The language introduction program in Sweden

How is translanguaging used in English education?

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Abstract

This degree project focuses on the English classroom in the Swedish language introduction program, more specifically on the use of translanguaging as a teaching tool for newly arrived students.

This thesis is an attempt to better understand the classroom dynamics in the program during English lessons by answering the following questions: What are the challenges of teaching English in the language introduction program in Sweden? What do teachers think about translanguaging as a teaching tool in the language introduction classes? Is using it taking advantage of pre-existing knowledge?

The research was conducted with three teachers from one school in central Stockholm, all coming from different socio-cultural backgrounds and having varying degrees of experience as teachers. The data was gathered through classroom observations and interviews, which allowed for triangulation, thus offering a better understanding and a deeper view of their teaching practices. Three lessons were observed, one with each teacher. These observations were conducted prior to the interviews, to facilitate the comparison between the teaching styles of each teacher. Doing so allowed for more exhaustive and informative interviews.

Although the qualitative nature of the data does not allow for the results to be generalizable, triangulation does give the results legitimacy and transferability. The results of this research will be beneficial in understanding how to tackle a multilingual environment, given that that is the direction in which Sweden is heading.

Keywords

Translanguaging, foreign language education, language introduction, translation, teaching tool.
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1. Introduction

The influx of immigrants to Sweden in recent years has spawned a discussion surrounding the educational system and the integration of these individuals into Swedish society. According to Statistics Sweden (2010), education was voted as the most important issue during the 2014 elections. Therefore, investigating the integration process of newly arrived teenagers is of interest not only for uncovering the inner workings of language acquisition but also as a social and public issue.

One of the first hurdles that newly arrived people can encounter is language and communication. Therefore, the Swedish government has established Introduction Programs such as SFI (Swedish for Immigrants), where newly immigrated individuals can be directed to learn about the language and customs of Swedish society. These programs are usually two years long (Statistics Sweden, 2011, p. 25). The benefits of these classes are that they introduce the newly immigrated students to a Swedish curriculum and school environment, which can be drastically different from their previous schooling. It is also worth mentioning that for some students these introduction programs are their first encounter with school at all. Furthermore, the rise in the numbers of newly immigrated students has led to a noticeable change in classroom demographics in general, since one fifth of students in elementary school and kindergarten now have foreign backgrounds (Torpsten, 2018). This all further strengthens the importance of a discussion around the education and inclusion of students with a multilingual or multicultural background into the language educational discourse.

My interest in this subject is personal, and stems from a first-hand experience of the introduction program. Having now gained some experience as a teacher, I wish to explore and discuss how teachers handle a multilingual classroom, and whether they think that the system is well equipped to offer appropriate education to these students.

This study will be focusing on translanguaging as a teaching and communicative tool, which has already been the focus of many studies. The Swedish national education agency (Skolverket) has written in the teaching curriculum of English that the use of L1, in this case Swedish, should be minimal in the classroom (Skolverket, 2011). This has created a debate around how much or how little L1 should be used, and naturally there are teachers at both ends of the spectrum. However, given the special circumstances in an immersion classroom, where the students are new to Swedish, this specific debate is interesting to explore.

This project targets one specific age group as well as one specific introduction program, students between the ages of 15 to 19 in the Språkintruduction (introduction to language) program (SPRINT) at the upper secondary school level or Gymnasium. The subjects are newly immigrated teens who are being prepared to take the Swedish national test and then aim to graduate lower secondary school (year 9). During this time the students learn Swedish in parallel to English and Mathematics, however the introduction of another language, in this case English, so early in the learning process, can be a cause for concern as regards not only the language acquisition and proficiency of the students, but also the teachers’ role. How will these students be able to learn both languages? How do teachers overcome communication difficulties with the students?
A bigger and broader question is: should the English classroom in the language introduction program offer a bilingual or even multilingual education since the students are often times bi- or multilingual themselves, or should teachers avoid translanguaging as much as they can? Furthermore, the role of the language teacher is likely to be magnified, given that he/she is dealing with language can be a sensitive issue related to both personal identity and integration into society (Skolverket, 2012).

The goal of the study is to probe SPRINT teachers’ attitudes towards the inclusion of different L1s in their classrooms. Furthermore, it aims to explore how they deal with situations of communication breakdown where the students are less fluent in both L1 and L2 than the average students.

Research questions:

- What are the challenges of teaching English in the immersion program in Sweden?
- How do teachers deal with communication breakdown?
- What do teachers think about translanguaging as a teaching tool in the language introduction classes? Do they use it? Why/why not?

2. Theoretical background

Language is strongly linked with the identity of its user, be it spoken or unspoken, signs or gestures. It is in constant use and its main goal is to transfer a message between interlocutors. It has a complex role in shaping human interaction as it moulds people’s perception of the environment they inhabit; it is also shaped by the said environment and its social customs (House, 2007). Its structures and modes are strongly linked with the customs and traditions of the people using it (House, 2007). For example, in English to express joy upon hearing good news, people use the expression “warms my heart”, while in Arabic the equivalent phrase would be “it cools my heart”. This is due to the fact that in most Arabic speaking countries the weather is relatively warm and cooler temperatures bring relief. There are many other examples even within the same language when it is spoken by different people throughout the world. The different variants of English American, Australian, British and so on, are all the same language, speakers of these various dialects might not have the same understanding of certain words. Bilingual and multilingual individuals’ language becomes thus even more interesting to study. Because they speak two or more languages, the cultural and social values of those languages become part of their repertoire and therefore they help shape their vision of the world. This can lead to different views between monolingual and bilingual/multilingual speakers in each individual language they know (House, 2007).

Multilingual, which is the umbrella term used to describe bilingual speakers in this study, can navigate multiple linguistic systems with relative ease. This ability to easily move between repertoires is usually known as either code-switching or translanguaging. This study focuses on the latter and explores its use in an educational context.
2.1 What is translanguageing?

The first use of the word translanguageing was in 1994 by Cen Williams, a Welsh educator, and it is a translation of the welsh word trawsieithu. Through his observation of Welsh bilingual children in the classroom, Williams noticed a pattern in their language use where the students shifted between their L1 (Welsh) and L2 (English) and it was done for a specific purpose (cited in García & Wei, 2014). In a sense translanguageing has always been associated with an educational context, more specifically, multilingual education.

In its original sense, translanguageing was used to describe a pedagogical practice via which bilingual pupils intentionally changed their languages between the input and output (García & Lin, 2017). For example, the pupils would read a text in Welsh and write the summary of it in English, so they activated and shifted between both languages. Bilingual and multilingual individuals can move between the different features of the languages in their repertoire, which are in constant collaboration and coexistence in their minds (García & Wei, 2014). Baker (2011, cited in García & Lin, 2017, p. 119) describes the intentional shift as a way to achieve understanding and knowledge though the collaborative use of two languages. He rationalizes that the students will gain a lot from this process because it will allow them more time to think and digest the concepts fully.

García and Wei (2014) situate translanguageing in relation to other forms of communicative strategies or even learning strategies. It is presented as a socially conscious teaching tool that does away with hierarchies in languages, and instead of the focus being on the languages and their rank (mother tongue, second language etc.), it is on the features chosen by the speaker and their use in context (García, 2017). This is what sets it apart from code-switching which it is often compared with. The latter refers to a simple swap of one language for another and does not take into account the complex practices that compose the speakers’ entire language repertoire (García & Wei, 2014).

Translanguageing, on the other hand, does look at the repertoire as a whole and not just some of its parts. It is categorized as one, regardless of the languages incorporated in it because it offers bilinguals/multilinguals the means to rationalize their world. Essentially, translanguageing envisions the many languages of the individual as part of one repertoire from which he/she strategically selects a feature or a practice that will allow for a clear communication as that is the ultimate goal of interaction (García & Wei, 2014).

Additionally, translanguageing is common amongst bilingual families because it allows for them to go between structures and practices that are all part of their semiotic repertoire (García & Wei, 2014, p. 23). That freedom to roam and explore their language freely allows them to strengthen their ability to coordinate their knowledge and creatively form language, thus, crystalizing their socio-cultural values, because it allows for discussion of complex identities and cultures validating the one felt by the multilingual individuals.

Translanguageing makes it possible for multilinguals to bring together the different features of their languages as well as cultures and practices in a way that best represents their experiences (García & Wei, 2014, p. 24-25)

Translanguageing allows for speakers to go between and beyond linguistic systems and modalities; offering a freedom which can be extended to all non-verbal forms of
communication, such as emoticons, because they are meaning holding modes that facilitate communication. There is an interconnectedness between traditional languages and other forms of human communication systems, due to this relation it would be hard to separate language from the human and social context in which it evolves (García & Wei, 2014, p. 24-25).

The complexity of human interaction has broadened the scope of language and interaction to include all forms of meaning carrying acts since they have a communicative value. Modern forms of interaction now rely on more than just text, for example memes (humorous images with text), therefore the ability to flexibly shift between all these meaning carrying forms is a necessity and a good representation of modern linguistic realities (García & Wei, 2014). In other words, translanguaging provides a more profound and expanded view of how humans interact, how they think and why they do the things they do, which makes it well-suited as an aid to describe and try to understand the complex classroom interactions in an English classroom in the SPRINT (Språkintroduktion) program in Sweden.

2.2 Translanguaging as an educational tool

Monolingual and bilingual pedagogies, and the subsequent assumptions that come with them, have a way of shaping the method used by the teachers. Their influence is much imbedded in teachers and other decision makers’ minds (Cummings & Persad, 2014). This explains certain widely held beliefs, for example the negative connotations that the use of L1 in L2 education has. The inclusion of L2 is seen as a failure by teachers and other educators (Cummings, 2007). Unsurprisingly, this is reflected in the exchanges with the teachers which we will discuss later.

Monolingual principles, where there is a clear divide between L1 and L2, are internalized as common sense by teachers and policy makers alike, although they do not in any way reflect the real-life practices of teachers in the classroom (Cummings, 2007, p. 225). It is safe to assume that multilingual teaching strategies, like translanguaging, are more beneficial to the students in SPRINT programs as Auerbach (1993) (cited in Cummings, 2007) came to conclude that the use of monolingual teaching strategies with adult ESL learners, who have limited knowledge of their L1, is not effective and thus they require the use and inclusion of their entire linguistic repertoire. Manyak (2004) (cited in Cummings, 2007) states that the learning of multilingual individuals benefits from the inclusion of their existing languages, which is offered by a multilingual education, unlike a monolingual one where learners are limited to a single language. Cummings further expands on this by saying that the proficiency of multilingual students in their acquired languages is not separate because both languages remain active during production. There is also the argument that the monolingual teaching principle serves to reinforce the pre-existing inequalities in societies where the learners are often minority language speakers learning the majority/standard language (García & Lin, 2017).

Translanguaging goes beyond the hierarchies of language and views the repertoire as whole, it gives a representation of the speakers’ cultural and socio-linguistic background and identity. Therefore, its implementation into the classroom will have positive ramifications that will allow for more fair and inclusive teaching practices that include
the various facets of multilingual students. García (2017) compares the borders between the languages used by the multilingual to the border between sea and sand on a shore. She states that there is no real divide and the borders are hard to determine, thus forcing the students to use only one their languages will be unfair to them, and a sabotage that will not allow them to fully express their knowledge.

Usually translanguaging is seen as a scaffolding strategy implemented to help students develop knowledge in one language through the use of the other one. However, it can be much more than that because its use can be a useful tool to help students develop their overall repertoire in both their L1 and the language of instruction (García, 2017; García & Lin, 2017; García & Wei, 2014; Cummings, 2007).

by doing away with the distinction between an L1 and an L2, a translinguaging theory offers educators the possibility of understanding that bilingual language practices do not compete with each other because there is but one system from which students select appropriate features (García & Wei, 2014, p.73).

The general view is that offering a translanguaging space in the classroom allows the students to engage in collaborative learning during which they negotiate meanings and share experiences, knowledge and perspectives that help them develop their new language. It levels the field between teachers and students and includes them in their own learning, meaning they are more likely to understand the concepts presented to them because they discuss and rework them collectively. However, because of the nature of the program studied in this paper, it is easy to assume that translanguaging would be more of a scaffold “valued… because of its potential to educate the children in English, more than for its capacity to sustain the students’ own languaging.” (García & Wei, 2014, p. 76). The goal of translanguaging in a classroom where the students have low proficiency is to be a support system where they do not find the learning daunting, rather than a dynamic system which will allow them to develop their own L1 while learning the target language.

Hence, the goal of translanguaging in education has the potential of being more than a scaffold since its implementation in a bilingual classroom will offer the students the possibility to improve their L2 through their L1, which is something that even the Swedish Schools Inspectorate acknowledges (Skolinspektion, 2017, p. 28).

There are two types of translanguaging: official and natural translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014 p. 92). The latter happens naturally during class and is often initiated by the students who use it to ask questions or further their own learning, whereas the former is scheduled and intentional practices that the teacher uses as a means of support for the lesson. Translanguaging that is constructed and organized by the teacher is considered a transformative pedagogy which is arranged to accommodate the different profiles of the learners, who come from diverse backgrounds (Lewis et al., 2012). Thusly, the use of translanguaging allows teachers to have a holistic grasp on each students’ ability and consequently challenge them according to said ability by meeting them at their level of proficiency (García & Wei, 2014 p. 92).

In the beginning of the acquisition teachers lean on translanguaging as a scaffolding tool especially with students who are emerging multilinguals. The learners are starting to add new language practices to their repertoire, and so they need the opportunity to gain a
deeper understanding of the new information they are being introduced to. Students need to process the new system and fully incorporate it into their own language. They have very little, if any reference points in the new language and so they need to make the connection between the languages already present and the language being learned and introduced so that it can be effectively used as part of the repertoire later. The example presented in García and Lin (2017) is a useful representation of this phenomenon. A Latina girl in ESL class who, when learning the word bigger used the form grander, a direct translation with the English superlative marker -er, meaning, transposing the recently learned knowledge on the existing forms. This is a way for her to fully understand what its purpose is and how it is used. Translanguaging can also offer the opportunity to the student to try and understand how to say certain words in their mother tongue, thus enriching both L1 and L2 thought the merger and use of the same system.

In other words, teachers who use translanguaging do not necessarily have to be bilingual, but they do need to learn to relinquish some of their power over the classroom, which can lead to some uncomfortable situations. They have to be facilitators, according to García and Wei (2014). Teachers also unconsciously try to make the learning environment comfortable for them (Chan & Tracy, 1996) which justifies the resistance to relinquishing of said power (Mary & Young, 2017, p. 111). Furthermore, a study by García (2011) showed that students use Translanguaging to perform various social activities, like including or excluding specific students from the group (cited in García & Wei, 2014). These strategies can be used behind teachers’ backs (Canagarajah, 2011, p.8), which strengthens their attitudes towards the inclusion of non-target languages, and maintenance of power in the classroom.

Translanguaging in foreign language education is a helpful scaffold, that offers a way to explain grammatical concepts that are hard to understand or even broad and vague ideas that need to be supported by the use of L1 or any other language already established. Furthermore, even from a monolingual teaching perspective, which encourages the use the target language as much as possible, there is space for translanguaging (Cummings, 2007 p. 224). In conclusion, the inclusion of the entire language repertoire of students can help learning, at least in the first stages of it, and although teachers use some form of translanguaging, they are not fully aware of it or they still have some reservations to multilingual education.

2.3 Translanguaging in a Swedish context

The articles presented below focus on translanguaging as a scaffold in a Swedish multilingual classroom.

Research led by Anna Dahlberg (2017) focused on translanguaging as a scaffolding tool in a multilingual group studying English in Sweden. The research was based on structured classroom observations and field notes, which were used to describe the context and application of translanguaging in the classroom. The notes were gathered through three hours of observation, with no interaction with the students. The subjects of the study were all non-native speakers of Swedish. The teacher, however, was a native speaker of English and had declared that he uses all of his languages when teaching, but he was not aware of translanguaging as a term.
The teacher used google translate and Quizlet and mnemonics (using words that sound the same in a L1 to help with pronunciation) to help the students learn. Google translate was constantly visible in the classroom, and it was used to translate to a few different L1s plus Swedish. The teacher’s knowledge of Swedish helped with the lack of accuracy of the computer program.

Overall, there was a total of 27 instances of translanguaging, 6 produced by the students, and 19 by the teacher, two by both. The students often resorted to Swedish when the word in English was too difficult to find, or they would associate the words in English to words in their L1 because they were close in pronunciation. Additionally, they collaborated in their L1 to reach meaning in English. The students would repeat the instruction to each other in their L1 to make sure that they understood them correctly. The association of already learned sounds and words can be seen as a scaffolding tool and they used it as a communicative strategy to keep the exchange going. The teacher consciously used it to help the students learn English.

By analysing the data collected it was possible to see that TL (Translanguaging) was a consistent way of performing and learning targeted language in this particular class (Dahlberg, 2017, p .15).

In sum, the study found that adult students strategically use their pre-existing linguistic knowledge to help with the acquisition of a new language. Translanguaging is used efficiently as a scaffolding tool in language education by both teachers and learners to support the emerging language.

The second study which focuses on translanguaging in a Swedish context was led by Ann-Christin Torpsten (2018), and targets young learners. The subjects were 11-year-old students, all of different multilingual backgrounds. Its goal was to examine the attitudes towards language and language learning via translanguaging strategies. The data was collected and examined through an ecological or a linguistic-life story approach. The observations were reached by examining different types of data such as classroom activities, texts, and pictures, all produced by three middle schoolers in a multilingual classroom. The students spoke Swedish as a second language and began learning it at different times. Their teacher spoke Swedish but it was not mentioned if they were a native speaker of it.

Aisha, Somsa, and Vanja and their parents signed consent forms and filled in questionnaires about their backgrounds, the names here are of course pseudonyms. Aisha was born in Sweden and her L1 is Somali. She started learning Swedish in preschool, and now takes a one hour long weekly class of L1 education. Somsa moved to Sweden at the age of four. He speaks Thai but uses mostly Swedish at home. This is due to his mother preferring to speak to him in Swedish at home. He has no formal L1 education, and no literacy in it either. Vanja moved to Sweden at the age of nine. She speaks Chechen and learned Russian in school, but she speaks other languages as well. She attends a once a week L1 class for Russian.

During the first years of education, the L1s of these students were unused because learning Swedish was a priority. That is until their teacher started implementing
translanguaging strategies in the classroom; this was done with the goal of maintaining the students’ multicultural/multilingual identity.

To make multilingualism a tool for language and identity development as well as acquisition in all subjects in school, the teacher introduced translanguaging following García’s (2009) strategic and pedagogical principles of social justice and social training. The class began to discuss the value of multilingualism (Torpsten, 2018, p.107).

They all encountered a new language during their schooling, English, and it is possible that it might have been daunting. However, through translanguaging they were able to increase their multilingualism, use more than one language during the school day, and learn from each other. They learned words from each other’s languages and were able to expand their repertoire, thus reinforcing the case for multilingual education in place for monolingual teaching practices.

In light of the research presented above, this study will consider translanguaging as any communicative attempt which includes a conscious and strategic language switch to successfully convey a message or an emotion. This can be extended to non-verbal strategies because they are also meaning carrying acts that have cultural and social significance. Translanguaging is a means by which humans strategically use their entire language repertoire to make a connection with each other and be understood. Its implementation in the classroom could have positive outcomes on the learners’ language acquisition in general, as it offers a way for the pre-existing knowledge to scaffold the language being learned.

3. The Methodological Design

The study will rely on both naturally occurring data, gathered through classroom observations and the elicited data gathered through semi-structured interviews with teachers. It will triangulate and compare both data to reach conclusions that are as objective as possible. Triangulation offers the study a reliability check and is a great way to reduce bias (Dörnyei, 2007). Naturally, due to the presence of an observer (the observer's paradox) and the human element of the research, the results will not be generalizable. However, they can be transferable, which is why the research strives for reliability and validity through the use of different data gathering methods.

The nature of the research questions requires a qualitative methodology as it offers the best means to develop an answer. Furthermore, qualitative research might offer an insight into the power dynamics in the classroom and the communication between teachers and students. This will be interesting to study seeing as the communication is between two speakers of different proficiency levels.

Dörnyei (2007) discusses subjectivity in the interpretation of data, because each researcher draws different conclusions depending on their own experiences and views. This is especially true for qualitative data. He also mentions that language teachers have a different interest in research, because their goals are usually linked to the nature of their
profession. In other words, their goal is to become better teachers, and find new insights into the nature of the work carried out in the classroom (Dörnyei, 2007, p.16). He goes on to say that qualitative methods are the best when dealing with language acquisition. This is because every aspect of the said acquisition “is determined or significantly shaped by social, cultural, and situational factors, and qualitative research is ideal for providing insights into such contextual conditions and influences.” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38)

### 3.1 Data gathering methods

The limitations of the observations will be discussed further down, for now the focus is on the interviews. The research relied on observations and interviews.

The reliance on interviews provided a considerable volume of data surrounding the methods and views of the teachers. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted at the teachers’ school, in private conference or group rooms. The interviewer of course strove for objectivity, nonetheless, problems did surface due to the formulation of the questions. The subjects interpreted the questions differently, which lead to varying answers, ones that the research might not be examining. The interviews were conducted following Kvale’s (2009) list of attributes of a good interviewer, meaning that there were further questions with simple and straightforward formulations, a friendly and open attitude, and a willingness to listen to the interviewee. The interviews were also recorded and transcribed to facilitate the analysis of the answers (see appendix A and B).

The approach to the interviews in this research is that they are a social practice (Talmy, 2011). Therefore, the data was analysed within an interactional context, to get a clear and broad view/understanding of the relations between the teachers’ attitudes and their backgrounds.

Furthermore, the observer's paradox, briefly mentioned earlier, is a real issue for the project, since the first step and the basis for the interviews is an observation made in a natural setting. This means that the presence of a stranger in the classroom is bound to have an effect on student performance and teacher interaction. It is for this reason that qualitative research is deemed as unsystematic and hard to reproduce by some, regardless of what the research question is. The changeability of circumstances surrounding the collected data can drastically change the results. It is almost impossible to get the same answers form the same people, or observe the same behaviour all across the board. Nevertheless, the flexibility and the exploratory nature of this research method is an asset (Dörnyei, 2007), because it allowed the study to investigate any interesting factors that were highlighted during the classroom observations and ask more specific and informed questions during the interviews.

This is one of the reasons behind the choice in method, because the questions proposed by the project are focused on the “How” and “Why” which cannot really be quantified into numbers and thus require an in-depth understanding of human behaviour. In conclusion, the data is best studied through a qualitative view.
3.2 The work plan

The project started with classroom observations. A typical lesson is around 60 minutes; three lessons provided a sufficient amount of data to form the interview questions. As mentioned earlier, the interviews were semi-structured which means that there were broad and general set questions which gradually became more specific. The observation and the interview were not directly one after the other, simply because there needs to be enough time to first analyse the recording and then adjust the interview questions so that they are based on each teachers’ classroom behaviour.

The participants were contacted through different channels, some were old colleagues who were interested in being part of the study, and others were contacted via the school principal. There was unfortunately some reluctance to having a stranger in the classroom recording a lesson, and most of the contacted teachers did not answer the emails sent to them. Whether this is due to the nature of the research or lack of time on their end is hard to determine. The teachers contacted via email were presented with a clear work plan and abstract of the study. They were informed of the general theme and purpose of the study. The students in the observed classrooms were provided with clear consent forms and introduced to the research purpose through their teachers prior to the filming of the lesson. Although they were not the focus of the study, they needed to consent to having their voice on film. This goes back to ethical data gathering requiring informed consent. They were allowed to withdraw their consent before May 2019.

The expectation is that teachers use some form of translanguaging in these classrooms but the extent of its use and the attitude towards it is to be explored by the study.

3.3 Teacher profiles

The three teachers who are part of this study all have different backgrounds. They have varying years of experience teaching. All three teachers were given pseudonyms for anonymity.

First teacher: addressed as Eric. Male, 49 years old. Has worked as a teacher for 12 years in total, 7 years with a qualification. Native English speaker, immigrated as an adult from England with a Bachelor of Honours in political science and a postgraduate certificate of Education (PGCE) in primary teaching. Then obtained a teaching qualification from Lärarhögskolan in Stockholm. Currently teaching Level A-C.

Second teacher: Addressed as Jennifer. Female, 59 years old. Has worked as a teacher for SFI (Swedish for immigrants) for 7-8 years before obtaining a qualification for teaching at upper secondary level. Native Swedish speaker. Has been teaching English in SPRINT due to her background and previous experience in SFI. Currently teaching both English and Swedish in the program. She is responsible for the intermediary students at level C-D.

Third teacher: Angelina, female, 42 years old. Has worked as an English teacher for 12 years in Morocco, her country of origin, and has obtained her teaching qualification in Sweden from Linköping university. Native speaker of Arabic and French, she has obtained a bachelor’s degree from Cambridge university in the U.K. The level she is teaching is the one where the students have a high proficiency in English, level D-E.
4. Results

4.1 Observations

i. First observation

The first observed lesson was on March 28th 2019. The lesson was 60 minutes long, but only 40 minutes of it were recorded. It was the lesson for Level D-E students, and the group was composed of 8 students in total.

According to their teacher, the students in this course are ambitious, and they all want to continue their studies in upper secondary school and university. The ages of the students were from 17 to 19, and they all come from different countries. It is a diverse group of students with a majority of Arabic speakers. The students in this group have a good proficiency level in English—all of them have had some form of education in English in their country of origin.

The proceeding:

The purpose of the study was re-introduced and explained to the students. They were then provided with consent forms which they kept for the duration of the lesson. The camera was placed behind a pillar in the classroom so that the students are not on film and the focus is solely on the teacher. They all gave their consent to be on film, but the camera was placed out of sight to make them relax more.

The students were communicative, active and spoke English with fluency. The teacher tried to have them recall their previously acquired knowledge, and actively participate in the lesson by having them explain the “past perfect” to themselves based on their knowledge of the present perfect and the continuous form. She used recast and other forms of corrections to improve their pronunciation. Pronunciation seems to be the only major issue that they have with English.

The students were exposed to media in English in the form of a video explaining the subject of the lesson. The speaker was native, and they appeared not to have any problems following her speech pattern. After going over the lesson in detail, the students were then given a handout with some exercises. Some of the students asked for help and clarifications in English, and the teacher used the same language to explain. However, one student confused the spelling of “had” and “hade” (the past form of the Swedish verb har), and I decided to take note of this, and explore it with the teacher during the interview. One instance where the communication was not in English was a conversation between a student and the teacher. The teacher asked about how the student was feeling in Swedish and the student responded back in the same language. This also happened in the beginning of the lesson; before the recording started the same student asked to speak to the teacher, and their conversation was in Swedish. This leads to the conclusion that the students and the teacher use each language based on the context and environment they are in; Swedish for personal conversation outside of the classroom context, and English during lessons and in an educational context.
The teacher used little if any Swedish during the lesson. Instead of switching between Swedish and English or translating, she chose to explain in English and draw comparisons to grammatical structures they were already familiar with. Nonetheless, the teacher did admit to using her knowledge of Arabic and French in teaching by either translating or explaining a concept quickly to the students. I was also fortunate enough to get the students to answer some questions in a group interview. It was spur of the moment, with little preparation, but proved to be an excellent opportunity to collect data on the students’ experience.

In a brief discussion with the teacher, she mentioned that the fact that the textbooks are designed for small children is something that can be a bit frustrating for the students, because they feel like they are being talked down to. This was also expressed by another teacher. That teacher, Jennifer, said that the teachers are not ready for these classes, because they have to go down and meet the students at their level. There was no negative connotation attached to the statement, but rather that the teachers have to put in an effort to re-learn the rules, because in the more advanced classes the focus shifts from the form to the content. Jennifer mentioned during the conversation that the fact that Sweden has such a high proficiency level in English can be challenging for these students, because in their country of origin they were often considered really good at English, but when they move here they are in “the lower classes” and they try their best to move up and be in the “normal classes”.

ii. Second observation

The second observation was on April 3rd 2019. The lesson observed was 60 minutes long and was recorded in its entirety. The level was A-B students, meaning, they were all beginners with limited knowledge of English. The group in attendance was composed of 14 students, the majority of them young men from Afghanistan. The dominant L1 in the classroom is Dari, and that was reflected in the number of students in attendance as only two of the students present spoke a different L1 (Spanish and Thai respectively). Their ages range from 17 to 19, and they have all been in Sweden for a year or less. According to their teacher, the students in this group are unmotivated to learn English, so it can be hard to get them to be productive.

The proceeding:

After Eric’s introduction of the research aim and explanation of the conditions for the recording, the students were asked to sign a consent form. Eleven students did sign and three chose not to. They are not apparent in any recording and they sat down quietly during the lesson. It is unclear if it was the presence of a camera and an observer that caused this or their shyness.

The lesson was divided into two halves; during the first half, the students, with the help of a mind map on the white board, wrote a text about the future and how their lives would look like. They were presented with new vocabulary and phrases they could use in their texts. The teacher had some of them construct sentences to go with each branch of the map, and the students even joked around about their future marital plans. They then
started writing, and received help individually from the teacher. Afterwards, three students read their text for the class and received encouragement from the teacher.

The second part of the lesson focused on adjectives, more specifically superlatives. The students were introduced to the concept gradually with the teacher first trying to have them use their pre-existing knowledge by choosing very common adjectives: bigger, smaller. He then compared the process to Swedish, and how it can be the same thing by translating the adjectives. The teacher followed an inductive approach by having the students notice the pattern on their own, only to introduce them to the rule afterwards.

In general, Eric used translanguaging actively during the lesson. This is apparent because of the constant strategic use of both English and Swedish interchangeably. This is a considerable difference from the first lesson where the teacher used almost no Swedish. However, it is worth mentioning that this difference can be due to the levels of the classrooms being at both ends of the spectrum.

The deliberate, conscious, and strategic use of Swedish as a scaffold to help students understand and learn certain aspects of language is unavoidable. For example: very important instructions are given first in Swedish and repeated in English, key words are treated the same way. Explanations of broad concepts like marriage and the far future are also given in both languages. Furthermore, the teacher discourages the students from using their phones or any other electronic devices during the lesson so they are collected before class starts. Consequently, he writes a vocabulary list on the white board and adds new words and their translation into Swedish as the lesson progresses. Another interesting phenomenon was the fact that encouragements and positive feedback are almost always given in English. This was further explored during the interview.

In general, the students were energetic and vocal, they communicated a lot in Dari amongst themselves. Sometimes they asked questions, other times they seemed to offer translations into their L1. There is no way to monitor what was being said but they seemed to be helping each other with vocabulary.

Overall, because the level of the entire class is much lower than the first class, the observation allowed the researcher to view translanguaging in action. The teacher and the students were actively using all their linguistic knowledge to communicate.

iii. Third observation

The third lesson was on Thursday April 4th. The lesson recorded was 60 minutes long, and was recorded in its entirety. There were nine students present, and the group observed was on the level C-D. The students in this group are at an intermediary level, and the difference in communication between teacher and students compared to the earlier group is instantly noticeable. The group is composed of students from various backgrounds but most of them have Arabic as an L1. The other languages represented where Thai and Ukrainian, with two Thai and one Ukrainian students. The Arabic speakers are not all from the same country of origin, they all speak different dialects and have different levels of education. However, they are all able to read and write in Arabic.

What is worth noting is that although Swedish is less often used to communicate with the students, it is still used in the same instances, that is, explanation, emphasis, instructions,
and introduction to new concepts. The one thing that is different here is that the teacher subconsciously switches to Swedish, which was not the case with Eric or Angelina. This is probably due to the fact that Swedish is Jennifer’s L1 and she also instructs Swedish to newly immigrated students so there is an overlap of students between both classes. The teacher briefly mentioned that the inclusion of the students’ L1 is something she encourages, as it helps them build up their vocabulary in their L1, Swedish, and English.

The proceedings:

The lesson started with an introduction to the research project and a request to sign the consent forms, which all the students did. I then sat down in the back of the class behind the students and started the recording, which had to be stopped because two students came in late. I had to explain the research all over again, they signed the papers before the second start of the recording.

The students were provided with a text during the previous lesson and had started reading it. They were asked to re-read the handout and work on a word list where they translated the words from English and Swedish to their mother tongue. They sat down quietly and worked on that for a good portion of the lesson while the teacher walked around and offered them help individually or in small groups.

The students who share an L1, be it Arabic or Thai, use it to learn new words and check if their translations are correct. So, the task, although individual, becomes collaborative. I was able to understand and follow along the Arabic speakers’ conversation and reasoning—how they translate from English/Swedish to Arabic, and it was interesting to see the different answers they came to before they talked to each other. For example: prayer or pray is bön in Swedish, but two of the students thought it meant bear or björn, and were corrected by their classmate first before they asked the teacher. The past tense in English is similar to Swedish, so the teacher uses the already established system in Swedish to explain to them how it works in English. The difference between Jennifer and Eric is that she uses more instructional words in Swedish such as: egentligen, förstår ni etc. whilst he, a native English speaker, does not use them as much.

Overall, the observations allowed for the detection of certain translanguaging situations that were useful for further exploration during the interviews. The teachers clearly adapt their language to the level of the students in their classroom. Naturally, in the classrooms where the students have little knowledge the use of Swedish as support for English is much more common and apparent. The proficiency level of the students is tied to the use of Swedish. The higher their proficiency the lower the chances of Swedish appearing in classroom.

4.2 Teacher Interviews

The questions for the interviews were based on the observations made in each class. They were semi-structured and when there was an interesting question brought up by the interviewee, it was pursued. The results will be divided into two separate sections, one is dedicated to translanguaging and all the relevant data for the research, and another for data unrelated to the project but still very interesting and informative for teachers or pedagogues (see appendix A and B).
4.2.1 Language use in the classroom

The data collected during the interviews was very rich and because the interviews were semi-structured, the answers were in no particular order. This resulted in having to analyse the answers carefully, and grouping the answers based on the overarching theme (see appendix A).

i. The use of multiple languages in the classroom

This subheading gathers all the answers pertaining to the teachers’ views on the use of multiple languages in the English classroom, and their thoughts on translanguaging. Each teacher has expressed that they use at least two languages in the classroom (English and Swedish), or for Angelina, she uses up to four (Arabic and French). When asked why, they all said that it helps further the communication, and bridges communicative gaps between teachers and students, or even between students themselves.

Eric expressed that he switches to Swedish when he wants the information he transmits to the students to be understood. He uses it to repeat a point and to guarantee that the students retain the information. He further explains his use of a language other than the T.L as a way to establish a link between the two languages. The students would otherwise feel that they are learning completely unrelated languages, which can be daunting.

Jennifer explained a similar view saying that she includes Swedish as a way to not only save time, but also as a way for both her and the students to make the communication smoother. She also deems it a great technique to check the students’ understanding. The students also use Swedish in the classroom as a way to negotiate meaning. They see it as a good and economic way to gain understanding. It is quicker to translate to their mother tongue which is what Angelina does. She states that it helps with the accuracy, so if a teacher translates a word to their L1 or L2 they learn it easier and faster. She does have some reservations about translation, labelling it a last resort for the teacher. In her opinion the first step should be to explain in English, and if they are unable to understand, resort to translanguaging.

ii. The necessity of translanguaging methods

When asked, the teachers seem unfamiliar with the term translanguaging, they used translanguaging strategies and methods no doubt, but as Eric said: “I am aware of it in terms that I do it, I am probably not fantastically familiar with the theoretical aspect of it. I think it’s important to do”. This mirrors the response of the other teachers. They name: translation, body language, miming etc. which are considered translanguaging strategies, because they all carry meaning and help with communication. By this standard, it is safe to say that the teachers consider translanguaging crucial in the classroom. They are all in the favour of the use of body language as a scaffold for comprehension, they all use it and Angelina gives a concrete example saying that she uses gestures to explain tense.

Eric states that “Whatever you can use to make sure that they understand the instructions and what they are meant to be doing then you should use that[…] I think it is okay in that situation to have you know… begin in English and then… and then go over to translating into Swedish.” In other words the inclusion of other languages is a necessity, and although
Eric names only Swedish, but his words show that the goal is to have the students understand and learn, by any means necessary.

The teachers recognize the necessity of translation as a teaching tool, however recommend moderation. Overusing it can make the students complacent and lazy, as Angelina said. Jennifer expressed a different concern, that they might start to mix both languages as there is a lot of Swedish influence on English in the students’ minds, so the chances of them confusing the two languages are high.

Overall the teachers generally agree that if the students can recognize familiar already acquired structures they will be less intimidated and frustrated by the language and more willing to learn.

iii. The use of Swedish in the classroom

The teachers have agreed on the specific and very similar instances where the use of Swedish as a scaffolding tool is inevitable, for example when explaining broad and vague concepts, when giving crucial information about deadlines or the like, and when discussing grades.

The teachers give priority to English in the sense that broader and vaguer points are first introduced in English and then explained in Swedish. For Eric this is done with the purpose of helping the students, by avoiding their complete immersion in English alone. This immersion would be counterproductive and would lead to frustration because the students would find it too difficult to learn. Jennifer explains that Swedish is used in important communicative situations. She uses both languages at the same time, and explains first in English then Swedish to emphasize a point. The switch is mostly conscious as it is natural to try and pass on the information, although she was criticized by her boss for using Swedish in the classroom. She does not adhere to the monolinguist teaching “dogma”. Angelina on the other hand, claims to avoid the use of Swedish or any other language because the students are good at English. She has admitted that as a last resort, she translates to Swedish for the students with whom she does not share an L1.

The teachers who have the lower classes generally use more Swedish than Angelina and they have both stated that the use of Swedish is necessary, because the students have too little knowledge of English to be able to understand fully what is asked of them during lesson; therefore, Swedish acts as a support for English because the students speak better Swedish than they do English.

iv. The use of L1 in the classroom

The use of their L1 in the classroom is deemed acceptable only because the school cannot forbid the students from using their L1. Nonetheless, the teachers see this as disadvantageous, because if there is a majority language (ML) in the classroom, its use will marginalize and exclude the non ML speakers. The teachers see it rarely used in an educational context where the students ask for help, but rather a socialization tool where they joke around and as Eric and Jennifer said: “say nasty things to each other”.

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Jennifer normally would not allow the students to speak to each other in the first place, because they would just get distracted. Angelina expressed the same opinion but added that she cannot allow them to speak a language she does not understand.

When it comes to collaborative learning and the use of L1, the teachers all have witnessed it but on rare occasions. In Angelina’s class collaborative learning is rare because the teacher speaks the ML and although Dari speakers sometimes explain things to each other it is very rare. Jennifer expressed that maybe she should not be suspicious but allow them to talk to each other and work together in L1, after she was made aware of the fact that they were indeed working.

The students can use L1 in classroom as long as it is for individual work. They can translate to their L1 in their notebooks, thus the teacher can avoid awkward social situations where the other students who do not speak the ML do not think that the teacher is showing favouritism towards one group.

In general, the attitude towards the inclusion of the L1 is similar. The teachers see it as beneficial if used within a restricted context, so as to not overshadow the target language or impact hierarchy in the classroom.

v. Attitudes towards English and motivation in SPRINT

Teachers’ attitudes towards English

When asked which language takes the priority in this program, English or Swedish the teachers had nuanced responses. One chose to focus on the importance of learning English for future studies, and the others linked it to the students’ social circumstances.

Eric and Jennifer share a similar view, to quote Eric: “on paper, we are there to teach them English and so English must have the priority. But, I would say that I would use Swedish to help with learning”. Jennifer agrees, saying: “they are here to learn Swedish and English in order to be able to go through this Swedish school system[…] they don't have a chance to acquire the level of English necessary to go study English five. That's not possible, especially since they are in Sweden and they need to focus on Swedish First.”

Therefore, Swedish is still a major part of teaching English in this program. English is overshadowed by the local language. Angelina has a different view on the importance of English. It is equal to Swedish and is a necessity for the students to advance their educational careers. She also stated that English takes priority because: “otherwise why would they have English as a course?”

Overall, although it is English class, the priority in the SPRINT program is Swedish. English takes a second seat to it, and is often a bonus that the students are able to learn some English along the way as Eric said.

Students’ attitudes towards English

Eric and Jennifer’s students do not prioritize English over Swedish, and that is clear by the lack of time invested outside of class in studying English. The lack of motivation is
due to frustrations that stems from either the addition of a new language, or from the lack of experience with school work/school environment.

Jennifer believes that because the students are not very good at their own language, since it is not fully developed, they turn complacent. In addition to that, they have little school experience which would allow them to handle the workload. Eric, on the other hand, thinks that the addition of English is the cause of frustration and anger. The students’ legal status is often related to their grades and ability to speak Swedish; so there is an urgency attached to Swedish that is simply not present for English.

The level gap between the students in the program, according to Eric, is due to the successful students not sharing a language with the rest of the class. They feel an urgency to learn either one language or both to be able to communicate and assimilate. Angelina does not experience the same phenomenon with her students, because they are interested in following an academic career and want to attend university. Their motivation and need to learn English is present and pressing.

**Learning multiple languages at the same time**

The students in this programs are all young, and most of them have not finished upper secondary school before they immigrated to Sweden. There are even some, like the students from Afghanistan, who lack formal schooling. Thus, their language system is not fully developed. Jennifer encourages the use of L1 as a scaffold and through that process the students learn and develop all their L1s simultaneously. Angelina shared a confession from a student who told her that she learns Swedish through learning English. This led her to say that the development of both languages becomes parallel. Eric on the other hand questions the validity of learning both languages at the same time. In his opinion, the students become frustrated and prioritize one language over the other.

**vi. The impact of teaching experience on the classroom**

The teachers have different backgrounds, as was mentioned earlier, and each of them has a unique perspective. Eric has a background as a primary school teacher from England. The only impact he himself sees is with structure, he believes that having clear goals and structures will help the students advance in their learning.

Jennifer has started as an SFI teacher, which she credits as a huge help. It prepared her for the challenges of SPRINT. She says that teaching adults and teaching teenagers is different. However, without the experience with the adults, working with SPRINT students would have been more difficult.

Angelina does not talk much about her experience as a teacher in Morocco during the interview, but did speak about it during personal conversations. She said that teaching upper secondary school in Morocco is similar to teaching in SPRINT because the students are at the same level.
4.2.2 Interesting data

i. Teaching the students social aspects of Swedish culture

Teaching language in SPRINT goes beyond just language, it has a social aspect that the teachers mentioned. Eric and Jennifer have both expressed that they needed to teach their students how to behave in the classroom, they have to remind their students of small things like, raising their hands, and taking turns when speaking. They also have to remind them to lower their voices because they are enthusiastic and tend to speak loudly. There is a social interaction and introduction that they need to learn.

ii. Tribalism and social hierarchy in the classroom

Jennifer and Eric have talked about the social relations between the students and how they use their L1 to establish a hierarchy. The teachers have mentioned that the students use L1 to bully and say mean and hurtful things to each other. They also use it to strengthen and include or exclude students from the circle. Jennifer explained it is mostly boys who use these strategies.

Their lack of school etiquette leads to problems and tensions between the teacher and the students. They lack the knowledge to navigate the school system, so they become frustrated and their motivation drops. They turn combative and reluctant to learn, and the teacher responds with strictness. The classroom becomes grounds for power struggles which results in frustrated teachers, and disgruntled students.

iii. Lack of appropriate teaching material

The teachers have all shared their struggles in finding appropriate teaching material for the students. The teaching material available does not offer texts or activities designed for teenagers, and the students find it boring.

Eric found himself constantly disappointed by the book so he decided to bypass it completely this school year. Jennifer has also expressed her disappointment in the available material as a result of this, she has had to rely on old material left by her predecessor.

4.3 Student interview

The students expressed the same views on most issues (see appendix B). They believe that if teachers explained complex concepts in their L1, they would understand them quicker. The Arabic speaker talked about how helpful it is when Angelina translates words for them. Some of them mentioned the confusion between English and Swedish, especially regarding pronunciation. In other subjects the students said that they sometimes have to ask for clarification in English, because their Swedish is not good enough. The students themselves see the benefit in using their entire language repertoire for learning.

In conclusion, the results of the interviews yielded a rich data that will offer a good base for the discussion.
5. Discussion

In this section, I will analyze the data gathered through the observations and the interviews, and discuss the results based on the research relating to language use in the classroom. The results will be examined with the goal of better understanding the student-teacher relation. They will also give a representation of the actual practices of teachers in this program. The following discussion is divided into three parts, each one dedicated to one of the aspects brought up in the data.

5.1 Translanguaging in the classroom

The teachers in the English SPRINT classroom are active users of translanguaging practices, but they do not label them as such. They are familiar with the term and have come across it; however, they never mentioned it during the interviews. They call what they are doing “trying to communicate”, “making students understand by using body language”, and “translating words into Swedish”. These are all forms of translanguaging, since they aim to bridge communication gaps through the use of conscious switches in the language.

The teachers want to successfully communicate with the students through any means available, which mirrors the results in Dahlberg (2017). The teachers in her research were unaware of the theoretical framework behind translanguaging, and worked instinctively through a trial-and-error process implementing what worked best for them. This is not to say that the translanguaging was natural or unintentional; the teachers in both studies are aware of their use of it and have mentioned specific instances where it is necessary. They introduce a different language, most often Swedish, to their lesson in a deliberate and conscious way. It is used to convey important information and explain vague or broad concepts which are unfamiliar for the students. Teachers use the already established language as a scaffold for the emerging one, a common use of translanguaging for early multilinguals (García & Wei 2014).

There are some contradictory statements in regards to the use of non-target languages (NTL) in the classroom. The teachers admit to using Swedish during the lesson; in fact, they use a lot of Swedish with the low level students. It is a helpful scaffold as mentioned earlier; however, they also say that they try to avoid using NTL. The issue is not the use of an NTL in the classroom, but the use of a language that is not understood by the teacher. Angelina, who speaks Arabic, does not have an issue with the use of Arabic in the classroom, because she understands what is being said. She does not encourage its use, but she does say explicitly that she cannot have all the students speaking their L1 because she will not be able to follow along. This sentiment is common amongst the teachers, since they would like to remain in control and not being able to understand what is said can impact the power dynamic (Cummings & Persad, 2014).

The students are allowed to use their L1 but under limited circumstances. The teachers’ concerns over the use of L1 are not baseless. They have identified multiple instances where the students use their L1 to say mean things and establish a social hierarchy. They admit to its usefulness with vocabulary acquisition or learning, but what worries them is
the social aspect of its use. This is one of the main disadvantages of translanguaging; it does not consider the negative side to the social use of L1. Mary and Young (2017) mention the power struggle and the conflicts between teachers and students when they do not share an L1, but García and Wei (2014) say that not speaking the students’ L1 should not be a problem as long as the teacher learns to let go of the power. This is not possible, or at least does not reflect the realities of teaching in this program. Teachers need to be able to intervene and correct any behavior perpetrated by the students that does not adhere to Swedish values. These students are being introduced to both the language and the culture, and need to be corrected so that they do not become outcasts when they integrate into the regular program.

There seem to be conflicting feelings amongst the teachers about introducing NTL which strengthens the idea that the monolingual teaching principle has left a big impact on the teachers (Cummings, 2007). It can also be said that this belief is imbedded in the teaching philosophy of the school as a whole, considering the criticism that Jennifer received from her principal. Teachers use other languages because they are indispensable if they want to teach and communicate with students (Lewis et al., 2012); however, they feel pressured to adhere to the norm of monolingualism. This norm is pushed in the official teaching curriculum, but the teaching realities indicate that even within monolingual teaching, the use of translanguaging is inevitable (Cummings, 2007).

The students need to use their entire language repertoire to communicate because they are newly immigrated and their knowledge of either language is limited. Translanguaging offers a space for collaborative learning and social exchange (García & Lin, 2017). However, the teachers do not seem to be fully behind this initiative. They do not trust the students to use these opportunities to learn and force them to only use the languages that are understood by all. This forced monolingualism, or limitation of language is unfair to the students because it will sabotage their chances of expressing themselves fully (García & Wei, 2014). The monolingual ideal imposes a hierarchy between the languages in the program, this is what is discussed in the following section.

5.2 Language priority in SPRINT and its impact on motivation

The hierarchy between the languages in SPRINT is clear. The Swedish Schools Inspectorate explicitly notes that the main aim of the program is to teach newly immigrated students Swedish. The goal is for the students to integrate into the regular program as fast as possible, which creates a time problem attached to teaching, forcing teachers to use the quickest means to communicate information which is translation.

The teachers in our study have also noticed the hierarchy imposed by the system. Angelina and Eric see that their students prioritize Swedish over English. This is due to the social status of these students; they feel an urgency to learn Swedish because it is the main language and they need it for work and stability. They also need to speak Swedish to integrate into the regular gymnasium program; therefore learning Swedish becomes a necessity if they want to stay in the country. The addition of English creates a conflict for them, because they feel burdened with an extra language that is of no immediate use for them. Their struggles are accentuated by their limited knowledge of either language and, consequently, the difficulties in separating the two. Torpsten (2017) noticed a similar
phenomenon in her study, where newly immigrated students prioritized Swedish over their L1 during their first year in Swedish school. It is apparent that these students are experiencing the same feelings, like the students in Torpsten (2017), and will express interest in their L1 or English after a while. The lack of motivation for learning English reported by the teachers can be linked to the hierarchy between Swedish and the other languages in the students’ repertoires, which is completely avoidable if translanguaging practices are introduced in the classroom.

The students have said that if they could speak their mother tongue to their teachers, it would make it easier for them to learn. They have, when given the chance, used their L1 to collaborate and learn. Jennifer expresses the concern that the students’ knowledge of their own L1 is limited. This makes its use as a scaffold difficult, and considering their aforementioned limitations in Swedish, the learning becomes stunted in her opinion. She admits, however, that their development becomes multilingual as they learn all of the languages simultaneously. The other teachers also see this multi-language acquisition as a positive development, although they do not prioritize it like Jennifer does. It can be said that the teachers are aware of it but they do not utilize it to its full potential as a translanguaging tool.

The development of English and Swedish, according to Angelina and Jennifer, go hand in hand. This is an interesting view because the two teachers who feel this way are teaching students with higher proficiency levels in English. Eric, who on the other hand, has the students with a low proficiency level, feels that the inclusion of English this early in the immersion is unnecessary. It puts the students in a vulnerable position and leads to frustration. They are unable to use what little they learned in Swedish to help them learn English. The proficient students are not affected in the same way because they are able to use both languages as a support for each other. This leads to the conclusion that for the languages to be used as a learning scaffold for each other, the learners must at least have a basic knowledge in each language.

What can be said of the previous research is that it does not offer a good view of language acquisition in Sweden, because the SPRINT program is essentially a bilingual immersion program. The works mentioned in the theoretical background of this essay focus on a monolingual immersion program, and the ones that center on Sweden, target a different age group with different circumstances. Torpsten (2018) and Dahlberg (2017) both deal with non-native speakers of Swedish learning English. However, the subjects in those papers have a good base in Swedish and are not learning both languages simultaneously. Furthermore, the social interaction issues, which are relevant to the SPRINT context, are not taken into consideration when speaking of Translanguaging and multilingual inclusion. Most of the previous research focuses on English as the language of immersion, however in our case the students are being immersed in Swedish first and then introduced to English. In my opinion, more work needs to be dedicated to this program and the benefits of introducing translanguaging as a teaching tool for these students.
5.3 The challenges of teaching English in SPRINT

The challenges that English presents in this program are numerous: the lack of the appropriate teaching materials, the monolingual “dogma”, the lack of schooling that some of the students suffer from, the status struggle between English and Swedish and so on.

The teachers face issues that relegate to the socialization of the newly immigrated students and which they are not prepared to deal with. The teacher education for English does not offer any courses concerning language introduction to English. The teachers themselves credit their previous work experience or education for their ability to adapt their methods to the level of these students. This shows a lack of interest from Skolverket, who are ignoring the necessity of such education due to the massive immigration to Sweden.

The lack of appropriate teaching materials is a concern that was brought up by all the teachers. The available material is inadequate because it is designed for much younger students which leads SPRINT students to feel under-stimulated. The teachers are disappointed with the activities offered by the books. Although the books offer and encourage translanguaging by having exercises where the students translate to their L1, they do not include sufficient activities to help them develop their language as a whole. This is the main reason for them to refrain from using the books. A solution would be to develop appropriate material based on what teachers of SPRINT and similar courses deem necessary knowledge to improve language acquisition for students in their program.

The use of translanguaging as a teaching tool in the program is necessary, and the teachers are aware of this and use it to their advantage. What needs improvement is the attitude displayed by educators towards the languages present in the classroom. The fear of multilingualism being used to challenge the teachers’ authority needs to be addressed, because the enforcement of monolingualism is unfair to these students. It prevents them from expressing their identity fully.

6. Conclusion

The position of the English language in the SPRINT program in Sweden is a delicate one, because although English is being taught to students, it is not a priority for them. This makes it hard for the students to be motivated, and the teachers have to bear the brunt of their dissatisfaction. The students who attend this program have limited knowledge of Swedish and English, so they have difficulties communicating with the teachers. They are immersed in essentially both languages, and ill-equipped to learn either. The enforcement of a monolingual classroom places these students at a disadvantage, because they become unable to express themselves and communicate using their full language repertoire. Additionally, the social pressures of immigration and educational progress weigh heavily on them. They need to quickly learn Swedish customs and integrate into the Swedish national program to ensure that they can remain in the country. The teachers are also under pressure, because they need to help these students advance. They take the responsibility for introducing Swedish society to these immigrants. An ideal situation would be that the students who have zero proficiency in English were given more time to learn Swedish before English was introduced. This would allow them to use Swedish
more efficiently as a learning tool. It would also diminish the need for the inclusion of L1 since the teachers are not comfortable with its use. Translanguaging, although helpful in these situations, needs to be introduced to teachers in this program, ensuring its correct application and the reaping of its benefits.

In closing, although this research was limited in terms of time and participants, it shed some light on the attitudes of teachers towards translanguaging. Further work needs to be done on this subject because of its increasing relevance in the field of pedagogy.
References


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Appendix A: teacher interviews

Here I have compiled the questions and answers used by each teacher in the study, the answers are grouped by theme. What was excluded from the transcription is information that is irrelevant to the study or a repetition of what was already said. A full transcription of the interview can be submitted upon request.

1. Eric’s answers

Translanguaging

Rim: are you familiar with the term translanguaging or even code-switching?

Eric: I am aware of it in terms that I do it I am probably not fantastically familiar with the…the theoretical aspect of it I think it's important to do and yeah…

Rim: Okay, each person has a different perspective so if I were to ask you what is your perspective on translanguaging... what I mean by that is do you think it's just a teaching tool? is it a communication strategy? What is it for you?

Eric: I think it is a mixture of both. I noticed that when I need to give important information I go sort of automatically to Swedish. for example. Maybe there's a test coming up and they need to know the date they need to know what they need to revise. So, I would say that in Swedish so that I am guaranteed that they'd understand. because if I said in English then there will be a certain number of words. that they won't understand and I also use it because I want to …. repeat a point teach a point …. I want to... kind of… be able to do associate Swedish with English.

 [...] 

Rim: I noticed that you do is that you explain broader concepts in English first and then you go over them in Swedish. Do you think that that helps the students?

Eric: I think it helps based on the fact that they are in a situation where they are learning two new languages. I am not a great advocate of the sink or swim kind of teaching that you basically stick to English and immerse them completely in that language…I think that they need to have one or two reference points to Swedish or quite a few reference points because otherwise they just won't…they will find it too too difficult and bearing in mind that we have a group that has profile of being fairly low level.

 [...] 

Rim: you do that unconsciously I suppose but when you do give these sort of instructions do you think it is you should translate them to the students I mean bodily you are asking them to do something it is an instruction do you think it's necessary for you to go over it in Swedish or through body language?

Eric: the priority .. is to do whatever you can …whatever you can use to make sure that they understand the instructions and what they are meant to be doing then... you know... you should use that. As far as I can say, I think it is okay in that situation to have you know... begin in English and then… and then go over to translating into Swedish. Yes, that is a priority for me.

Rim: do you encourage your students to use translation ?

Eric: yes, yes I do. I think that it is really important they have… they see both the English and the Swedish words together, and it could be vocabulary it could be phrases… but yeah. I have… I write the English word on the left hand side and the Swedish word on the right hand
...and I said to them many many times that they need to write everything that goes up on the board.

Rim: and do they?

Eric: no no, they don't. They should do. They do when I tell them but they don't... they are rather unmotivated in that respect.

**I1 use in the classroom:**

Rim: some of them start speaking in their own languages is that.. what do you think of that is it okay? Is it not okay? What is your stance on that?

Eric: my stand on that is that the school has previously...we have said that that we don't speak Dari or any other language in our class. But we have now learned that you are not allowed to say that, that you can't deny them the opportunity to speak in their own language. Which is a bit of a shame, because I think it is slightly counterproductive and it is excluding some of the other students.

Rim: okay! yes because the majority are Dari speakers, and the minority is not. Do you think they use it as a collaborative tool?

Eric: sometimes they do. Sometimes they do but not enough. They use it to often, kind of, say nasty things to each other...to joke with each other in some way. So it is not really used in the way that perhaps one could. Occasionally it is...I do hear the students kind of like ask any question they get a response in Dari and then they can write it down but it is I think some sort of social kind of thing.

**Introduction of non-target languages in the English classroom:**

Rim: Which language in your opinion is there to support to the other?

Eric: yeah, you know on paper we are there to teach them English and so English must have the kind of priority but I would say that I would do Swedish as a... to help with learning.

Rim Swedish is sort of there as a sort of support

Eric: yes yes

Rim: do you think that they know enough Swedish to have that?

Eric: Well bearing in mind that we are working with a group of students that is kind of on the lower level I would say that they probably do you have sufficient level in Swedish but occasionally it does come up that they learn a new word in Swedish, absolutely so I go and explain that, and then I can go over to English.

Rim: So you think as an English teacher you need to have ... to be able to Teach the students you cannot just be fluent in English. You need to have yourself a good knowledge of Swedish?

Eric: yeah I think so yeah. I think full immersion in English is or would be.. it would leave them very frustrated, and I am not sure that we would really help them.

Rim: That is very true but also Sweden has a very high level of fluency or proficiency in English and do you think that that can leave them a bit frustrated maybe in their home country they were the best at English but then they came here and they...

Eric: absolutely! I think it's... our priority really is for them to learn Swedish and I think that it's an additional advantage if they have developed a good level of English. But then we are going into subject of whether or not they should be learning two languages at the same time bearing in mind the circumstances that they are in and that is another discussion. But I would say that
briefly, that it is a bit of a tall order for them and I feel very aware that there is frustration but also you can that there are telltale signs. English isn't there or isn't the subject that they prioritize, I think that there is a lack of kind of interest in I'm studying outside of class for example oh, I think that it is indicative of the fact that they probably they probably don't prioritize it that much. But that is just this class there are other classes SPRINT classes where the situation is different.

Rim: so there's a gap right, what I was wondering is: do these students that are up here do they use anything to help them... how do they achieve this level did they have prior knowledge or they just motivated?

Eric: I think they achieve this level and this is just…. it's actually quite an interesting subject I think they in part achieve this level because they are not part of a larger group of students that have the same language. We have one for example was the only Thai student there and we have another one who is from I think are French speaking African country and obviously they don't know anything about Dari. So, they don't fall into those or that habit of communicating with their friends in Dari.

Rim: so the fact that they can't really share an L1 everybody else sets them apart so that they can concentrate more on the languages that they do share with everyone. Okey…

Eric: but definitely in the terms of the fact that two of the most motivated are ones that don't have a shared language together.

Rim: sharing a language helps the students learn together it is very interesting that you think that that is not the case in your classroom.

Eric: I mean it doesn't help partly because you don't see them supporting each other in the way that they should be. You see it occasionally, it happens as I have mentioned before. But generally you know they say rude words to each other and kind of like throw comments out which I suspect are not particularly kind of uplifting, and generally also that they are they have a shared language it means that they don't have… perhaps the same desire motivation.

Teaching SPRINT:

Rim: is the fact that English is your mother tongue an advantage?

Eric: so you mean what are the advantages of having English as a mother tongue? Yes. I think it's an interesting question I think that probably for me it's that I am sure of the grammar and I am sure of the vocabulary. So there is never an issue where I'm kind of like I have a question mark of in my head and I don't understand what I'm saying so it is sort of like self-confirmation to some effect.

[...]

Rim: do you think that when the students for example ask you to translate something from English to Swedish the fact that English is your mother tongue you are more sure of the vocabulary so whether or not things are as they said.

Eric: yeah yeah

Rim: when explaining grammar do you explain it in English then switch to Swedish? do you see yourself doing that?

Eric: I could do I'm not sure but at times I feel like I'm kind of like unsure of the Swedish so I might not steer a path in that direction. But if it is something that I am fairly kind of confident about Then yeah absolutely.

[...]
Rim: body language I mean we have talked about this, they're not very fluent so what is the role of body language in your opinion when you are standing in front of a Classroom?

Eric: so what I would do is I do a lot of acting you didn't see that in that particular lesson I explain things using my arms legs and and so forth so there are quite a lot of there is quite a lot of acting that takes place super language is important and they like it when you do acting they think it's fun.

[...]

Rim: Does the confusion between English and Swedish happen often?

Eric: yeah well they will absolutely…at this level there would be a lot of Swedish influence in English absolutely.

[...]

Rim: how do you yourself feel as a non-native speaker of Swedish, can you relate to their experience.

Eric: can I relate to their experience? I can't relate to the aspect of urgency which a lot of them have I don't quite know which of the legislation which basically dictating how long they're going to be in Sweden and what have you. For some of them it is very important for them that they go to school and that they get good grades. And that stress … I have never you know, never had to worried about. But obviously being in a foreign country not knowing much of what is going on I can relate to that. But for me it has always been quite natural to want to learn Swedish. Since the day I came. I think I see that with them learning Swedish, but I don't see that with them learning English. Many of them feel, and I can understand this, “I have got to a level of Swedish which is good and now things are being made more complicated by the fact that I now have to learn a new language” which is you know English.

[...]

Rim: do you think that your certificates in primary education helps you with the students especially.?

Eric: I think it doesn't make sense. We go we got it drummed into us that you had to have a structure to your teaching clear aims and objectives I'm looking at time issues and looking at stuff like that that was really important and I kind of keep that in the back of my mind when I teach. Yes.

[...]

Rim: so the other thing which is the shouting of answers at you why in your opinion do you think they do that?

Eric: well I have tried many times to show them put up your hand if... and I physically put up my hand but you try and tell them to put up your hand, but they don't listen and I don't know why… I think it's because they are.. they are quite an enthusiastic bunch and excitable bunch, they don't see a kind of advantage of just putting up their hand and waiting and that is because I don't probably do a good job at sort of pointing to the student who his waiting there silently. I probably point too much to the shooting one who is kind of like Me Me.

Text books:

Rim: the material for the students is very very low. I mean they are designed for younger learners. do you think that that could be frustrating for these students?

Eric: well it is definitely frustrating for us as teachers because we see that that the material that is available in the market just typically does not understand these students. You can get one book that focuses on Grammar you can get another book that focuses on skill or vocabulary but what I would want to have is a book that has focus on grammar, a focus on vocabulary, a
focus on different skills and that is very difficult to find. And also exercises where there is a lot of class participation.

Rim: do you think that's why you stopped using text book?

Eric: yes I have.. yeah yes I think so I think I am frustrated by the books. and I think to keep yourself kind of up-to-date and in tune with teaching I think it is very good that you do not fall into the habit of using the same type of set up every single year. So last year we did have a textbook and this year I wanted to see whether or not you could achieve a similar outcome without having a textbook. and I am of the conclusion that basically you can.

2. Jennifer’s answers

Translanguaging

Jennifer: there are different schools here. Some say not one single word in Swedish in the classroom when you teach English. Oh that's like the a Dogma! and you have to be wary so that you don't speak too much Swedish of course but I find it… I find it a little bit stupid; because time is of the essence. It takes time and some of this time, if you can't check very quickly that they understand you, that is also going to take time. They just do that they mix the languages.

[...]

Jennifer: these are young people they have not come very far in the development of their own language… there are still… it depends on their schooling also. But you know in spoken language… there are 50000 words... you don't use the full extent when you speak only… it requires reading and education all the big and abstract type of thinking. You acquire that from book or from text and from education and sometimes, I tell them if you… well you might look up a word and the word you get in your own language you don't understand.. Right? I say it's because you are very young. So if you come to that level where you don't understand those words then it's a sign that now I must go on only in English or Swedish.

[...]

Jennifer: especially when it comes to subjects like social studies or history or those non fictional text about complicated matters and that is what stops my students from having less schooling. Because it takes longer and it is difficult for them because the entire mindset… if they translate maybe the, well the Dari students do it in Persian, they have not gone to school they don't know these Persian words.

Rim: it could be difficult

Jennifer: and what they have to do very often when they do study in Swedish which is the language here… but they have to learn the concept the actual knowledge with Swedish words or English words if they have to sort of leave the basis of their mother tongue and move into the new. Whereas a grown up person, because I taught grown-ups, and it goes so much faster for example to study…and that is because they had the thinking already and they have their language. The thinking and the vocabulary are already there so they just have to go straight over.

Rim: so it's basically just taking it and translating it… whereas these students they are already building up their language… it's basically just an unfinished project… and then moving on to a new one and they can't transfer things…

Jennifer: yes, so in one way young people learn faster whereas in another way they don't… because then it become the challenge to do so within a new language it slows things down and they grow tired very quickly…
Rim: is it a necessity to speak their language?

Jennifer: no I don't think so not necessarily some say that they must have support with people speak their language...somebody from their country helps them with their homework or whatever... or even in class... but I have seen horrifying examples of that going totally wrong like a Turkish girl I had last year, well she came from secondary school in Vaxholm. They had let her have a Turkish teacher beside her all the time and she had been allowed to write all of her exams in Turkish I mean in social studies and history all of the subjects she could take because that is allowed in Sweden, for some! I don't know they go so far... it's just a subject she needs to know but she had no idea of Swedish vocabulary in that subject. And then when she came to me she did developed at all. Her language was so inadequate in Swedish she had a learning disability because she couldn't develop. That she only admitted to having trouble in Turkey that some of her friends used to cheat for her to get her through school and barely at that. She had grades from all kinds of subjects from Swedish School, because she was allowed to do the test in Turkish and she just did everything in Turkish. And I don't know what... that masked her learning disability do you understand?

Jennifer: so I mean... but I think it can be good to have somebody help you with homework but I do not think it's a good idea necessarily in class.

Rim: so if for example you spoke one of the languages that the students speak for example you know some Russian, and they ask you about a word that you know the equivalent to in Russian are you just give it back to them in Russian do you think that that is a good strategy? What do you think?

Jennifer: I think that it would be... I don't know how the other students would feel I mean if I have students who speak Thai... I can't translate to them. Then I have the social aspect which is never never talked about in pedagogical situations. [...] it's like I favor one or that person if I... because we have mixed... if I had one student or one group or language but then we have to be fair to everyone that is the reason why we have to somehow confine ourselves to languages that everybody knows. Swedish and English are yes! but if I start translating to Arabic for instance. then we have a... most of the students in that class speak it (laugh)... but in a different classroom Thai students will not be able to follow... how would they feel if we start talking together in Arabic? the social aspect of the classroom can be... you have to think about it!

L1 use in the classroom:

Rim: Something that I have noticed as well is that your... the students in your classroom are.. they collaborate together to get meaning. yes but do you think it is helpful to leave them and give them that opportunity to do that in the classroom communicate in there L1 I mean?

Jennifer: that is an interesting question because I normally.. I don't encourage them to talk too much to each other when they study... because I have a suspicion especially in this class who is very calm and believe me oh boy they showed off to you... I mean they were exemplary students. I have never seen them like that so focused so fast the way that they work like that. [...] The thing is I realized that the reason why I try to, or not to, let them use too much of it is. Some guys are really undisciplined and they start doing other things they start answering messages on their phone. I try not to let them use a phone much now they did that here but try to use a computer instead. Because they always get messages all the time and then they get distracted [...] maybe I should let them help each other a bit more they do they sort of talk. This thing is maybe I shouldn't be so suspicious of it... because sometimes I feel is that there are some students that have a smart friend help them out all the time and they're really without
that friend there they are helpless. They don't take an initiative to do something. I find the question very interesting.

Rim: for me it was very interesting as well because you have a class where people are majority Arabic speakers so I understood what was going on but what I was thinking was well they are actually helping each other but do the other students feel left out? How does Jennifer feel about this? does she feel like she is being left out?

Jennifer: yes true you can feel left out and it depends on what they talk about because this time they were so focused on the work they were reading in class, and especially those two guys in the back. One especially is like he's just kind of climbing the walls normally. He was a different guy this time. What happens sometimes is that they start talking about other things doing other things distracting each other I can sense they are not focused. This time they were so focused on the task they were like a dream. And it was great they became the good students they became students who are successful students.

[...]

Rim: what are your thoughts about including L1?

Elizabeth: is that their mother tongue? Oh I understand I understand... well I do included in a sense that I encourage them to write translations of words into their mother tongue but that is something that they could do individually and not necessarily have to cooperate to do that and so on... no we have to curb it. I haven't asked and class... my Swedish class is dominated by Afghan people, Afghan young guys. Well they speak Dari they speak a lot of dirty stuff sometimes. I have one girl who is from from there and she has complained and nowadays they are much calmer and I've had a real fight with them because yeah... I would say it depends also I think on the sex also a little bit or the gender whether they are the girls or boys how bad it could be. boys can become if there are many of them... become like a little tribe.. and boys they want... they fight for hierarchy and they challenge each other to, how would you say, break or past the boundaries and if they start speaking their mother tongue nobody else understands it could be a very bad thing in the classroom. So therefore in a Swedish class we said only Swedish making a little bit use... And I had to teach them to lower their voices because they were too loud also for being in Sweden I said you have to...you are screaming when you speak… that's how we feel and you know... so there are many things, social things,

Jennifer: [...] some of them have the real trouble, this thing that you should control yourself from the inside is a new concept for some of them. Which makes me wonder off to another problem. Which is school work or homework which some of them may not do because they don't have… because they are all alone they don't come with family so they don't. The ones who do do their homework come with their family, but the Afghans are alone and some of the other African students are also alone. So they don't, they don't have a parent who says you have to do your homework you have to do this and that so they can become very lazy and complacent and don’t do much outside of school they have to be a controlled from the outside or they are used to that...

Rim: external motivation ?

Jennifer: yes exactly and those are the ones who work well if they like the teacher. Those who are internally motivated work with any teacher as long as they can get to their goals. That's unusual that requires more maturity and maybe also some... how should I say this experience with school helps. That varies a lot I think, there are people from Syria, they went to school usually proper schools...The Afghan kids they may have...some of them haven't gone to school...some have gone to schools organized by the neighbors for learning to read and maybe basic math and that's it but they have been working their childhood.

Rim: they understand a lot more than they speak. How do you think you support that how do you think you help them develop their their understanding or actual knowledge… ?

[...]

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Jennifer: that was exactly the question I was thinking about the other day (laughter). I can confess that that is something that I have felt is a problem, and I haven't actually decided on what to do about it… and how we can do that is very much restricted on how the class is or function socially. That's the problem. Then they're going to have these guys who are competing for attention or with each other… if somebody makes a mistake or says something wrong everybody laughs. They are so scared of making mistakes, if they have that situation that it's not called you know they're still roosters trying to show off to each other… if you have mixed classes from different places that is then accentuated and maybe never sort of settles properly in the class this thing with male interaction in large groups is very interesting to study because they have certainty rules… I would say that the grown-ups have more of this… how would you say… they abdicate from being the leaders when the leadership is sort of based off the friendship that the student should accept them because they like them etcetera, the authority of teachers is very weak and that that creates insecurities amongst these guys more than the girls because the girls there more still focused on pleasing the teacher…

Rim: Eric talks about encouraging them to read books and how that can help them build up their vocabulary because the students are not very motivated other very school oriented. Would you think that your students are more school oriented?

Jennifer: I would say that is quite a mix. I would say, that many of them are quite motivated really but some of them are a victim of this mentality reverse prestige… because they would like to be good students because they have the talent but I prefer to keep the social image how can they get around that how can you make them realize that and.. you know I am sort of getting there slowly but.. the best thing you can do if you can get some students to be feel safe in the classroom somehow and relax then that is the key because that is very hard to acquire that… they would be more willing to take risks and try things and say something wrong and… and that's not a disaster.. Yes

**Inclusion of non-target languages in the English classroom:**

Rim: do you think that Swedish functions as a scaffold for English, or do you think that English is a scaffold for Swedish?

Jennifer: I was criticized by my head teacher who is also a language teacher of, well not, English but Swedish, I was criticized by her for using Swedish in the classroom, well actually she asked me why I did it but I could hear the tone, that she said that was not really what you… as a.. I don't think that she mentioned anything about current research because it hasn't really… there is a Dogma, and you are familiar with the Dogma. I think for instance when it comes to grammar I know that there is one construction which is really difficult for people that are Persian or Dari speakers, and for some other people too, and that is the difference between perfect and past tense, simple past… when do you use one or the other, and those rules are exactly the same in English and in Swedish. [...] but when I do explain grammar for the first time I do it in Swedish and at the same time… that I have to say they are they are better at Swedish my students… I use Swedish but I also teach them the grammatical words in English. I write down this is *present* this is *infinitive* this is *past* and this *past participle*. “Oooh!” they say “what is that?”.’ “It's a long word” I say but it's fine… whenever it is helpful but I would say Swedish is a scaffold for English but not the other way around usually.. because I don't have students who are better in English that in Swedish normally.

[...]

Rim: another question is are you teaching Swedish in English or better yet, what is your purpose in teaching this program? how do you interpret the instructions from Skolverket? are you there to teach them English or Swedish...

Jennifer: I'm not sure I understood that question but.. what I can say is they are here to learn Swedish and English in order to be able to go through this Swedish school system as fast as possible. To get the best possible future, and I would say many of them have not Studied in
English in their home countries, where are they then get to go to Eric, they don't have a chance to acquire the level of English necessary to go to study English five. That's not possible, especially since they are in Sweden and they need to focus on Swedish First.

**Teaching SPRINT:**

Rim: my question to you would be how do you think that linguistic richness helps you be a teacher now especially for these foreign students?

Jennifer: I wonder if it helps me well… I would say

Rim: do you think it helps?

Jennifer: I think it does yes I think it does. Because first of all, I can help them with all their questions basically. Of course it is very important that I know Swedish as a foreign language and I think that some maybe I shouldn’t say that but some… those who are… Swedish as a second language teachers in senior high school if they have gone to University and learn from University, they don't really know how to explain the grammar. (laugh) All the time I think that sometimes there are things that they learn that is like if the you have taught people from the beginning then you get a totally different grip on it.

[...]

Rim: even as a Swedish as a second language teacher do you think that you are prepared to deal with students that are completely new to Swedish?... 100% blank no previous…

Jennifer: if I taught such classes I would try to use some of my SFI skills but…in those days they were grown up people, and in those days what is different, if I talk about the English for Sprint, they know some Swedish. It varies in how much, because in order to save time to be honest I do use some Swedish as a tool and they use Swedish too, and if I want to check if they know a word and say what does this mean? They could explain it in English what would they do is they say the Swedish word and some…There are different schools here, some say not one single word in Swedish in the classroom when you teach English oh, that's like the a Dogma and you have to be wary so that you don't speak too much Swedish of course but I find it…I find it a little bit stupid because time is of the essence. It takes time and some of this time if you can't check very quickly that they understand you that is also going to take time they just do that they mix the languages… Now one thing that I tried to tell them very strongly is that they… “please if you translate something to use it translated first your mother tongue not to Swedish because if you do that regularly you are just going to start mixing and Swedish will come and and you want English and the other way around and you can get blocked when you sort of”... so you I am careful not to encourage the inference too much.

Rim: is that why you encourage them to translate to their mother tongue?

Jennifer: yes yes it also sticks better.

Jennifer: But I can tell you I am grateful for my work in SFI because that has helped me a little bit to understand it's hard when you teach a language you're having being prepared for and I don't this level.

**Text books:**

But I can tell you I am grateful for my work in SFI because that has helped me a little bit to understand it's hard when you teach a language you’re having being prepared for and I don't this level.

I have some old old material I got from the woman… there was a teacher who was about to retire and I took her place and she was here a few months after but she had no classes and she was
like my mentor for that time… that was such a luxury… but you know very rarely are you that lucky. So anyway, she gave me some old material which I have kept and it was self-teaching material where they… it was just collecting dust I didn't realize I had it so… no thank God I have this… because the books are not so good it is very hard to find good books for the beginners levels and intermediary levels especially in English.

3. Angelina’s answers

**Translanguaging**

Rim: do you teach English to the students so that they can learn more English or do you teach it to so that they can learn more Swedish as well? What is your purpose?

Angelina: yes of course they are learning English that is, first to improve their language it's going to help them in their studies in the future, it's going to help them in other… is… courses that is to use them in other courses. Some of the students that you have met they hope to continue their studies at the University.. and you know at the University they they are going to need English.

Rim: so we have talked a little bit with your students and some said that they would like to use their own mother tongue in the classroom, do you think that that is helpful?

Angelina: yeah… sometimes it helps because… it helps because their level they have a low level okay? They don't have a very good one… so sometimes it helps to… the teacher needs to translate that is for them to understand exactly what do you mean… I don't translate a lot but I use it especially with another group when you weren't with me, that is I have some students who have French as their mother tongue and I have other students who have Arabic as their mother tongue. So I try … not all the time, but sometimes I try… I explain the word or I try to translate the word in French and Arabic

Rim: for each group?

Angelina: yeah exactly, but I explain in English of course! The first step is explain in English I try to give some examples… You know but sometimes they don't need to tell you just from their eyes you can understand that they don't understand that word… so I tried to like, only say the word in French or in Arabic and then they say: Ahaa! Okay!. They understand it

[...]

Angelina: yeah of course I think any teacher can say the same thing because the purpose is to help the student be better in the language they can speak they can write and they can understand when they listened so course my purpose is to help them to improve their language.

Rim: do you agree with... some teachers think that the main reason for this program is to teach Swedish only do you think that that is something that you can agree with?

Angelina: no I don't think so… because they need English also they need grades in English for them to continue no no no.. otherwise why would they have English as of course.

**L1 use in the classroom:**

Rim: and your students do they speak to each other in their mother tongue in the classroom?

Angelina: sometimes… I don't let them to tell you the truth. I say no, no other languages. because I want all others to understand what they are talking about.

Rim: so if you let them speak their language they will exclude other students?
Angelina: yes kind of… and also because I have many languages in the class if I let these one speak Arabic that one is going to speak Dari, that one is going to speak Tigrinya… no no

Rim:

it becomes too much

Angelina: yeah yes too much no no… English yeah because the class that you were with me that is that one they are like they are better than the other ones. The only language that I let them speak is English so they can speak English with each other. {smile in voice}

[..]

Rim: and for example Jennifer’s class… some of the students who speak Arabic help each other with the words and with the meanings they were talking about bear and prayer, so they misunderstood it.. anyway.. but they talk to each other and Arabic and they were trying to help each other do you think that your students do that?

Angelina: ah I get what you mean.. yeah.. I have these situations but as a can Arabic so I asked them or I used to tell them ask me yeah yeah it… it has happened once I think with the Dari language… one student explains to the other one but not a lot does not happen a lot in my class.

[..]

Rim: and do you think you would be okay with that?

Angelina: yeah but not too much not too much because I feel like I am there it is my job that is to explain to them if they need something so if they need to know something in English or in Swedish but between… yeah no, not too much

Rim: okay so Collaborative Learning is not something that happens often in your classroom?

Angelina: no not in that level because I know I can't understand their language… I am afraid that they are going to be talking about something else that I don't understand.. this is that I don't let them.. I don't let these this way... no

Rim: I think the other teachers also brought up the same issue… but you don't really understand what they're saying

Angelina: yeah exactly maybe they’re talking about something private between them so this... I don't accepted in my lesson.

Rim: if you go back to your lesson, would you allow your students to maybe use their mother tongue when during this class? would you maybe be willing to ask your students to read a text in their mother tongue summarize it in English.

Angelina: no… not the level that I have no..

[..]

Rim: do you think that because… when when they are learning English or or switch for that matter when you give them the opportunity to go back to their mother tongue do you think that helps them?

Angelina: yeah.. It helps! There are many theories that says when you have for example a student from another language or a student who has already a mother tongue it helps a lot these student…. like his level improves a lot when he translates to the background that he has already. So it helps yes it does

**Inclusion of non-target languages in the English classroom:**

Rim: do you use Swedish as well?
Angelina: sometimes...sometimes for those students who have other mother tongues that I cannot... I have students from Afghanistan, they speak Dari. I have two students from Eritrea, they speak Tigrinya. so I can't speak their language so these students... of course I use Swedish language.

Rim: but do you first try to do it in English Swedish and then the other languages?

Angelina: yeah of course... all the time I start with English, giving many examples, as I told you, when I see that they don't understand I give them the word.

[...]

Rim: do you think that it's a good thing to use other languages in the English classroom? Or do you try to avoid that?

Angelina: yeah I try to avoid it.. to tell you the truth as I try to avoid ..why? I believe that if students that is, if they get used to the teacher translates words for them they are all the time waiting for the translation like they don't think or they don't make an effort that is to understand the example that The teacher is explaining. So, they get used to translation like the easiest way .. so no I am not with the idea that translating directly... not all the time... I tried to explain give many examples Like is the last step or the last solution that I can translate, because I don't want them to be like lazy and receive only something which is very easy no!

[...]

Rim: okay what do you use this sort of translanguaging, that's what I'm calling it, when you switch between languages. Do you use that in other classes for example in Swedish classes with students speak Swedish as their mother tongue do you use Swedish to explain things?

Angelina: no because I have English. Right now they are very good in English so I don't need it at all.. They understand all what I tell them so I don't need it at all. But for this translation they have already in their workbook that is, the last page of each chapter...they ask them to write they give them words in English and they ask them to write them in their mother tongue and then the third column is in Swedish. So English Swedish and in the middle their mother tongue. So each student translates the word according to his mother tongue so it is in the workbook already.

[...]

Rim: what if for example they just can't seem to understand this one structure of the past perfect for example it just doesn't click in their brain... how would you go about explaining it? would you go back to for example Swedish because they have the same structure or would you just use another structure...

Angelina: no no especially in grammar I don't translate. I don't translate why? I tried to give examples and I have different ways that I used to explain grammar rules that is either writing on the whiteboard, explain with this timeline that I draw and I explain I say this is simple present this is simple past so I try with my body gestures I think.. this line also time using the whiteboard to explain to them that is the time of each tense and how do you say especially simple present and present perfect I use a lot of.. I did it two weeks ago I did it with my students... so we use a lot of tasks about it I bring also a video about it and this helps them a lot..

Rim: so visual stimulation...

Angelina: yeah yeah for them because I believe that there are students that they can learn when you write... or others they learn when they listen but there are others that they learn more when they watch so I use a lot of... videos

Rim: visual help.

Angelina: yeah in my lessons yeah
**Teaching SPRINT:**

Rim: and if you were to like explain broad very vague concepts to them in English would you go to any of the languages that you speak for help, that you know that they speak…?

Angelina: Exactly yeah if it’s something very difficult that one I can use other languages it helps

Rim: how? How does it help?

Angelina: yeah because they have already their mother tongue so when you give them a word that like they know of course it's easier… it's okay..

Rim: so they connect

Angelina: exactly they connect to their mother tongue.

Rim: they connect to their mother tongue they're able to understand

Angelina: and also they feel safe but, not talking just giving examples and saying that, you can't … they don’t understand so it doesn't help but when you give them like a word from their mother tongue you see from their eyes “yes I understand”.

[...]

Rim: ok ok so in your opinion when you're teaching English especially to the students who don't speak Swedish fluently. I think most of them have been here less than 2 years… do you think that English… or you can use other languages to be like sort of a help for you to teach them English? or do you think that Swedish only is enough for them to be able to learn English? You can use it as a scaffold to be able to teach them English..

Angelina: no I think that I have I have a student she told me this, she confesses, she told me you know what when I use Swedish words I learned also Swedish, and yes I agree with her. Because when you use Swedish words for when you translate to Swedish you improve your Swedish also so I think it's parallel.. the languages with each other English and Swedish and as I told you that they have in their workbook they have English and Swedish so because as I told you I give them homework and then when they come to the classroom they go through this so I asked them like sometimes I need a test that is to see whether they prepared it at home or not so I give him a word in English and they tell me in Swedish or I say the word in Swedish and they tell me in English here just to check if they have learned vocabulary or not so they told me that this way helps them to improve both languages English and Swedish.

Rim: okay and do you think I mean we talked about them when I had a little interview, we talked about them confusing the two do you think that that happens often?

Angelina: yeah yeah it does..

Rim: In what situations?

Angelina: especially if we're examples you have these structures that are similar between English and Swedish[…] they do especially in grammar why? Because they have approximately the same structure that you have in English and in Swedish so maybe they confuse them and I think that this is normal for beginners that it is, any beginner in any language. I used to confuse when I learned Swedish so yeah...I think it's normal I see myself in my students

[...]

Rim: I think it was Eric who said that in his opinion when the students speak their mother tongue in the classroom they don't feel any urgency to learn any new language and I wanted to ask if you agree or disagree

Angelina: I agree this is what I said exactly and that's why I say they feel lazy they wait for the teacher’s translation. So like they don't make an effort.. their minds don't make an effort to understand what the teacher is explaining or the example that the teacher gives them. they
like it easy they are lazy or they become lazy... but if they are used that you explain and they understand or that they have to understand the word from the example the teacher gives I think it helps..

[...]

Rim: when is it important to switch to Swedish or their first language and the ones that they speak... when is it important to do that and is it important to do that?

Angelina: in situations when you find like you have a word... I can't really say a concept because these ones they have a very low level but a very difficult word an abstract word that is difficult to explain it even if you give an example you feel like it's still very vague for them so in that situation I can translate even if I give the first example second or third I still see in their eyes no they don't understand... then I can translate..

[...]

Rim: yes, do you think that using body language is helping them understand?

Angelina: ohhhh oh yes... a lot a lot especially for example like you use the past so I do like that (points behind her back), and the future (points forward) or the present, so now (points down to the ground)... so the present continuous something that is happening now oh yeah I think it helps a lot

Rim: I think it was Eric but whenever he said read he made the gesture and then listening as well and he points to his ear.. yeah yeah he using the senses and do you think that because you can use your body to expand these things do you think that the students understand them quicker?

Angelina: yeah yeah yeah oh yeah it helps yeah it helps

Rim: that's great they need the encouragement. I think I asked you this question in the beginning but maybe you have a different answer now what is your purpose as a teacher in this språk intro program because you're teaching English you're not teaching Swedish so what is your purpose in your opinion?
Appendix B: students’ interview

Below is the full transcription of the 10 minute interview:

Rim: today is Thursday 28th of March I am in X gymnasium with a lovely group of students who wanted to participate in my research. if you could say who you are and give me your ages that would be wonderful so that I can know who is who.

Charlotte: Hi my name is Charlotte and I am 19 years old
Rim: and where are you from Charlotte?
Charlotte: I am from Somalia
Rim: and you are?
Oliver: hi my name is Oliver I am 18 years old and I am from Ethiopia.
Rim: Ethiopia cool..
Elin: hi my name is Elin I am 19 year old I am from Iran.
Joe: hi my name is Joe I come from China and I am 17 years old..
Rim: oh do you speak Cantonese or Mandarin?
Joe: Mandarin
Samira: my name is Samira I am 19 years old and I am from Syria.
Martina: my name is Martina I am 17 years old I am from Senegal but I lived in Italy.
Rim: do you speak French?
Martina: no
Samira: she lived in Italy..
Rim: oh so you oh so you just you speak Italian that's wonderful .. 19 speaks Italian..
Martina: no 17
Rim: 17 I'm so sorry my bad
Malika: my name is Malika I am 18 I am from Eritrea but I live in Saudi Arabia..
Rim: oh you speak Arabic?...
Malika: Yes..
Rim: id you did you study English when you were in Saudi Arabia.?
Malika: Yes..
Rim: well you kind of have to when you are there.. most of you are consenting adults so yay that's great for me.. my questions pertain mostly to your studies... how how it is.. I mean I know it's very hard to move and come to a new country I know the feeling I've done it before.
it's not the easiest of things... how was it for you learning Swedish in this new system? How do you do you feel?

Charlotte: first time it's difficult but now it's perfect after a while we all learn how to speak and how to write first time it was difficult..

Rim: it must have been how do you guys feel?

Samira: At the beginning it was very hard because I think I would never speak the language but by the time goes you start learning and now it's going to be easier

Rim: you get more comfortable…

Everybody: yes

Rim: same thing happened to me at first it was difficult but then you get used to it..

how is it with English then...is it the same do you feel the same way when you are learning English?

Malika: no it's like we studied before English so it's like…

Joe: we studied English when we are young so… it's more easily

Rim: and everybody here had English before they came to Sweden?

Everybody: yes

Rim: good, so did you use a lot of English when you first came to Sweden?

Everybody: yes

Joe: Because we just can't speak Swedish

Rim: you use a lot of English

Samira: hell yeah

Rim: for your studies do you like confused the two is there some like confusion between Swedish and English or do you feel like you know enough English to be able to understand the last no problem?

Charlotte: yes we have enough or I have enough English to be understand no problem..

Oliver: yes: from the time I come to this country to now I have learned to speak to the Swedish so English was the only language we could understand

Rim: how long have you all been here? Less than 2 years?

Everybody: yes less

Rim: congratulations your English is very good my questions you would be do you confuse the two?

Elin: sometimes

Everybody: yes sometimes

Malika: when we’re speaking yes sometimes

Samira: no

Rim: oh not for you okay.. when do you confuse it do you confuse words or is it verbs or sentences because English is very close is very close to Swedish so so what is it that is a little problematic…?

Charlotte: like words I think words

Oliver: yes and like words I cannot pronounce it samma samma in English or something..
Rim: so because they're pronounced the same way it's difficult okay interesting if you are for example asking for clarification from a teacher or.. do you ask for clarifications in Swedish or in English what do you use?

Oliver: both

Laughter

Joe: yes both if you don't understand in in Swedish you can speak in English or Swedish maybe..

Rim: so in English class if there was something that was unclear you would ask for clarifications in Swedish

Everybody: yes or in English or in Swedish

Angelina: or Arabic you can say it it's fine

Rim: for example for you guys if your teacher was from Somalia would you ask them to explain something in Somali

Charlotte: yes

Rim: same goes for you? if your teacher spoke your language you would ask for that

Everybody: yes

Charlotte: it is more helpful to understand

Rim: true, that's very interesting so you would actually like to have people who speak your own language to explain things because it's easier… I imagine it's very easy for you right now because your teacher speaks Arabic… would you like to do this in languages only or where would it be more helpful in other subjects as well do you guys study other subjects aside from languages..

Everybody: yes we do

Rim: what do you have… math?

Everybody: physics chemistry…

Samira: we have a lot of… religion…History… a lot of subjects geography… SAM

Rim: so you think it would be helpful if you had a future explain something to you in your language and other subjects

Everybody: yeah

Samira: sometimes it's… with the Swedish teacher… some sometimes English does not help… and it just like so confusing how can we understand a certain word or or what do they say…

Rim: yes I understand how that could be you confusing especially if you're studying something that is completely new and if we don't know what an English you don't know any Swedish you just feel a bit lost so yeah…and to do… to understand people to understand these situations do you use Google Translate do you dictionaries.. is there any way for you to

Everybody: Google Translate…

Rim: your best friend there.

Elin: dictionaries

Rim: do you use bilingual dictionaries… fridgle for me French Swedish or French English… English Swedish Arabic Swedish Farsi…do they have any Italian Swedish for you..

Martina: yes they do

Rim: oh that's wonderful so you use dictionaries…That is wonderful because I know that your teacher does not allow phones in the classroom so in other subjects where you are allowed to use your phone do you use your phone?
Malika: but our teacher says it's okay for the translation..
Rim: oh it's okay for translation okay… but you have to ask her.. good so that's very interesting so you do.. do you feel like you need to have your mother tongue to be able to understand anything else in other subjects or do you feel like you can manage it's fine you don't have to have another language
Everybody: sometimes it's helpful to have another language
Charlotte: when we learn something new that's we have never seen before
Oliver: sometimes
Rim: Elin you too?
Elin: yes sometimes
Rim: would you like to add anything else I think that you've been thinking of something that's been on your mind that has to do with learning Swedish learning English learning anything anything at all… don't feel any pressure to be silent… this has nothing to do with your school if you have any criticism or anything feel free feel free to say anything..