is not professionally perfect translation but the effort to include everyone in work-related meetings, creating supportive climates for diversity and inclusion (McKay and Avery 2015; Mor Barak 2017) through language policy that encourages using languages as resources for inclusion (Shohamy 2006).

3.2.1.2 Encouraging bottom-up, flexible language choice

A second approach that we consider likely to facilitate inclusion, mentioned in five policies, is encouraging bottom-up, flexible language choices, where all participants at a meeting can discuss their language choice and practices (Airey et al. 2017; Björkman 2014). Because this approach potentially allows participants to draw on whatever language resources they have, it recognizes their particular skills and allows for their involvement in the meeting, both of which contribute to a positive climate for inclusion. Since there can be a power imbalance among participants, language choice that is not prescribed but made in a specific context can still result in the exclusion of some participants in favor of others. Nevertheless, having the possibility of flexible language choices can secure inclusion and participation more than rigid, top-down prescription of which language is to be used in a situation, which automatically precludes the participation of those who do not speak the predetermined language (for how flexible language choice contributes to workplace inclusion, see e.g., Holmes 2023; Negretti and Garcia-Yeste 2015; Salö 2015, 2022).

Regarding this policy of flexible, bottom-up language choice, Royal Institute of Art's and Malmö University's policies in Extracts 7 and 8 are of particular interest.

They exceptionally show an understanding that language use for successful communication involves negotiation among interlocutors, which Shohamy (2006) suggests is a prerequisite for an inclusive language policy.

(7) When we talk to each other, it is important to think about which language we choose to speak in order not to exclude anyone from the community of the conversation. At KKH [Royal Institute of Art], we make an effort to help each other be understood in conversations and meetings. (Royal Institute of Art, 3)

(8) In daily work, one is required to have a mutual willingness to negotiate and a pragmatic approach when it comes to choosing language in various informal, semi-formal and formal contexts. Using several different languages at the same time can be a solution. (Malmö University, 2)

Notably, the extract from Malmö University not only specifies that such flexibility should be available in both formal and informal situations, but can be read as encouraging multilingual practice or *translanguaging*, a practice that involves "select[ing] and deploy[ing] particular features from a unitary linguistic repertoire to make meaning and to negotiate particular communicative contexts" (Vogel and Garcia 2017: 1), or communicating drawing on full language repertoires rather than relying solely on a specific named language (Shohamy 2006). This communication-focused approach to language choice by Malmö University exhibits a clear contrast with many other HEIs' dual or double monolingual understanding (Holmes 2020) of parallel language use, which usually requires 'only one language at a time' (as seen later in Extracts 15–17).

Karlsson and Karlsson (2020: 68) note that "negotiation of national policy in a local policy can contribute to possible inclusion." However, in order to encourage bottom-up, inclusive language use, HEIs seemed to require a stronger measure than 'negotiation', actually needing to deny the governing rule of using Swedish in accordance with the Language Act, to promote more democratic, inclusive language use, as seen in Extracts 9 and 10.

(9) In general, meetings will be held in Swedish. However, this need not prevent participants from using other languages, as long as everyone participating in the meeting understands what is said and can make themselves understood in their language. It is appropriate to start a meeting by discussing which language or languages will be used, so that all participants are aware of the rules. (Uppsala University, 9)

(10) In education and research, the university must protect and develop the Swedish language, but there the choice of language is more context-dependent and requires consideration of, for example, research traditions and target groups. Which language is used as a working language can also vary depending on the conditions. (Stockholm University, 3)[4]

3.2.1.3 Emphasizing individuals' rights to choose what language they use

The third approach found in policy documents that may facilitate inclusion and participation is emphasizing individuals' rights to choose the language they speak and write. Certainly, the chances for people to participate in meetings can be higher if they may speak a language they feel comfortable with, and the overt recognition of employees' own language skills can contribute to a positive climate for inclusion. However, language-based in-groups and out-groups may be reinforced in this approach. The right to speak in a self-chosen language is helpful for inclusion only when the speaker is understood by all participants and when that speaker also understands others' chosen language(s), a point Karlsson and Karlsson (2020) also noted. Thus, only highlighting the right to choose the language to use without considering the importance of mutual understanding, as seen in Extracts 11 and 12, may not succeed in including everyone.

(11) Please note that individual employees are welcome to speak Swedish despite the fact that English is mainly used at staff meetings. No one other than the employee themself can decide whether the message is best formulated in Swedish or English. The same applies to e.g., PowerPoint presentations, the speaker decides for themself whether such a PowerPoint should be in English or Swedish. (Department of Public Health Sciences, Stockholm University, 4)

(12) Regardless of whether the meeting is held in Swedish or English, all participants have the right to use the language most comfortable for them. (University West, 4)

By contrast, the policy documents at the University of Arts, Crafts and Design and at the Royal Institute of Art in Extracts 13 and 14 not only highlight the right for language choice at meetings but also note the importance of providing support for mutual understanding in case not all participants share the same language

4 Although Stockholm University provides an English version of their language policy document, here we use the version translated by Google, as it better matches the official version of the policy in Swedish. Stockholm University's English translation is additionally provided in the supplementary materials.

repertoire. If the policies are properly implemented, both individuals' language rights and inclusion of all participants can be supported.

(13) Members of decision-making bodies must always have the opportunity to present their case in Swedish. If necessary, an interpreter must be hired for members who do not speak Swedish. (University of Arts, Crafts and Design, 2)

(14) Staff meetings, or similar meetings with employees, are held in English when English speaking employees participate. It is always possible to ask questions or present opinions in Swedish in these meetings and the meeting moderator helps with translation so that everybody understands. (Royal Institute of Art, 3)

3.2.2 Compromise

3.2.2.1 Taking a top-down, monolinguistic approach

As mentioned earlier, some policies that Swedish HEIs proposed as promoting inclusion may instead exclude certain groups from different work situations, reinforcing language-based out-groups and contributing to a negative climate for inclusion. One such approach, found in nearly three quarters of the policies, prescribes top-down, predetermined language choice for different situations (Airey et al. 2017; Björkman 2014; Karlsson 2016; Karlsson and Karlsson 2020). That is, HEIs frequently assigned only one language (usually Swedish, and sometimes English) to various situations, such as meetings at different organizational levels as well as documentation of decisions, minutes, or other important information, as exemplified in Extracts 15–17. This dual or double monolingual approach to language choice (Holmes 2020) makes participation conditional on linguistic uniformity in a given situation (Shohamy 2006) and excludes employees who do not speak the chosen language from those functions and activities, mainly non-Swedish-speaking internationals and occasionally Swedish staff lacking English competence. Extract 15 also allows for individual speaker choice, but presents the need for such choice as non-ideal, while Extract 16 states that the only exception to the Swedish-only policy is for external experts at meetings.

(15) The meeting language shall normally be Swedish. This is particularly important when it comes to meetings of preparatory and decision-making bodies, but must also be taken into account when it comes to departmental and subject group meetings. However, some adaptation can take place. For example, individual statements can always be presented in English if someone prefers this to better express their opinion. However, an aspiration should be that all employees have such good knowledge of the Swedish language that they both understand information given in Swedish and can communicate in Swedish. (University of Skövde, 3)

(16) Meetings of the university board, faculty board ([or] the like), department board, library board and other work unit[s] as well as bodies that work on delegation from or as preparatory bodies for said boards are held in Swedish. At a meeting of the employment committee, the chair may decide that the consideration of a certain case shall take place in English, if a non-Swedish-speaking expert participates in the meeting. (Linköping University, 2)

(17) Our staff meetings and staff days are the entire workplace's common meeting place for information exchange and dialogue. … English must therefore be the main spoken language at staff meetings and staff days. … The department's three decision-making bodies… have meetings in Swedish. (Department of Public Health Science at Stockholm University, 4)

As seen Extracts 18–20 below, the top-down prescription of language choice explicitly draws on standard language ideology (Milroy 2001) in at least a third of the HEIs' language policies, assuming the "correctness" of some varieties and suggesting that the use of particular language norms will guarantee efficient communication. In Extract 18, the "correctness" of language is even put on the same level with the "correctness" of information provided.

(18) Karlstad University's communication within the organization and with the outside world must be factual, credible, and linguistically correct. The language must always be "neat, simple and understandable", whether it is aimed at individuals, the general public or organizations and regardless of the type of text and medium. Careful language is equivalent to standard Swedish… (Karlstad University, 4)

(19) In the following, guidelines are given for the use of language at the university, preferably in different administrative areas. "English" means British English. (Linköping University, 2)

(20) All internationally oriented information must be in good, comprehensible and consistent British English, which serves as the common language for non-Swedish-speaking students and staff. (Mid Sweden University, 3)

Extracts 19 and 20 additionally appeal to ideologies of nativeness that assume that the language form used by monolingual native speakers is most legitimate (Ortega 2014) by specifying the need to use British English rather than allowing variation, including second-language and non-native varieties. However, English in Swedish HEIs is used as a lingua franca (Björkman 2014), a communication tool chosen by

people with a wide range of linguacultural backgrounds. Imposing one variety (British English) as the standard and assuming it is 'the common language for non-Swedish-speaking students and staff' as in Extract 20 can undermine the legitimacy of non-British English speaking staff's English use for participating in work, and thus likely create a negative climate for inclusion (Mor Barak 2017).

3.2.2.2 Requiring staff to be highly proficient in both Swedish and English

The second approach that is likely to compromise inclusion is requiring staff to be highly proficient in both Swedish and English. Like the previous approach, this approach reinforces language-based in-groups by requiring linguistic uniformity for inclusion, an approach that Shohamy (2006) has identified as discriminatory. In particular, the pressure on international staff, who are perceived to be proficient only in English although most are at least bilingual or multilingual (Jämsvi 2019), to develop Swedish competence, is often very high (Karlsson 2017; Salö et al. 2022), as seen in Extracts 21–23, as well as Extract 3 above. This demand mirrors the strong pressure on internationals' Danish skills at an international company in Denmark, which Lønsmann (2014) connected to one-nation-one-language ideology.

(21) [T]he common working language at Dalarna University is Swedish and in order for all staff to be fully involved in the University's life, incoming staff are expected to acquire functional competence in Swedish within a year or so. (Dalarna University, 1)

(22) When recruiting for employment that covers two years or more, applicants must therefore always be informed that they are expected to learn Swedish within twelve months. (Department of Public Health Science at Stockholm University, 3)

(23) A teacher who lacks Swedish knowledge when he/she is employed must, if he/she receives permanent employment, acquire Swedish within two years such that he/she can teach and supervise in Swedish and participate in conversations in Swedish regarding the department's and faculty's academic and administrative activities. (Linköping University, 2)

Meanwhile, Extracts 24 and 25 present the demand on Swedish staff to develop English skills for internationalization (cf. Lønsmann and Mortensen 2018).

(24) All teachers must have competence in English to be able to teach and supervise in English. (College of Arts, Crafts and Design, 1)

(25) All teachers ought to be prepared to teach in English or at least bilingually, with visual support in English. (University of Gothenburg, 4)

Learning a second language in general takes several years and is much more difficult for adults than for children (Ortega 2008). For adult learners who use another language at work than the target language, second language learning can be even more challenging (Yates 2017). Thus, for most academic staff, who do not even have the flexibility to commit to language learning because they are working full-time in the language they are already proficient in, it is simply impossible to develop the required competence so quickly as many HEIs demand. Such a level of learning can be especially challenging for international hires, who may be hired without Swedish skills at all, but even Swedes who already have some competence in English may struggle to achieve the high level required by the policies.

The high, often unrealistic, demand on staff's proficiency in both Swedish and English not only attempts to achieve inclusion through linguistic uniformity, it normalizes the exclusion of those who are not (yet) proficient in both languages. Moreover, it represents a neoliberal shift of the responsibility for such exclusion from the HEIs to the excluded individuals, who, from a managerial perspective, apparently do not try hard enough to develop the expected language competence.

3.2.2.3 Offering unspecified language support

While policies that emphasize Swedish and English proficiency require linguistic uniformity and may contribute to normalizing language-based out-groups, the final policy we consider, offering unspecified language support, may fail to reduce such language-based tensions. The value of competence in both Swedish and English for full participation may lead HEI employees, as individual agents involved in language policies, to be willing to invest in learning Swedish or English (Spolsky 2022) in spite of the difficulty and time required. Such voluntary language learning can be successful when sufficient support and resources are provided (Spolsky 2022). In fact, the Nordic Council of Ministers recommends that "the study time required for [local language learning] must, of course, be factored in as a part of the employees' total of working hours" (Gregersen 2018: 35). However, only the Department of Public Health Science at Stockholm University's language policy document specifies that working hours can be allocated for language learning (while requiring employees to learn Swedish within a year, however, as seen in Extract 22). No HEI-level policies provide specifics regarding how employees' language learning is to be supported, although eleven of the twenty state a general requirement for such support, as exemplified in Extracts 26–28.

(26) …as an employer, the university must provide appropriate support and conditions for employees who need to develop competence in the Swedish language. (University West, 3)

(27) International students, doctoral students and staff should be given the chance to develop their Swedish language skills if necessary. …The university must offer adequate language support and competence. (Umeå University, 4-5)

(28) The university must offer language support in Swedish for employees with another mother tongue. Furthermore, managers and colleagues must provide support for extensive development. The language is the key to social contacts, both at work and in leisure time, and learning takes place in many different situations. Swedish-speaking employees are therefore encouraged to speak Swedish with colleagues who have another mother tongue. (University of Skövde, 3)

In HEIs' policies requiring language support, the only concrete way to support international staff's learning of Swedish is encouraging Swedish staff to use Swedish with their non-Swedish colleagues, as in Extract 28. However, it may not always be sufficient for language support at workplaces like HEIs, where language is complex due to the nature of work. Swedish input at workplaces can certainly offer non-Swedish-speaking staff opportunities to develop Swedish naturally if they already have enough Swedish skills to comprehend the input and handle work tasks. To offer actual help to international colleagues, Swedish staff also need to know how to make their talk comprehensible to them, which can be difficult (Ortega 2008). In fact, a participant in Holmes (2023) study reported that unilateral switching to Swedish with an international colleague to help them learn Swedish instead led to communication breakdown. Thus, to the extent that policies specify this suggestion, it is important for them to simultaneously emphasize the importance of mutual negotiation of meaning and adapting to one's interlocutor (Shohamy 2006), which might require using simpler Swedish or switching to English or other languages.

Thus, in contrast with other aspects of the language policies that often include details and concrete actions, nearly all the policies lack specific plans regarding language support, with only the two exceptions noted above. Unspecified language support, which may reflect HEIs' limited resources, may not be helpful for staff who wish to become more capable participants through further language learning, and can even be a factor in compromising their participation.

4 Implications and conclusions

Our study is, to our knowledge, the first to investigate HEI language policy documents (i.e., 'declared' language policy) with an exclusive focus on inclusion at HEIs as multilingual workplaces, although the issue has been identified by previous

studies (Holmes 2020, 2023; Karlsson and Karlsson 2020; Kirilova and Lønsmann 2020; Negretti and Garcia-Yeste 2015; Salö 2015, 2022; Salö et al. 2022). Overall, the possible exclusion and limited inclusion in Swedish HEI language policies reflects the processes and mechanism of exclusion at international companies with linguistic diversity in Denmark and Norway, involving monolingual, nationalistic ideologies (Lønsmann 2014; Lønsmann and Kraft 2018). Swedish HEI policies parallel those found in the Danish and Norwegian studies in that full participation in work activities requires high proficiency in both the country's main official language and English, which consequently results in the exclusion of those who do not have the language competence, whether they are international or domestic employees.

The language policies may lead employees to see themselves and colleagues as in-group and out-group based on language, with differential treatment between groups, which can have detrimental effects on the overall work environment. The exclusive assignment of Swedish to administration is likely to create situations where Swedish-speaking colleagues feel overloaded (Karlsson and Karlsson 2020) while non-Swedish-speaking colleagues feel limited and powerless (Holmes 2020). Some employees' inability to participate in various ways because of their language creates a negative climate for inclusion that negatively affects all employees. In addition, if language backgrounds dictate that some colleagues have to take on more responsibilities while others have limited promotion opportunities because they have been excluded from decision-making committees, that will create a negative environment for diversity (Mor Barak 2017), possibly leading to conflict and job dissatisfaction (Travis and Mor Barak 2010).

In a multilingual community where members do not fully share linguistic repertoires, no language policy can perfectly resolve the issue of inclusion. Nevertheless, alternative approaches to language requirements, support, and facilitating inclusion can lessen the emphasis on language as a constraint on participation and opportunity, thus improving the climates for inclusion and diversity. We discuss each of these approaches below.

First, language proficiency requirements as a prerequisite to inclusion requires linguistic uniformity (Shohamy 2006) and reinforces language-based in-groups, limiting representation of and opportunity for diverse groups in the organization (threatening climate for diversity) as well as sense of belonging and ability to participate at various levels (threatening climate for inclusion, Mor Barak (2017) as noted above). While high proficiency in both Swedish and English is probably ideal in the Swedish context, the requirement cannot be a condition for inclusion unless it is required at hire rather than expected to occur on the job, given that mastering a new language as an adult is very difficult and can take several years, particularly when working full time in another language (Yates 2017).

Karlsson and Karlsson (2020: 83) suggest that requiring HEIs to "incentivize language studies by making them possible, attractive and accessible" would offset the problem of requiring Swedish proficiency for inclusion. However, we argue that their emphasis on proficiency as a requirement for inclusion is a neoliberal approach that shifts the accountability for inclusion from HEIs to individual international employees, contributing to naturalizing the years of exclusion that internationals may experience until they become fluent in Swedish (see Kubota 2014 for discussion of neoliberalism at internationalized HEIs).

In terms of English requirements, we first question whether internationalization requires all Swedish staff to have high English proficiency. As Lønsmann and Mortensen (2018) note regarding an English-only policy at a Danish company, treating English as the 'natural' global language *erases* (Irvine and Gal 2000) the role and importance of other languages used in such communication and delegitimizes speakers of the local language, contributing to linguistic imperialism. Thus, mastery of English, rather than being universally required, should be expected only as needed for the specific job. Moreover, there should be clear awareness that English used at HEIs is an academic lingua franca (Björkman 2014), which need not conform to the monolingual norms of Anglophone countries (typically those of the US or the UK) but instead should be developed and maintained by multilingual users in their own specific contexts, as Widdowson (1998) argues. Such awareness will help counteract the ideologies of nativeness that are evident in HEI language policies and that reinforce the ongoing process of linguistic imperialism.

Second, although we argue that Swedish proficiency should not be a condition for inclusion, concrete support for non-Swedish staff's Swedish learning is nevertheless crucial to allow eventual full, independent participation without further language support, as well as integration into Swedish society. In fact, concrete support for international employees' language learning is recommended by the Nordic Council of Ministers (Gregersen 2018), as it can help achieve both goals of internationalization and maintaining the local language (in this case, Swedish). The lack of specification of how language learning is to be supported suggests an area in which implementation is likely to be problematic, with discrepancy between policy and practice (Shohamy 2006).

Third, given the variation in actual language competencies in the internationalized HEI and the need for inclusion, we argue that HEI language policies would be most beneficial if they emphasize the importance of successful communication itself, however achieved, as Shohamy (2006) proposes, rather than trying to facilitate it indirectly by dictating choice of language. Our analysis indicates that workplace exclusion may emerge as a consequence of the inflexible top-down assignment of Swedish and English to different activities. However, as discussed in 1.3, the law may allow more flexibility than is sometimes assumed.

Well-implemented policies emphasizing successful communication rather than specific language choices can minimize language-based in-groups and increase participation and opportunity, thus contributing to positive climates for inclusion and diversity. Allowing and encouraging translanguaging and negotiation of meaning, as well as visual aids, translations, and bilingual colleagues' help as informal interpreters, can not only provide for immediate and full inclusion but can also facilitate language learning for both Swedish and non-Swedish staff. That is, it can help Swedish-speakers acquire intercultural communicative competence in English as a lingua franca (House 2007) and provide non-Swedish staff with exposure to comprehensible input of Swedish needed for the job, an essential condition for language acquisition (Ortega 2008). In fact, immediate language support for everyone's understanding would make work-related meetings an optimal environment for language learning as well as for academic staff to work together beyond language-based group categorization. Without such support to ensure everyone's understanding, there is little or no benefit for language learning, not to mention inclusion.

Finally, the current study only looked at 'declared' policies, and we suggest further ethnographic studies to investigate democracy of inclusion in language policies and practice. Based on Shohamy's (2006) conceptualization of language policy for democracy of inclusion and involving the constructs of climate for diversity and climate for inclusion (Mor Barak 2017), the focus can be the extent to which all who are affected by language policy – local and international staff and students – negotiate between declared and *de facto* policies. As the issue of exclusion in Swedish HEIs has been identified in other contexts in relation to ethnicity, race, and gender (e.g., Mählck 2013), an intersectional investigation with a focus on inclusion can contribute to a better understanding of the actual effects of language policy and ultimately begin to address issues of linguistic injustice.

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