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**Children Hybrid Integration: Learning Dialogue
as a way of Upgrading Policies of Participation**

Local report (Sweden)

How do you feel about school? Local report of interviews with children, and professionals on their school experiences

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CHILD-UP WP5 local professional report: SWEDEN

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1. Introduction: Context and method of the study

The Swedish part of the CHILD-UP project is realised in collaboration with three schools in Malmö, the third largest and the fastest growing city in Sweden. The greater Malmö area has a population of around 750 000 inhabitants, and the city itself, which corresponds with the municipality, has 347 949 inhabitants (2020) (Statistics Sweden). The schools included in the study are located in the municipality of Malmö, which we refer to as Malmö City (*Malmö stad*). In this introductory section we shall first briefly say something about migration and schooling in Malmö. This serves to contextualise the three schools that participate in the study. After this we present the selection of schools and research participants, and discuss implications of it.

Migration, segregation and schooling inequality in Malmö

Malmö is located in southern Sweden, just by the bridge to Copenhagen, Denmark, connecting Sweden with continental Europe. This geographical location has implications for its migration experiences. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when emigration peaked, it was a port of embarkation; contrary, today it is a port of arrival. This is notable in its population. The share of foreign born in the population is 34,6 per cent, compared to 19,7 per cent in the total population. If we include persons born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents, the share of persons with foreign background in Malmö is 47,2 per cent while in Sweden it is 25,9 per cent (Statistics Sweden). People born outside of Sweden origin from 179 different countries and the most common countries of birth are Iraq (11 744), Syria (8 299), Denmark (7 469), Yugoslavia[1] (7 407), Poland (6 720), and Bosnia-Hercegovina (6 395). Persons born in Lebanon, Afghanistan and Iran reaches around 4 000 persons for each country (Malmö City, Population Statistics on webpage).

Of interest to this study is the proportion of children with migrant background in schools. In Sweden, the CHILD-UP selection criteria of children, corresponds with grade 5 (ISCED1) and 8 (ISCED2) in compulsory school, and the second year in upper secondary school (ISCED3),

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[1] The registration of country of birth as registered at the time of immigration, hence this refers to persons who immigrated before the dissolvement of Yugoslavia.

hence students aged 12, 15 and 18 years. Preschool (ISCED0) is not included in the Swedish part. As table 1 below illustrates, on average in Malmö City, persons with migrant background in these ages outnumbers persons with Swedish background.

TABLE 1. PERSONS AGED 12, 15 AND 18 YEARS WITH MIGRANT AND SWEDISH BACKGROUND IN MALMÖ CITY (DECEMBER 2020)

	12 years	15 years	18 years
Migrant background*	2 002 (51%)	1 847 (54%)	1 722 (54%)
Swedish background**	1 915 (49%)	1 550 (46%)	1 438 (46%)
Total	3 917 (100%)	3 397 (100%)	3 160 (100%)

*Migrant background includes persons who are foreign born and persons born in Sweden with two foreign born parents

**Swedish background includes persons born in Sweden with at least one parent born in Sweden

Source: Statistics Sweden, Population Statistics

Malmö is not only a city marked by a diverse population, it is also a city of social inequalities and segregation. In fact, compared to the national average, as well as the two larger cities in the country (Stockholm and Gothenburg), Malmö is characterised by large numbers of poor households compared to wealthy households (measured as purchase power per household unit). At the bottom line, this means that Malmö, by national standards, is a comparatively poor city (Salonen & Grander 2019). Further to this, it is also characterised by spatial segregation between poor and wealthy, and between persons with migrant and Swedish background, with a considerable overlap of migration background and poverty in the eastern parts of the city, and of Swedish background and wealth in the western parts of the city. This also overlaps with how different types of housing (home-ownership and tenancy) are distributed (Salonen & Grander 2019). Of relevance for the CHILD-UP study is that, overall, compulsory schools recruit their students from the surrounding housing areas, while in upper secondary schools the recruitment of students is instead to be understood in relation to which study programs they offer. In the next section we describe and discuss implications of this.

Collaboration with three schools

The Swedish part of the CHILD-UP project builds on collaboration with three schools, two compulsory schools and one upper secondary school. We collaborate with the same schools and collect data from basically the same students across all three empirical work packages (WP4–6). The two compulsory schools (school_1 and school_2) both have classes from grade 0 to

ninth grade, 450–500 students and they are located in areas with high levels of poverty and large shares of persons with migrant backgrounds in the population. They mostly recruit their students from the surrounding area. The upper secondary school (school_3) is located in central Malmö and attracts students from across Malmö who have applied and been accepted into the school. It has around 1 000 students and around 80 per cent study a theoretical program, 10 per cent a vocational program and another 10 per cent an introduction program. An introduction program is a program for students who are not eligible to enter a national program, and it aims at supporting students to enter a national program. Table 2 below shows the share of students according to gender, migrant and Swedish background and parents' educational background in the selected schools compared to the Malmö and national average.

While all schools in Malmö, both compulsory and upper secondary school match the national average as regards the share of students with parents with post-upper secondary school education, the share of students with migrant background is higher in Malmö than the Swedish average. This reflects the migration history of the city. While the share of students with migrant background in school_3 is close to the Malmö average, in school_1 and school_2 this share is much higher, reaching 87 and 77 per cent respectively. In addition, in school_1 and school_2, the share of students with parents with post-upper secondary school education is comparatively low. This illustrates how the socioeconomic and migration-background segregation in the city overlap, as discussed above.

TABLE 2. SHARE OF STUDENTS ACCORDING TO GENDER, MIGRANT BACKGROUND AND PARENTS' EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND IN THE SELECTED SCHOOLS, MALMÖ AND SWEDEN (OCTOBER 2019)

	Share of female students	Share of students with migrant background*	Share of students with parents with post-upper secondary school education
School_1	47	87	29
School_2	52	77	43
All compulsory schools in Malmö	49	52	59
All compulsory schools in Sweden	49	26	60
School_3	40	56	50

All upper secondary schools in Malmö	49	51	51
All upper secondary schools in Sweden	47	31	52

*Migrant background includes foreign born persons and persons born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents
Source: Skolverket, Skolblad 2019/2020

It goes without saying, that this composition of the population, i.e. the share of people with migrant and Swedish backgrounds, in the city and in the selected schools, impacts on how 'integration' is understood and approached, including how it is 'talked about'. We will return to this in the analysis.

Interviews with professionals

Interview persons were primarily recruited from the three schools we collaborate with. Primarily through snowballing, that is, one contact person would typically assist us to get in contact with a new potential interview person. This is also how the interview persons ended up being unevenly distributed between the schools. It was overall challenging to recruit interview persons, not least due to the consequences of the pandemic. In particularly, it was challenging to recruit mediators, and this is why we in the end included two mediators from another school in Malmö.

While the first few interviews were conducted face-to-face, as consequences of the pandemic intensified, we transferred to do interviews via an online communication platform and most interviews were done in this way. In most cases the first contact with teachers, social workers and mediators was initiated through an e-mail, containing brief information about the research project and the interview in the mail, and with an information letter and consent form attached as a file. Most commonly, we would receive a positive answer or no answer at all, on very few occasions we received a negative answer. If the person accepted the invitation, we would agree on a time and use a safe online communication platform from the university to conduct the interview. The video file was immediately erased, and the audio file was saved and transcribed. If the contacted person did not answer we would send a reminder, once or twice and then consider the absence of answer as a negative answer. In particularly, this was the case in our efforts to contact mediators. The interviewed mediators based in other schools than the ones selected for the project, work in schools that are similar to these and we estimate that this has no impact on the results in the analysis. Moreover, two of the social workers do not have their base in the selected schools, but work in close collaboration with them. We estimate that their experiences add on relevant information to the analysis. Table 3 below shows how the interview persons are distributed between the schools.

TABLE 3. OVERVIEW OF NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS DIVIDED BY SCHOOL AND PROFESSIONAL CATEGORY

	Teachers	Social Workers	Mediators	Total
School_1	6	4	2	12
School_2	4	2	1	7
School_3	2	-	-	2
Other	-	2	2	4
Total	12	8	5	25

Several of the interviewed teachers, social workers and mediators in compulsory school (School_1 and School_2) work (or had experiences of working) with children in both ISCED 1 and ISCED 2. In School_3, basically all teachers and social workers work exclusively with children in ISCED 3. Mediators are typically based at a central unit of the municipality, and work with children at different schools and at different ages. In school_3 we only interviewed teachers. The number of social workers was small and we were informed that very few of the students with other first languages than Swedish used the opportunity to have mother tongue tuition and study guidance in their mother tongue (see description of mediators in the section below), and to the extent that they did, it did not take place in School_3.

2. Professional experiences – an overview

This section concerns the professional and educational background, gender and work experiences of teachers, social workers and mediators.

Teachers

The majority of the teachers have a long working experience in the profession, ranging from 9 to 34 years. Two of them have worked respectively 1 and 3 years. The majority of them have worked in different schools during their professional carriers. Years in the current school vary. The teaching subjects vary; different languages (ISCED 1-3), Swedish as a second language (ISCED 2-3), Natural science (ISCED 2), Mathematics (ISCED 2), Social sciences (ISCED 2), Home and consumer studies (ISCED 2) and several subjects in grade 4-6 (not subject teachers). Three of the teachers work as special pedagogues (*specialpedagoger*) and one as a special teacher (s*peciallärare*). Special pedagogues have an overall responsibility for the special needs work in the schools and work with students in difficulties or with special needs. They work in close collaboration with the school management around school development, follow-ups and evaluation to provide good learning environments for all students. In contrast to special

pedagogues, special teachers' work focuses on teaching students with special needs, individually, in small groups or in the regular class. Special teachers are specialized in for example hearing impairment, mathematics development, language-, writing- and reading development or developmental disorder. One of the teachers also works with newly arrived students in introductory classes. Four of the participating teachers are first teachers (*förstelärare*) with the responsibility to also work with school development tasks. Ten of the participating teachers are female. All the teachers work in classes where the absolute majority of the children have a mother tongue other than Swedish. The major languages are Arabic, Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian, Albanian, Pashto and Somali. They thus have experiences of contexts where different aspects of migrant children's learning and development is a part of their everyday work.

Social workers

All schools are obliged by law to have a Students' Healthcare Team (*Elevhälsovårdsteam, EHT*) that shall have the medical, psychological, psychosocial and special pedagogical competences needed, though precisely how it is put together and organised can vary between municipalities and schools. It is expected to work preventive in school and to secure that all students can pursue their studies in school, but also to remit students to other instances when treatment is needed. Such teams typically include a student counsellor (*skolkurator*), usually trained as a social worker. However, in schools with low levels of study performances among the students, as is the case in our selected compulsory schools, professional categories of what is referred to as complimentary competences are recruited. This is part of a nation-wide strategy to unburden teachers[2], so that they can focus on teaching and students' learning, and it foremost involves teacher assistants (*lärarassistenter*) and student coordinators (*elevkoordinatorer*). Several schools in Malmö City are involved in this national strategy, which is implemented in varying ways in different schools. While a university degree is needed for the position as a student coordinator, this is not required for the position as a teacher assistant. Further to this, different schools implement the strategy differently. In Malmö, among other things, this can involve recruitment of other complimentary competences within the school and involve various forms of collaboration around preventive social work strategies, including recreation centres that organise activities for children and adults residing in the area (see reports from Malmö City, Malmö stad 2019a and 2019b). These varying forms of social work initiatives involve professionals with varying educational backgrounds. In effect of this, the interviewed social workers have different professional tasks and duties and different educational and professional

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[2] See more about this on the Swedish National Agency for Education's (*Skolverket*) webpage: https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/leda-och-organisera-skolan/leda-personal/avlasta-larare-med-lararassistenter-och-andra-kompletterande-kompetenser.

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backgrounds. In light of the limited number of interview persons and due causes of anonymity, we outline their professional backgrounds in a summative way.

Out of our eight interview persons, five are males and three females. Five have a university degree, one a professional degree in social work and four in related social science areas. One has a post-secondary professional degree and three were in the process of completing a university degree. The interview persons have at least a couple of years working experience with their current work, and several have long experience with it though in several cases the interview person has changed the formal position/organisation, while remained with more or less the same work. While only two schools are represented among the interviewed social workers, the two compulsory schools, all professional categories mentioned above are represented.

Mediators

All the participating mediators work with mother tongue tuition and study guidance in the mother tongue. The two positions are regulated by different policy documents. Mother tongue tuition is based on a national curriculum, while study guidance is connected to policy documents on local level; it has not its own syllabus. The tasks and responsibilities of the positions thus differ. The mother tongue tuition is based on a right to tuition, and the parents need to apply for it. The study guidance is decided by the school principal based on an evaluation of the need of the student. The action includes recently arrived students, as well as those who have lived longer in the country. It is recommended that a newly arrived student should be entitled to study guidance for at least 4 years. The guidance is focused on both developing knowledge in school subjects and the Swedish language. The responsibility to organize mother tongue tuition and study guidance in the mother tongue lies on municipalities and schools.

The language and educational background of the participating mediators vary. Three of them work with Arabic, one with Italian and one with Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian. Their education spans fields like; a teacher degree from Sweden or another country, master degree in humanistic sciences or/and languages, Swedish as a second language and diploma in mother tongue teaching. Three of the mediators are employed by the Foreign Language Centre [Språkcentralen], and two by the schools where they work. Their experiences as mother tongue teachers and study supervisors in mother tongue range from four to twelve years. Two are males and three are female, and all of them work in ISCED 1–2 levels.

3. The experience of migrant children from professionals' perspectives

This section set focus on how teachers, social workers and mediators perceive the situation of migrant children through their professional experience. Importantly, in the Swedish case these

experiences are shaped by the migration background of the city as a whole and the involved neighbourhoods in particularly.

Teachers

Since the majority of the students (almost everyone in some cases) that the interviewed teachers teach have migrant backgrounds these are the students the teachers refer to in the interviews.

Educational difficulties and challenges

All the interviewed teachers perceive that many of their migrant students have difficulties and challenges regarding school performance. However, there are differences between the students. Different reasons for these difficulties and challenges emerged in the interviews and are presented in sub themes below.

Lacking basic educational skills

Six out of the 12 teachers talk explicitly about that their migrant students lack basic skills and that they have different prerequisites, which is of importance for their schoolwork. When talking about the different prerequisites they both explicitly and implicitly compare their migrant students with students of native backgrounds. For example, SWE_T7_F perceives that her students do not reach the same achievement level regarding e.g., reading and reading comprehension, as students in other schools she has been working in, schools with hardly any migrant students:

> I also perceive here, compared to the others (other schools), that… yes, but they have very different prerequisites, which I now think a lot about, because here… the level of knowledge is maybe… yes, but I… You see this with the language, reading and reading comprehension, it has not up… I think, I have done this kind of DLS (tests) for example in others… in the other schools and there they reach the norm. And then there are those who stand out, who you know are about a handful who you know are the ones who are already on the move, but who are having difficulties. But they… it is the norm. Here it is the norm or at a low…(SWE_T7_F)

SWE_T1_F says "There can be large holes in the basics of what they bring with them or not as well." meaning that her (migrant) students have large "gaps" in basic skills and lack prerequisites, which she perceives leads to difficulties to achieve passing grades and that she must focus her teaching on having the students achieving passing grades:

> Considering the prerequisites that the students have, or the lack of prerequisites to some extent, there will be a lot of focus and work around getting our students to reach passing grades to be able to move on in life after compulsory school. (SWE_T1_F)

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Lacking sufficient language skills in the language of instruction

This sub-theme relates to the previous since language skills can be seen as a prerequisite, amongst many, for learning the intended subject content in school. All the interviewed teachers refer to language issues in some way or another during the interviews. According to SWE_T1_F many students are very ambitious but will never reach a higher grade than an E (the lowest passing grade) because lacking sufficient language skills in Swedish: "There are students who are very ambitious but who will never get to more than E-level because the language becomes such a big obstacle anyway." SWE_T5_F is of the same opinion when she says "They are very motivated to study, but I think that Swedish itself is an obstacle, because they do not have the vocabulary and so on. But they do their best, I really think." Further, SWE_T5_F, says that this deficit becomes evident when they, write, read and speak and she perceives that many students have difficulties because of this:

> So, I think the language itself and how to use the language, it is clear when they write and read and speak, that there is a shortcoming when it comes to the Swedish language itself. And I think there are many here who have a hard time with that. (SWE_T5_F)

According to SWE_T4_F, the largest challenge is the students' insufficient languages skills in Swedish. She talks about students' "weak language" and that the majority of the students have a "weak language". However, she says that some native students also have a "weak language":

> But the largest challenge is that our students have a very weak language. As a large majority, the vast majority have a really weak language. And then we talk about all ethnic backgrounds. It does not really matter. I have students with an ethnic background other than Swedish who have better languages than those with a Swedish background, or ethnic Swedish background. So, it really does not matter. But I think it's a big, big problem that students come here and have such weak language. (SWE_4_F)

Thus, immigrant students' insufficient language skills in the language of instruction are perceived as a major educational challenge amongst the teachers.

Cultural contexts of education

A third sub-theme that emerges as a challenge that may create difficulties for migrant students' work in school in several of the teacher interviews refers to cultural issues. For example, SWE_T1_F refers to different school cultures when she says:

> And there is something they have a hard time with, it is to evaluate their own and that they want to get an answer that they can only give back, they are… There are several who are phenomenal at memorizing, but to take them the step forward to memorizing, it is not enough for this grade but you must be able to use it. (SWE_T1_F)

In the quote, different epistemological views are evident, meaning that what it means to learn and what knowledge is, is perceived differently by the migrant students of SWE_T1_F in relation to her view. SWE_T11_F also talks about that the migrant students' school cultures in their home countries as different in relation to the school culture in Sweden, which she perceives may contribute to that the students do not take some school activities seriously and instead start to play and do other things then the expected during class:

> We sometimes talk like how the school is in their country and how the school is here in Sweden. And I think they think there's a big difference. Also… Both how the relationships between teachers and students and the teaching methods. We have many students who are used to the teacher writing on the board, you copy it, so that's what matters [?? 0:14:16]. When I say to the students "yes, but what do you think?" This is how it may seem… Then they can, as they like, not take it really seriously, but then they may think that it is jump and play and that you… that it is not for real. So that you can mix this way of teaching, so that you… Yes, for example if I tell them that they should work together. (SWE_T11_F)

Also, SWE_T6_F talks about different school cultures as a challenge, but refers to how education is viewed in the home cultures compared to in Sweden in terms of the importance of education when she says "Their school background looks so different. And also, that they come from different school cultures. And they also come from a home culture where you have different views on how important school is. I think that is a challenge…" This is further elaborated on by SWE_T6_F when she talks about how the students become "caught in the middle" between their "home culture" and the "Swedish culture", which may be considered hybridized cultural educational context, when it comes to what is thought of as important:

> And it is reflected on the students as well, that they end up a bit in the middle. From home, they have a culture where other things are important. Like getting married or things like that. And then they are in school, where they see that school is important. So, they end up in the middle there. And it's a lot of work for them. (SWE_T6_F)

Social aspects

Some of the teachers bring up challenges that relate to social aspects such as students' behaviour, which they perceive as something they need to work with. This emerges when SWE_T10_F says:

> But also, the social part is a big challenge. How to act towards each other, to be nice to each other we work on constantly. What it means to show consideration and respect, that we do not have to like everyone equally, but we still must behave and move in the right way, we work very hard with this. (SWE_T10_F)

Another aspect that refers to social challenges has to do with what SWE_T5_F says about students' difficulties to focus in class, but also outside of the classroom:

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> But I think, by large, it's actually a problem that is actually in the whole school. This is that you must be explicit and that the students are not able to stay focused. And it does not have to be in the classroom. So, it may be in the canteen, that you are impatient, you want your food now. Or out in the corridors, in the hallway, out in the schoolyard. (SWE_T5_F)

This most likely causes a rowdy environment. Also, SWE_T9_M gives account of rowdy working environments. However, he perceives that the students with the largest difficulties with the Swedish language are the students that best focus on the teaching. The rest of the students causes the rowdiness:

> It is difficult to get a peaceful working environment sometimes. They are very social with each other, they are. But some, and especially those who are… as I mentioned earlier, those who have Swedish as a second language problems, they are usually maybe… they are a little more by themselves and… yes, and solve their task, are more concentrated, focused on teaching, than other students, who are more lazy and look at other things and do other things. (SWE_T9_M)

The influence of socioeconomic background and parents' educational background on students' achievement and education

Socioeconomic background, parents' educational background and students' home situation emerge as influencing students' performance in the teacher interviews, which is illustrated in the following quote from SWE_T5_F:

> There may be a difference between the students who have a little harder time at home, because it is so difficult to let go of what is at home, you take it ... you take it to school. And it affects one's studies a lot. (SWE_T5_F)

This is also highlighted by SWE_T3_F when she says that they must compensate for the students' socioeconomic backgrounds when it comes to for example reading and views on education:

> The educational background of the students' parents is also very varied. If you talk based on the socio-economic, then you understand that many students also do not have that large maybe ... What to say? They are not so privileged, but we must also make sure of that and try to compensate. For example, when it comes to reading and views on education and things like that. (SWE_T3_F)

Educational needs

Social and relational needs

This sub-theme refers to the teachers' perceptions of the importance of good relations with their students. For example, SWE_T1_F compares her current working place with prior workplaces, in which students with Swedish backgrounds mostly attended, and concludes that social and relational aspects are much more important at her current workplace. According to SWE_T1_F

the teaching does not work without good relations with the students: "Yes, but also social and relational because that part is so much bigger, it gets a much larger role, it becomes much more important. Without it, it will not work." Also, SWE_T5_F talks about the importance of good relations and thinks that the better you know the students the easier the work gets, which she relates to trust:

> And that ... These students are very dependent on relationships, so to speak. The more you know them, the easier the job will get. Because they always want to test you, can you really trust this person and so on. (SWE_T5_F)

This also emerge in the interview with SWE_T8_M. He stresses the importance of having good relations with the students to make the teaching work. He gives an example of that teachers need to decide whether to stay at the school or not. He perceives that the students can tell if their teacher want to work in the school or not which he thinks impacts the lessons since it makes the students feeling (un)safe:

> But we have students who are very relationship-bound. It is important that you as a teacher here decide to be here, that you want to be here. The students notice if you do not want to be here and then the lessons will be according to that. It has been like this all the time I have worked here in fact, that… because it has been very much rocked on the staff and staff changes a little too often, so that the students have not found any security in it when they change teachers all the time. And now that those students are older, they feel that it has affected their grades. (SWE_T8_M)

SWE_T8_M explains it further by relating having a good relationship with the students to caring for the students. He tells about how he used to go to the boys' soccer games (in his spare time), which he perceived had good effects for his teaching and how the lessons went:

> But we always have… I can also say that we always have… Ever since I started working here, it has been important to care about the students as teachers. And I had for example… I went in my spare time for example and watched the boys' soccer games, for example. And it did a lot for my teaching and how my lessons went. How the students met me in the corridors, and we had something to talk about that was about them besides "how are you?". (SWE_T8_M)

Key factors

Students' opportunities to participate

Several of the interviewed teachers talk about the importance of student participation in terms of student influence. For example, SWE_T5_F stresses this, but also the importance of listening to the students' perceptions of their feelings and needs. However, she makes a distinction between having influence and making decisions and relates it to democracy and the right to have a voice heard:

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> When I come to the students' participation, I want to say that it is important when students are involved and participate. It is important that we also listen to them and that we get to hear and what they feel they need more of or less of. And that ... Because they are involved does not mean that they should decide things, but that is that ... We live in a democracy and it must be reflected in the school as well, where everyone can have a voice. And that it should be heard. So, I think it's important to reflect society. Democracy is important in the classroom. (SWE_T5_F)

SWE_T9_M also stresses the importance to listen to the students' perceptions of their needs, but he also makes interpretations of their work and of more spontaneous conversations, which he perceives as a way of grasping the student influence, which he believes impact his relationship with the students and how he teaches:

> That is, by listening to students' needs, and listening not only by asking, but actually interpreting what emerges in their texts, in the work we do, and the spontaneous conversations we have. So it is not at all the case that I sit and say "yes, but now we will have conversations, now I want to know what to do, because now I will work after that", but it is… Their influence has so many different channels, as I… so, I use very many different channels to get their influence. And it is clear that it affects, that is the relationships I have with the students and what comes up, it affects my planning and my approach, at the same time as I have to relate to the curriculum. (SWE_T9_M)

The importance of having multilingual staff

One of the interviewed teachers, SWE_T6_F, perceives that having multilingual staff in the school as crucial. She thinks it is a large resource and that it creates feelings of safety among the students. SWE_T6_F is not multilingual, but wishes that she was since she believes that it could contribute to another type of contact or relation, a better on, with the students:

> Yes, exactly. We have multilingual staff and I think that is a huge asset here. It is A and O in… If you work at a school in Malmö, you must have multilingual staff. Because it gives a huge sense of safety for the students. No, it can be educators, it can be student coordinators. It can be, only if you are… I myself am not multilingual. But that you have multilingual staff. I wish I could have spoken multilingual when working at a school like this, because you get a completely different contact with the students. (SWE_T6_F)

Gender dimensions

The interviewed teachers perceive that there are gender differences when it comes to migrant students' classroom behaviour, social difficulties, and home cultures, which is exemplified in the sub-themes below. However, when it comes to gender difference and school achievement the teachers' perceptions differ, some teachers perceive that there is a difference in achievement, and some do not. For example, SWE_T5_F and SWE_T6_F perceive no

differences between boys and girls when it comes to achievement in school. According to SWE_T5_F there is no difference in achievement between boys and girls. SWE_T5_F states that the students who have difficulties to achieve in school are both boys and girls:

> No, I do not think it is a large... No, I have never thought that it should be something for boys and for something for girls, but it is actually the same things I see that ... Those who have the difficulties are actually both boys and girls. (SWE_T5_F)

However, SWE_T3_F, says that there is a difference when it comes to students in special need and estimates that one third of the students in special need are girls and two thirds are boys: "Yes. Now I have no statistics in my head, but I would only guess that it is maybe a third of girls and two thirds of boys". Some teachers highlight gender differences in relation to social difficulties and classroom behaviour. For example, SWE_T3_F perceives that there are more boys with outspoken/rowdy behaviour than girls in the school: "Yes, you can see more outspoken behaviour ... Usually comes from the teachers reporting or talking about it, describes it, when it comes to boys…". Both SWE_T5_F and SWE_T10_F perceives that the boys take up a larger space in the classroom than the girls. SWE_T5_F says "The boys take up a little more space in the classroom than the girls do". SWE_T10_F perceives a large difference when it comes to girls' and boys' behaviour in the classroom and describes the boys as louder and rowdier than the girls:

> So, there may be more girls backing if there is something and the boys take up more space. Are loud and this that… And it may not always have to do with the things going on inside the classroom but you they just must be heard and noticed, that it is more so that the boys take that role. So, there I notice quite a big difference. (SWE_T10_F)

Unlike the perception of SWE_T10_F, SWE_T9_M does not perceive any differences when it comes to gender and behaviour in the classroom:

> No. When it comes to girls and boys, it does not matter. It can be… They can be anxious, regardless of gender. It's not like I have to call on the boys more than the girls. I do not experience that. (SWE_T9_M)

Another gender difference that is brought up in the teacher interviews relates to the students' home situations or culture. SWE_T6_F, SWE_T7_F and SWE_T12_F perceive that girls are controlled and cannot for example participate in sports and meet boys whereas boys have more freedom. SWE_T6_F says "I can say this, that of course, some girls become more controlled. They will be. I have experienced that. Depending on where they come from. While boys have a greater freedom. They have. And so.". SWE_T12_F and SWE_T7_F express it as follows:

> And also now… I do not feel it so much, because I am not in high school, but also the thing about watching the girls. And it has been, on some occasions, quite obvious that cousin… a girl cousin has started here, and then the boy cousin starts… You

can see that they keep a complete track of where she is and what she does and so on. So yes, it does occur. (SWE_T12_F)

… And then also… then, yes but with girls, it's also the culture with… you can… yes, you can do and cannot do and so on. I do not say a must is not this with the veil, but many choose to have it and… But that you do not … you are not allowed to meet boys at all for example. You are not allowed to play sports with… A bit like this, like… yes. Yes. (SWE_T7_F)

Social workers

The analysis of social workers' experiences of migrant children builds on interviews with social workers based in or in relation to two compulsory schools dominated by students with migrant background. Their professional positions and experiences vary, and this is reflected in their perceptions. Nevertheless, it is central, that while the large majority of the children they encounter, have migration background, there is an ambivalence in how they describe the children, not only between different interview persons, but also in each interview with the social workers. On the one hand it is stated that the children are like any other children, and on the other that this is a special area with special needs that demand special engagement from the professionals.

A mix of (migration) backgrounds

All interview persons describe their students as dominated by persons with migrant background. This makes it difficult to talk about children with migrant background as a demarcated group; migrant background is the 'normal':

Basically, all students have some kind of foreign background, many are born here in Sweden but their parents have moved here. It is also many new arrivals, actually. And they are from Syria, Kurdistan, and Somalia. (SWE_SW2_M)

I don't know the exact statistics about how it is in school, but the absolute majority of the children living in [name of area] and who comes to school either have one or two parents born in another country, or are born in another country themselves. So, it is a huge diversity among the children and which languages that are spoken in school. (SWE_SW6_M)

I meet children from all over the world. We have … I heard some number saying that we have 28 different native languages in this school. Then, I don't meet all //…// individually, but in this school. (SWE_SW7_F)

If we consider which languages that are spoken in school, this is a huge mix. We have a very large number of countries, if we say so. I would say Iraq, I would say Syria, Somalia, Tunisia, I would say Swedes. I would also say Norwegians, and Danes. In fact, it is a mix of everything. (SWE_SW1_M)

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> In [the group IP works with] more than half are not born here //…// and we don't have a single student with Swedish parents. (SWE_SW3_F)

There are many and demanding problems in the schools. While this in popular debates often is related with the migration background of children, this is not necessarily the understanding of the interviewed social workers, instead social factors, including lack of support from home. However, for newcomers the migrant background impacts.

> In my view, this school is a school like all other. There are conflicts, there is bullying, but foremost there are very strong friendships and the children are very supportive in relation to each other. These are also the things that we try to focus on. (SWE_SW6_M)

> There are many capable students. Then there are many with challenges as well. It is not … I believe that many are suffering from though situations, probably poverty, and maybe with overcrowding at home, which means that one does not … all students don't have support from home //…// many simply don't have the possibility, they can't offer the support that the education … the school demands, to succeed in school. And we do our best to catch them here. (SWE_SW2_M)

> This school is very good at making students pass, but we should maybe put more effort on those students who want to go from a 'C' to a 'B' or an 'A'. Because we have many strong students, but we also have … due to the fact that many, I don't have any figures, but a significant number of new arrivals, who have attended schools in other countries before … so there is relatively much focus on basic skills. (SWE_SW3_F)

An aspect that is lifted repeatedly regards the area *per se*, what can be interpreted as a kind of place-based stigma that impacts on the situation (or rather position) of the children.

> And then, of course, many children feel that eh … I don't have the energy, I will not make it anyway, and [name of area] is no good. (SWE-SW4_M)

> All we in [name of area] are as rich as all others, as poor. It is when we start upper secondary school that we realised how good or bad we have it in relation to other children. (SWE_SW8_M)

> In [name of area] there are shootings, there is open drug dealing, and one doesn't want one's child to be outside when it is dark. (SWE_SW6_M)

Aspects considered central in the experiences of migrant children, includes the situation of newcomers and the management of social problems, as we discuss in the following.

The situation of newcomers

The situation of newcomers is primarily related to the lack of proficiency in Swedish language, but not only. This causes situations that social workers, as well as other professionals, must manage.

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> I would say that the biggest challenge for me are the students that are relatively new in Sweden //…// where social factors impacts hugely on their development. This is when you indirectly must feed with social norms without trigging conflicts. (SWE_SW1_M)

While this sometimes means that a formal translator is engaged, depending on the situation, commonly a colleague or child who share mother tongue with the newcomer can assist:

> In cases when there is a child that does not understands me, I always have colleagues, or just another child, that can translate and help. (SWE_SW5_F)

> I talk a lot of Swedish with them, but sometimes when you look at them, and you know … when they make a face like this and 'Do you understand what I mean?' No, then I talk in [native language]. (SWE_SW4_M)

Students with short time in the country, and who does not yet speak Swedish, might have the knowledge of the subject, though s-/he is unable to show it in Swedish. In the first quote below, the social worker acted as translator, and in the second the mother tongue teacher assisted.

> She asked the questions and I translated them. He answered and I told [the teacher] what [the student] answered. It was shown that [the student] knew, but was unable to formulate it [in Swedish]. (SWE-SW4_M)

> I have many newcomes who are super-motivated, and they have good marks, since we have made some adoptions. For instance, in social science or in natural science, the teachers have worked a lot together with the mother tongue teacher, so the students have made tests in their native languages. So, no, I would not say that it [migration background] is a factor really. (SWE-SW3_F)

Low Swedish language proficiency have implications in the communication with parents too:

> The majority of the parents talk good and fluent Swedish, and are easy to communicate with. It is primarily those who have not been in the country so long, but we still want these to have the same information as those who speak Swedish. This is why we might print our information material in several languages //…// otherwise we hinder their participation. (SWE_SW6_M)

Social problems in the school and neighbourhood

In the interviews, the social workers point to several areas of perceived social problems. Some students have problems with self-control and behaviour:

> But another thing is, it can be persons born in Sweden, with or without migration background, it does not matter, but who has difficulties one could say, regarding their emotional regulation. (SWE_SW1_M)

> Often it is about social difficulties, and they often end up in conflicts or do not confine with adults or that they … this kind of problems. (SWE_SW3_F)

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The mentioned problems also include bullying:

> Overall, the climate is good //…// but there is a … what is striking, is that there are some children who are vulnerable and bullied in the classes. //…// we need to work a lot more with social relations in school, or … they need to get to know each other and have more understanding for each other. They are so quick to throw back 'But it was you who started', it is some kind of revenge. It is a challenge … (SWE_SW7_F)

Several interview persons lift the combination of social problems with lack of Swedish language proficiency:

> We have many children with difficulties. It is one thing to have a school with children with diagnoses, ADHD or autism. But when you at the same time have language challenges, it is a challenge to succeed, and in the view of that, we are pretty successful. (SWE_SW5_F)

> It is a challenge *per se*, when they don't have the language. (SWE_SW7_F)

Gender dimensions

Gender dimensions is a complex matter. Many interview persons first respond that gender does not impact on how they perceive the experiences of the children or their work, other are explicit about it. Nevertheless, several interview persons who first state that it does not impact, later outline how gender in fact do play a role. To a large extent, this is a matter of how 'gender' is understood, but also the different training of persons.

In the first quote below the interview person states that there is no difference, it is just boys and girls. In the second, the interview person argues that the problem *per se* is the same, but the expressions of it vary between boys and girls, referring to that boys are more violent and girls more 'socially verbal'.

> Not at all, it all depends on you if you want to see a difference, but I see no difference. I have daughters, and I find it smooth to build relations with girls in school. So I see no difference, it is boys and girls. (SWE_SW4_M)

> In my view, the problems are the same, but with different hormones. (SWE_SW1_M)

> It is about the same, but it takes different forms, boys are more inclined towards violence while the girls freeze out each other and quarrel. (SWE_SW7_F)

Yet, several interview persons have experiences of differences in terms of out-reach to girls and boys. It is experienced that boys to a larger extent than girls can attend different after-school activities, which is explained as due to that parents are more cautious about their girls, but also that girls have more duties to fulfill at home. In some cases this was actively followed-up by

the social workers, and they also invited the parents to come and visit the after-school activities, a method that has proved to be very helpful.

> If I received a 'no' [meaning that a girl could not participate], I went to the parents and rang on the door bell, and I wanted to know why their children could not participate. Because sometimes, the boy was allowed but not the girl, and I wanted to know why. (SWE_SW8_M)

> I then invited them there, like this: 'Come here with me'. If your child wants to take music classes, they might think … or dance, then they think that dance is something very different from what it is. (SWE_SW8_M)

Contrary, some other of the interviewed social workers, with special training in working with gendered structures of inequality, talk about the impact of gender in a very different way, including LBTQI questions though this is very rare. The interview person describes the problem in the following way:

> It was this hierarchy, that the oldest and the male has the power. As a girl you could not hang around in same places as the boys, it was not considered suitable, for various reasons. (SWE_SW5_F)

> This is a kind of honour culture that does not come from religion, but from culture, that is the man who decides. The patriarchal system … we have reached far in Sweden, but many remain in that [culture]. (SWE_SW5_F)

These structures of gendered inequality impact differently on different children, with girls experiencing control from home being one vulnerable group. The same social worker continues:

> The girls that I experience as most controlled from home, are those with most disruptive behaviour. They are often angry with adults and have difficulties with trust. And they come here and feel provoked when we try to help them to feel free, as they are very controlled in how they can be. They find their ways, it can end up with a lot of absenteeism … as a way to have some kind of freedom. //…// They live out their adolescence in school, as they cannot do it after school. (SWE_SW5_F)

Mediators

Educational performance and needs of the children (from mediator's perspective)

The participating mediators experience that the students who they support with study guidance have difficulties with their educational performances due to lack of sufficiency in the Swedish language. This concern newly arrived students but also students who have grown up in Sweden:

> As I said, the needs are great, the students have great difficulties, both linguistically and otherwise, and there is not enough time [to help them]. […]. Some are born in Sweden so the language is not… if you do not have a diagnosis or other worries so… But usually, it is the language that is lacking. (SWE_M1_F).

According to the mediators, the shortcomings in Swedish has implications on the students understanding of the subject content. The students therefore often need, regardless whether born in Sweden or newly arrived, explanations of the subject in their mother tongue:

> Sometimes some students who were born here, still it needs to be explained to them, for example, about atoms. Teachers explain about atoms, but they need someone to explain in Arabic. Then I can help them. For example, I explain to students in Arabic - "ah, now, I understand". (SWE_M5_F).

The students thus need help with the understanding of the subject content rather than translations of text. The task of the study guidance is then more focused on explaining rather than translating:

> For the most part, it's about explaining, not translating. So, for example social or natural sciences. They don't understand what the teacher sometimes means by that particular question, "have I interpreted it correctly, can she mean so, can she mean that". An example, but often it is [for me] to explain it (SWE_M1_F).

However, the educational performances in relation to the understanding of subject content differ among the students receiving study guidance. This applies in particular to the newly arrived, who differ greatly in terms of level of education and knowledge:

> So, it becomes difficult, and unfair to those who know a lot, who understand immediately when I explain. […]. A bit difficult for me, that I have to talk to someone who knows a lot in very advanced level. While the others, I have to simplify my language, concepts, give some synonyms to concepts, what does this mean. Or sometimes it is necessary to start from the beginning, (SWE_M4_F).

The same mediator is reflecting on differences among the students who participate in her mother tongue tuition classes. Here the difficulties in educational performance is greater for children who grow up in Sweden, compared to the newly arrived:

> Those who are newly arrived in Sweden, they are very good. They read in Arabic. But those who were born here in Sweden, they need more planning or like some who do not know the letters. I have grade six, some do not know letters (SWE_M4_F).

Factors and challenges influencing children's performances

Educational background and socioeconomic factors

The mediators mention several factors that influence the children's performances. As previously has been mentioned, one is the educational background of the students. Another is the educational background of the parents. This affects the students' possibilities to get help with schoolwork at home: "Some who do not have parents with education, therefore they don't get help at home. This is a big problem, I tell the student "read, read, read", but no one helps at home" (SWE_M5_F).

> For example, I have a girl, she is from Syria, dad cannot read and write in Arabic, mom cannot read and write in Arabic. She comes directly to Sweden. If dad cannot read and write in Arabic, how can he help? (SWE_M4_F).

Other factors mentioned are housing and family situations. Some of the students are in the country as unaccompanied with parents stuck in another country. These students worry about their parent's situation which affects their studies. Others do not have a stable housing situation and are therefore always on the move: *"Some who do not have a housing. So, every month they move here and there and, yes, that affects my students a lot"* (SWE_M5_F).

Some of the students also find it embarrassing to have study guidance, which in turn affects their motivation for taking help from the mediators:

> It's also an attitude sometimes. There may be resistance to having study guidance at all. There are those students who, especially after a couple of years in a Swedish school, may think, "I do not need this". (SWE_M3_M).

Sometimes teachers make a decision to end the study guidance, even if the mediator can see that a continuation would help the students in his/her educational performances:

> For example, I had a student who enjoyed studying, who gave no evidence of being tired of the study guidance. He was good. We had probably reached a sufficient level, but I thought, why stop when you have just climbed over the approved line? But then suddenly the teacher said, "I think this student does not need study guidance anymore, what do you think?" (SWE_M2_M)

Gender dimensions

Some of the mediators mention aspects of gender as challenges for the children's educational performance. One is that girls sometimes has to help with household chores, which gives them less time to study. A mediator tells what a girl from grade five told her: "Mom can't handle it herself. […]. I have my responsibility at home. There I have to clean, do the dishes" (SWE_M4_I_F).

The same mediator mentions another challenge; that newly arrived students sometimes have difficulties working in groups, and to take help from other students, especially boys from girls. She tells about a situation where she told a newly arrived boy to ask for help from a female classmate: He said "No, I do not want to ask her". So he thinks it's impossible to ask a friend, and especially if she's a girl. I can ask that guy he said, but not her […]. So in the beginning it will always be difficult (SWE_M4_F).

Other mediators mention individual rather than gender aspects in relation to educational performances. The challenge is related to the level of knowledge in the subjects and the Swedish language:

> I would probably say that there is individual variation. It is rather the subjects, you need to read a lot and perhaps the reading comprehension is not so developed that the student should be able to achieve the goals. […]. It's my experience, it is very much individual variations. (SWE_M3_M).

School inequality

One of the mediators is mentioning unequal schooling system as a factor that affects educational performances of students. She has worked in different schools in the city and observed a difference between schools as regards the share of certified and skilled teachers, materials, school environment, and the students' resources at home. This results, according to her, in a difference in children's educational performances. And it leads to great educational challenges when students move from secondary to upper secondary school: "When the students start upper secondary schools, it's a shame. Too bad for some. They can't cope with it. Some have big problems, and they [the school] ask which compulsory school they come from" (SWE_M5_F).

4. Working with children and their families

This section focuses on practical dimensions of teachers', social workers' and mediators' work with children and their families, including language issues and the way and circumstances of communication with families.

Teachers working with children

In this section different sub-themes that relate to teachers' work with migrant children are presented. The sub-themes all relate, implicitly or explicitly, to language issues. That is teaching students who do not have sufficient language skills in Swedish.

Something more is needed of the teacher profession

The first sub-theme is of a more general character since it includes teachers' perceptions on what it means to teach migrant students in their specific schools. For example, SWE_T1_F compares working with migrant students in the current school with working in other schools with mostly native students. In contrast to her work in other schools she believes the classroom environments in her current school is rougher and that she has to "see the whole student" in new ways and cannot use traditional teaching methods like "teaching by the desk" and having the students read texts and answering questions about the text:

> Even if you focus a lot on the school, it's about really having to see the whole student in a different way, you cannot get away with standing and teaching by the desk and then "read the text and answer the questions", because it does not work in these classrooms because they do not have the tools to handle such a task, there is not a chance in the whole universe that it could work in a good way… (SWE_T1_F)

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Similarly, SWE_T2_F thinks that more is needed of her when working in this school. She cannot assume that that the students know what she expects them to know and she must repeat, explain and clarify for the students to understand the intended:

> So, here I feel that I as a teacher must be… It takes a lot more of me to get them to get… so a level like this where I can feel that yes… So, a lot of things that you can take for granted, that if I say this now I think that everyone has understood but it is not possible to think like this, but you have to repeat yourself and repeat yourself and explain and clarify. (SWE_T2_F)

Also, SWE_T12_F gives account of that teaching migrant student in the current school requires something else and more of the teacher profession than just teaching, which she perceives as tough but rewarding:

> I think, if you want a job where you plan a lesson, go in and complete the lesson, have a test, see what it… what you have… what you can check out from it, then it is not such a job, but you have… There is so much around. But then, on the other hand, you also get more back when… There are many times you tear your hair and say "I never go there again". But the times you succeed, you get back so much more, because what you, what shall I say, invest in listening, you also get back. So, it's more about, in some way, working with oneself. (SWE_T12_F)

Further, SWE_T12_F says that she is not only a teacher, sometimes she also must act as a police officer and psychologist and has to be sensitive to how the students feel and show respect towards students' situations:

> I think it is… I sometimes think that you are both an educator, a police officer and a psychologist, because you have to be so clear in what you want to present in some way. And you also have to be so sensitive to different moods, or different nuances. I think, you have to be very open because it cannot just be one way. You have to have a lot of respect for other people's situations. (SWE_T12_F)

Multilingualism as a resource

Language and how the teachers work with students' language in their teaching make up a large part of teachers' descriptions of their work with children. Different aspects of how they work emerge from the interviews. This sub-theme consists of examples of how the teachers work in relation to multilingualism as a resource, which means that all languages are viewed as resources for learning and used in the classroom. For example, SWE_T2_F says that she tries to use translanguaging as a pedagogy, and gives an example of how they create wordlists in which she also includes English and the students' mother tongues:

> And then I actually try to start a lot from translanguaging, that many times when we create wordlists, I put a column with… where we have words in English or Swedish in one and then I add mother tongue and Swedish. (SWE_T2_F)

According to SWE_T2_F the students reacted negatively in the beginning when she started to encourage to use the mother tongue: "In the beginning they reacted, thought what mother tongue, I do not know what… huh, no, then it is nothing for you. But for some students, it is very crucial whether they have that column or not". SWE_T2_F and SWE_T11_F use the students who share mother tongue to explain in their mother tongue to each other when someone does not understand when Swedish is used:

> Sometimes when we cannot explain a certain word so just yes, now I know that many speak Arabic here, what is it called in Arabic, I say to someone. So, it says, aha, then the rest have taken over. So, it's pretty open with different languages. (SWE_T2_F)

> … I also had a student today who did not… it was a math task and no, we could not… I could not explain well enough to her. So, then I got a boy who speaks her language and yes, I thought it still seemed like she understood better when he explained to her. Or he just said the answer, I do not know. (SWE_T11_F)

SWE_T6_F claims that the teaching does not have to be one hundred percent in Swedish and that students should get the opportunity to show their knowledge regardless of what language they use to present their knowledge. She gives an example of having students write in the language they prefer and thereafter translate it to Swedish:

> … And it is not obvious that the teaching needs to be one hundred percent in Swedish, but I usually say that "but let the student write in the language he can, and then he can translate it into Swedish. But let him show his knowledge regardless of language". Language should not be an obstacle, but it should be an asset at this school. (SWE_T6_F)

According to SWE_T12_F it is all about communication and the importance of being able to communicate to understand each other both teacher and students. SWE_T12_F claims that you have to use all possible methods to achieve communication and gives translanguaging, body language and visual support as examples of tools for communication:

> So, I think that in general in our workplace you have to work very supportive of language, and you have to be open to using all possible methods to achieve communication, so that is really the main focus, that is both translanguaging and body language and visual support and all possible ways you can imagine. So, the most important thing is really to reach each other in a communication, and somehow understand each other, help the children understand each other. (SWE_T12_F)

Language-oriented teaching

Like the previous sub-theme this sub-theme also includes language and how the teachers work with language. However, this theme does not include multilingualism as a resource. Instead the examples of the teachers work in relation to language is focused on students' skills in Swedish.

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For example, SWE_T4_F claims that it is important that the students use Swedish to develop their skills in Swedish:

> But the important thing is to always try to get the students to speak, that's the most important thing, because they speak… We have students with us who speak very little Swedish, they mainly speak, for example, Arabic. So that it is only inside the classroom that they meet Swedish. And then I get… I think it's my job to make sure they actually speak Swedish. (SWE_T4_F)

SWE_T4_F also gives examples of how she works with words to have the students understand. For example, she says that she works with synonyms and that she prepares her teaching by reading the student texts and pick words that she thinks the students will have hard time to understand and then together with the students work with the words (in Swedish):

> So, the primary thing for me is to work with synonyms all the time. That as soon as I say something that is possibly an adequate word in the context, I try to give the students synonyms one after the other so that they can understand more easily. And I also do that in Spanish, so in that way I work language-oriented there as well. Then it is very important that whatever I do, that I know the text before and have been able to pick out the words I think are difficult for the students. But then sometimes I also let the students get to the board, if they do not just raise their hand or go in and check on svenska.se what a word means, they can come up on the board for example and write words and then we discuss words meaning. (SWE_T4_F)

SWE_T11_F also focus on words and claims that it is important that the students acquire a vocabulary: "And then we collect words and… It's a lot about collecting words and collecting concepts, they have to get a vocabulary, so it's super important."

Scaffolding strategies

Different scaffolding strategies emerge in the teacher interviews. Scaffolding strategies aim at moving the students forward in their work. A scaffolding strategi that both SWE_T2_F and SWE_T11_F use is the "teaching and learning cycle" (*cirkelmodellen*), which is a teaching and learning cycle model presented by Gibbons (2002). The cycle includes four phases in which a specific text genre is; introduced and contextualized, modelled, practiced together in class and last individually performed by the students. SWE_T2_F says "I work a lot with scaffolding materials, for example I use the circle model quite often". SWE_T2_F and SWE_T11_F say:

> Then you end up with that they shall produce a whole text on their own in the last step. So, it's a way to scaffold. And really, you could say that it pretty much permeates my way. Because every time I do something, I show it like this, I become a model for the students. (SWE_T2_F)

> … We work a lot with writing joint texts, we work a lot according to the circle model, that we start in the joint and then we break it down to finally be able to do it

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ourselves. So that, yes… And then there is very, very much visual support, very much…(SWE_T11_F)

Visual support, also mentioned by SWE_T11_F in the quote above, is a recurring scaffolding strategy mentioned in interviews. For example, SWE_T6_F says "A lot of visual support is another strategy… " and SWE_T8_M says "I use pictures as often as I can, really".

SWE_T8_M do not only talk about visual support, but also about using synonyms and concretizing and contextualizing concepts for the students to understand them:

Yes, that there is… In each subject you have a number of concepts, for example, which it is important to concretize for the students so that they actually understand it. So that you can have a perspective of "easy to understand" all the time, and feel free to use both synonyms and visual support and other methods. (SWE_T8_M)

Digital tools

Some of the teachers describe different digital tools that they use when working with their students, most of them relate to language issues. One is Studi (studi.se), which the city has purchased for all the schools to use. It holds short films in different school subjects. The films are presented in different languages. The students can choose what language they speak in the film and what language the sub-titles are written in:

And then we add this that "how can we organize teaching that all students can take part in and benefit from?" And then there are also these questions when it comes to language. And there we try to use the tools we also have. Where the city of Malmö, for example, has bought Studi, a tool where you can watch different short films in different languages and school subjects. (SWE_T3_F)

There is a computer program called Studi. There you can choose the language. It is films. Short films that are related to the goals and the curriculum, depending on which year you are in, and in all subjects. And then… The films are about five minutes. And then you can choose which language you want the film to be in, and which subtitle. Which language the subtitle should be in. (SWE_T6_F)

SWE_T11_F also use visual support and films, but also teaching materials that are translated to the students' mother tongue:

There is a lot of pictures, there is a lot of films, there is a lot… We have quite a lot of digital tools nowadays, for example we have a teaching material that translates everything into the students' language. Then you can work in parallel with both their language and Swedish. (SWE_T11_F)

Also, SWE_T4_F, uses tools that translate teaching materials. But she also uses other digital tools that are not translating tools. She thinks it works really well to use digital tools such as Kahoot and Quizlet Live in her teaching. When using these tools, the students have to collaborate and interact with each other:

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I work a lot with digital tools, in all different ways. And I notice that it works very well for the students, regardless of whether it is just a moment's play with Kahoot or Quizlet Live, it works very well. And I do not know if you know Quizlet Live, but there is… The whole point is that they work in randomly selected teams and answer, as it looks now in the system, you can always just enter twelve questions. And the whole point is that students should talk to each other to find the right answer. So, every student has an answer, or their answer on their computer. So, you must work with each other to find the right answer to the question. And it's also a way to get them to discuss and interact and talk to each other at all. (SWE_T4_F)

Teaching strategies enhancing student agency

This sub-theme involves teaching strategies, which not explicitly refers to language and scaffolding. To challenge the students so that they do not relax too much and end up doing nothing during class SWE_T4_F uses two different strategies, which she believes are successful. She times the student when they work and after a certain time, she randomly picks a couple of students who must share their work to the rest of the class. She thinks that this strategy also helps her to detect students in difficulties. When randomly picking students, she uses sticks with the students' name on which draws from:

I work with timing all the time. So, I take out my cell phone and then I time the students. It has proven to be a success factor for me because in this way I get a better grip on all students. Then I have these name sticks with… written each student's name on a stick. So, after I say they'll do something and they get a certain number of minutes, I randomly pick a couple, maybe five, name sticks. And then those students get to tell what they have done. And this is also a way to constantly increase the level, challenge the young people so that they do not relax and do nothing. Because that's the big risk, it's just that they do nothing. That they can sit a whole lesson sometimes and do nothing because they do not get started. And if you work the way I do, I think it's easier to pay attention to students who actually have difficulties. (SWE_T4_F)

SWE_T5_F starts lessons with warm-up tasks or games to get all students involved. These tasks may consist of different things but the aim of them is to get all students started, to participate and feel safe:

I think it is important to create an environment where everyone feels safe. When everyone comes to school or is in the classroom that you are safe with yourself and you get to be who you are. And that's why we usually start a lot with this kind of warm up games or tasks and so on. It's just mostly to get everyone started, so that everyone feels a little ... So that everyone can have room, quite simply. So, I think that is a good way to work a little. That you come in and you talk, and you start softly. I actually think so…(SWE_T5_F)

SWE_T9_M uses some other strategies such as for example EPA (Individual reflection, Reflection in pairs, Reflection in the whole class), which has become a common strategy in schools in Malmö. He also uses peer feedback and certain reading strategies:

> Yes, I often use EPA, individually, in pairs, together. I use reading strategies, before, during and after reading. I use peer feedback. Yes, write together. So, it's. Yes, how much really, if you just think about it. (SWE_T9_M)

Extra support – study guidance in mother tongue

Newly arrived students and students in need of it may be provided *Study guidance in the mother tongue* which focus on both developing knowledge in school subjects and the Swedish language. Teachers think of it as valuable and useful. For example, SWE_T12_F says "I thought, we have very great benefit from the fact that we have access to many study guidance supervisors, and that they can then support in the mother tongue". SWE_T10_F and SWE_T11_F give examples of how the work with Study guidance in the mother tongue and why it is of importance:

> Like all the social science subjects and natural science subjects that are quite complex, many new words where understanding is very important in order to be able to connect different things. There, it is very valuable to be able to connect it to the mother tongue and above all these subjects it is great are to, for example, take help from the study guidance supervisor to go through the concepts so you get an understanding of it, to then be able to talk and participate more easily. And when we then discuss in Swedish or watch a film in Swedish, or you have to answer. It helps them because then they have something to relate it to. So, it is a bit closely related, that you need to have it … also in your mother tongue even if you have not come that far in your language development. (SWE_T10_F)

> You can let the mother tongue teachers do… rehearsal. After I have gone through something, the mother tongue teachers can repeat what we have done. Or they can work in the meantime, it's a bit what you do… It's a bit maybe also about purely logistical, I will go through a new theme (content), and I will go through it on Wednesday… So those who have study guidance after Wednesday may rehearse it. But right now, I'm trying to stay a week in advance in the study guidance supervisors'… I have a Google classroom for all study guidance supervisors, so they go in and get their information there. So, I try to put it there a week before we will work on it in class. So that they are a week ahead. (SWE_T11_F)

Challenges – not enough time and resources

Working with migrant children involves several challenges. Many of them are connected to the students' in-sufficient language skills in the language of instruction. Challenges, which also relate to this to some extent, that many teachers brought up during the interviews were that they perceive that more adults are needed in class. It is not enough with one teacher. They also

believe that they need more time. That is more time for their work, but also more time together with the students. For example, SWE_T5_F and SWE_T10_F say:

> Yes, but there are some challenges. There are many who come from ... There are many who have difficulties and I feel it can be a challenge, to be one person in the classroom and try to meet all needs. And you feel that time is not enough. Because I cannot ... It's hard to spend maybe 15 minutes on someone who needs a lot of help when everyone else is yelling at you. So, it can be a challenge, the time itself. It feels like it is not enough, quite simply. (SWE_T5_F)

> And then I can think a bit that, as I said, language again rules because we need a little more time to go through concepts, different concepts, put them in different contexts and then work on. And sometimes it can actually be about very [do not hear 0:23:58] simple concepts, that is, if you can now say so, which many may not know about. But I think it's also something that does not slow down, but it is also something that is important. And then it kind of takes maybe a little longer to get to where we should, because we have to take care of the foundational first, before we move on. (SWE_T5_F)

> I would probably say that in a school like this, it would sometimes have been good to have more adults in the classroom because there are so many different ones. There are many times that I need to sit down and really help one by one. But I have twenty-five children and I may have ten that I need to help one by one. It is a very short moment per student, I wish there could have been more. So that …. Yes, more people who can help and support the children in their work on site. (SWE_T10_F)

Teachers working with families

The interviewed teachers' experiences of working with migrant children's parents, which emerged in the interviews, are presented in various sub-themes below.

Parents as important resources

According to the interviewed teachers, parents are viewed as an important resource when it comes to their children's schooling, which is for example expressed by SWE_T12_F and SWE_T5_F: believes that involving parents contributes to a larger engagement says:

> And my first year here I did not actually have contact with so many parents or guardians, but over time I have actually noticed that it is important that they are involved in their children's schooling and that when they found out more about how it went for their children, then they became more engaged. And this close contact with the home is extremely important, I have actually understood now, after some time here. (SWE_T5_F)

SWE_T5_F believes that involving parents contributes to a larger engagement.

No interference from the parents

Recurring in the interviews were the teachers' experiences of that parents do not interfere with their work because they are of the perception that the school and the teachers should take care of their children's schooling. SWE_T5_F says "I think a lot of parents leave a lot of this that you are a teacher, so you should fix this and you should try to solve this", implicitly putting the burden on the teachers to solve everything by themselves. SWE_T11_F says "I had a parent who said to me last week "when the child starts school I leave the child in your hands, and then it is you who decides…". SWE_T2_F relates this to culture and compares it with how it is in other schools:

> while here we get almost… come on, we must sort of pull out… Because there you then have with you a culture like that yes, but the school, they take care of their stuff, which is positive in a way. But we also want a participation with the home and there we get to work a little more for it, you do not need that in other schools.! (SWE_T2_F)

SWE_T9_M relates it to that the parents view the school as an authority:

> In Swedish as a second language, I have non-existent contact with the parents. I feel that there is a… with those parents, so there is a view of the school as if the school is an authority, and the school knows what they are doing. And if the school says so, then my child listens to it. (SWE_T9_M)

Communication and parent meetings

Some of the teachers talk about difficulties to communicate with parents. For example, SWE_T8_M talks about it as a hindrance and relates it to the parents' educational background, being of the opinion that parents with a low level of education do not communicate with school in the way he expects them to do:

> Communication with the parents has been an obstacle, you could say. The level of education is generally quite low in this area. And study habits are probably not very highly ranked out here, or what to say. It is not… There are very few here with higher education. (SWE_T8_M)

SWE_T3_F perceives that interpreters are needed when communicating with parents, but complicated: "It is more difficult when you cannot have this direct communication, but it must go through an interpreter. But that's the way to do it". Also, SWE_T6_F brings forward the importance of using interpreters when communicating with children and their parents, which she relates to the importance of having a voice in the conversation:

> Then we have interpreters. Always an interpreter in meetings. Because there it is also that there should be the same conditions for all students to be able to bring their opinion, but also for the guardians to be able to present what they want and what

they think and what they feel and so on. So, interpreter, very important. (SWE_T6_F)

Some of the teachers talked about having difficulties in getting the parents to attend parent meetings. A parent meeting is a meeting, arranged by the school when parents of a school class meet their children's teacher/s. The meeting taking place after the school day. For example, SWE_T11_F says that the parents do not attend traditional parent meetings and instead suggests meetings in which the children are involved and present their work and, in that way, have parents coming to the meetings:

> When it comes to not attending a parent meeting, yes, parents do not come to a parent meeting, it's that simple. So, then I think that then you cannot have traditional parent meetings. If I want my parents here, then I cannot stand there and tell you that you have to bring sports clothes with you to the gym and fruit for the break… So, it is not possible to have traditional then. Then you must think "what can you do instead?" A fairly simple way to do this is to get students to force their parents. It's pretty easy, at least with the younger kids, you may not be able to do this with high school students. But with slightly younger children, it is very easy to do something that they should show to the parents. And if the children go home and beg their parents to come, well, then they will. And all parents want to look at their children when they sing, or have made a drawing, or are going to read or whatever they are going to do. They think it's important. So that this to stand there and inform about everything, yes, I do not know… I also do not think it is so fun myself. I have to do it, but… You can do it fun, something fun, and then you can bring these points. (SWE_T11_F)

SWE_T8_F and his colleagues has stopped arranging parent meeting since the parents did not attend them, but he thinks the communication with parents have be comer better since the school employed study coordinators (*elevkoordinatorer)* whose job involve having contact and communicate with the children's families:

> We have not invited to parent meetings in recent years. Not among the older students, anyway. I do not know exactly what the younger ones have done. But since we got student coordinators a few years ago, the contact with the parents has become much, much better, of course, because it is more staff who have it as their job. (SWE_T8_M)

Parental support

During the interviews the teachers primarily talked about parental support as a deficit. SWE_T2_F says "the majority of our student group lacks this support outside of school, that we become a… we have a very big responsibility there". SWE_T10_F compares the parental support in her current school with another school she used to work in and think it is a large difference in favour for her previous workplace:

But there were more children there who had a good support from home. Which you see here, that here there are more children like… where the support is not as obvious, where the children are expected to sort out their school by themselves a little. That it should just kind of roll on. So, there is absolutely a significant difference. (SWE_T10_F)

SWE_T12_F gives explanations to why parental support is lacking, all of them referring to the parents and their backgrounds:

I think that… So, we have parents who for various reasons, substance abuse, or mental illness, or so, are not able at all. Then we have those who would like to, but of educational… that is, they lack proper education, who cannot. And we have parents who cannot help the children if they get a Swedish homework, because the parents may not be able to speak Swedish. So there… No, it is very varied. Then, of course, we have people who have come from other countries with an academic education, they can be supportive of their children, not least because they know how to study. (SWE_T12_F)

SWE_T10_F also refers to parents' insufficient Swedish language skills, but also says that many parents think of school as important and pushes their children in a positive manner:

It is very different, and I think that many times it can be some language difficulties, that it is a difficulty of course to understand how the school works and what is required as a parent. But many parents absolutely think that school is very important and push their children in a positive way. Then we also have those who are quite absent who are not really there, who of course make it difficult. (SWE_T10_F)

SWE_T5_F also refers to the language difficulties and gives examples of what kind of support parents can provide and not provide:

Yes, that is, those who can do it, that is sometimes. I also think, it is also a language barrier for them. I think those who can or if there are older siblings ... in the family, they also help. And if there is something we need, for example, remind the students or, "make sure now that he or she picks up his or her computer or has the charger with him or be on time". Then the parents help us a lot. But when it comes to knowledge itself, with homework and so on, then there is not much there. (SWE_T5_F)

SWE_T9_M gives another perspective when parents have too high demands on their children's school achievement which may have opposite effect on their children's schoolwork:

Yes. And I think many parents think they are supporting their children, but it will have the opposite effect. Children distance themselves instead, turn off, do not listen, because they feel that they are just being scolded. They feel that they are not good enough, that they are not good enough. Those demands exist… Because when I ask my students in SVA about "yes, what will you be then?" Yes, then they should become doctors, or dentists, or midwives, or something like that, which requires high

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grades. But then they also say "yes, but I would rather be a hairdresser or makeup artist, and I can be, but first I must have a real education", they say. (SWE_T9_M)

Social workers

As already mentioned above, the interviewed social workers have different educational and professional backgrounds, and they also have diversified tasks in relation to the two selected compulsory schools. Importantly, these two schools have recruited 'complimentary competences', a rather new professional category tasked to work with the more 'social aspects' of the school.

Holistic approach to education, also outside of school

Many of the interviewed social workers point to the importance of a holistic approach to the students and their families. This includes not limiting their work to the ordinary school tasks and opening hours.

> The school contains everything, and then the school in [name of area] has a bigger task than other schools in Malmö //…// the personnel working here are not just teachers that go home after work, but there are so much more in the role … you are a parent, a friend, you are so many different things. They can't just teach and then go home. Well they can, but it is not sustainable in the long run. (SWE_SW8_M)

It is in the view of this that both complimentary competencies and what could be referred to as complimentary activities, that is different forms of after-school activities can be understood. This work involves both the school and time before and after school, and it is not limited to the students, but involves their families and neighbourhood relations as well.

Systematic tools and social relations as a tool

A number of tools are used by the social workers in the participating schools. These are better described as tools for the inclusion of all students, than integration tools for migrant children. Among the tools that are used in a systematic way, there is one called absenteeism stairs (*frånvarotrappan*) and another called the consequence stairs (*konsekvenstrappan*). However, the use of these tools seems to rely on strong social relations between the professionals and the students. Overall, the importance of building strong social relations with the children comes through in all interviews.

> My main tasks include absenteeism and attendance at school is prioritized, to identify patterns of absenteeism and attendance, and to try to prevent absenteeism. If there is deviance or pattern in our attendance reporting system, which I check three times each day, then maybe something needs to be done. Contact with the student, contact with parents, see to plans and collaborate with [other professional groups]. The, I would also emphasize the meaning of social relations, the power of social relations, in order to support the students. (SWE_SW1_M)

> [I am tasked to] relieve the teachers, so my main tasks are to manage absenteeism reports and violation reports. (SWE_SW2_M)

> The tasks are about attendance and absenteeism, that is what we are doing most of the time. Then of course the social part, conflicts, offences, reports … everything outside the classroom, really. All contacts with parents that do not regard the teaching, the teachers do that. Meetings with the school counsellor, the social authorities, we are involved in basically everything except teaching. (SWE_SW4_M)

The absenteeism stairs is a plan developed by the municipality for how to communicate with students and parents about absenteeism[3] in a stepwise manner if absenteeism remains. The consequence stairs is a plan, also this developed by the municipality, for how to handle situations when a student is interrupting the classes or behaves inappropriately. Another tool mentioned is motivating interviews (*motiverande samtal, MI*). This method is used to increase the attendance in class among the students. Solution focused (*lösningsfokuserat*) is also mentioned as a method.

> All of our personnel are trained in something called solution-focus. It is a bit challenging to summarise, but it is a method to find the solution among the person you meet, and that our function is rather to guide those who have a problem or a dilemma by asking questions. (SWE_SW6_M)

Overall, strong social relations with the students are emphasized. Some social workers have this as their main task:

> We shall create some kind of security at school, where you can sense that adult support that you can trust always is available. And to establish trust, you have to work a lot with social relations, so building social relations is our first priority. And we seek to start early. (SWE_SW5_F)

Working with relations in school, involves working with the relations between the students, which is sometimes done in semi-structured ways:

> I have had discussion groups for guys and for girls, together with my colleague. She had the girls' groups and I the boys' groups. The we worked a lot with macho culture, vulnerability, and how you do … we talk about norms and values. (SWE_SW1_M)

Recreation centres, often located in connections with schools, have similar tasks, but with a broader out-reach. Their activities target all residents in the area, both children and adults. Their activities are free of charge and respond to demands of the residents as regards timing and content. They serve breakfast in the morning to children before school starts, during school

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[3] See plan om Malmö City webpage, link: https://malmo.se/Bo-och-leva/Utbildning-och-forskola/Grundskola/Moduler/Grundskola/Om-grundskolan/Franvaro-och-ledighet.html.

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breaks they organise activities, and after school they organise activities again for both children and adults. The activities for children are planned so that they fit with the school schedule. Popular activities include sports, cooking, arts workshops, music, and discussion groups. Social workers are also engaged in community work, aiming at increased security in the area. Also, this work is done in collaboration with the school, and school is represented in the managing board of the community work. The community work applies the CTC (Community That Cares) method, following a decision from the Malmö City.

> Our task is to work to create good conditions for children and youths in [name of area]. While you often check on … for instance if a child smokes, but we focus on the reason behind it, not the problem *per se*. //…// So we look for risk and protective factors and in this we use surveys [that we distribute in the area]. And then we gather all engaged in this area, so that we all work towards the same goals, including the residents and the youth. (SWE_SW8_M)

In several interviews it is emphasised that in order to do social work in these schools, and in these neighbourhoods, social relations with the children and their parents is a prerequisite.

> I have actually said this many times when we have been in meeting with teachers. If you are not prepared to build relations with our students, they you are in the wrong profession. It sounds harsh but it is the truth, that's just how it is. As an adult, you must feel 'I love this, I love building social relations, I love to be with the children'. If you don't have that feeling, they you are in the wrong profession, it is kind of logic. (SWE_SW4_M)

Mentoring and relations with families

Another task that social workers have regards mentoring. In many schools this task is the responsibility of the teacher, but in Malmö it is sometimes transferred to so-called complimentary competences. This is, as described in the reports referred above (see Malmö stad 2019a, 2019b), organized in different ways across schools.

> My prime task is mentoring //…// and that is, related with this, contact with parents, all this with coaching and mentoring appointments, talks with students, following-up on basically everything they do. Inquire into reports, absenteeism ... that is, map if someone has a lot of absenteeism. So, yes, it is very broad, it all depend on the student's needs. //…// I foremost focus on students with special needs, but I also 'hang around' during breaks. (SWE_SW3_F)

This means that the mentors, when needed, have a lot of contact with parents.

> If I work with a student, that I am really struggling with trying to get the student motivated, and the student does not get support from home, then I sometimes feel that I am working alone. I then sometimes bring this up with the parents, 'Please help me, so that you motivate from one side, and I from the other, so that we really help your child and my student'. (SWE_SW4_M)

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This work typically follows the consequence stairs mentioned above, as this quote describes.

> When I have given the student a number of chances and told them 'Now I am going to involve your parents', I call the parents and have a meeting with them. I tell them that 'Now I have talked with your son', or 'your daughter', 'and it has continued'. Now you must help us to help your son/daughter. The students never get offended, because they know that [name of IP] have given them one, two, three, four chances. The parents appreciate it a lot. (SWE_SW4_M)

Mediators

Task and role of mediators

All the participating mediator work with mother tongue tuition and study guidance in the mother tongue. They all have to handle the different aims of the two positions, which is that mother tongue tuition is focusing the development of the mother tongue of the children, while mother tongue in study guidance is used to help students to develop knowledge in school subjects and the Swedish language. The two positions are regulated by different policy documents. Mother tongue tuition is based on a national curriculum, while study guidance is connected to policy documents on local level; it has not its own syllabus. This means that the task of the study guidance can be interpreted differently on school level, for example, regarding the time that a student can get help:

> It [study guidance] is interpreted differently in different schools, some are very consistent with the first four years. Some schools finish it after the four years, because they assess that after four years it may not be mainly the language that is the challenge. While other local policy documents say that you can have study guidance for as long as needed (SWE_M3_M).

Even though there are differences between schools regarding the organisation, there are common themes in the participating the mediators talk about their work. One is how they define their role. They all pinpoint the idea that the mother tongue is of major significance to a child's language, identity, personality and educational development. For this reason, their role is to give students with another mother tongue than Swedish the possibility to develop language and knowledge in parallel.

> It [the role] is actually part of an equivalent school, so that the students get a chance or opportunity to develop at the same pace as their classmates, in the language in which they are strongest. So, I think it is part of that all students to get the opportunities or help they need. So, my mission is worth gold and I'm passionate about it (SWE_M1_I_H).

> Thus, the study guidance provides an opportunity to reduce friction when a student goes from another countries school environment to Swedish environment. (SWE_M2_M)

I am a resource that offers support, compensatory support, for, most often, newly arrivals. (SWE_M3_M)

Some of them also define their role as cultural mediators between students, teachers, social support and the family

> The principal here, she often says "You are needed here at school". You know, I understand the situation here, and I also understand the situation at home. So, I mediate in the situation, in a way that parents can understand what I mean. (SWE_M4_F)

> I have contact with all teachers, I meet the curator and tell her. She also tells me sometimes when she needs to call parents, I help her. I know all about what problems families have. I help translate the forms. I translate what the social service says. (SWE_M5_F)

Content of work

The work consists of study guidance in groups or individually either in or out of class, depending on if the mediator is employed by the city (Språkcentralen) or by the school. When employed by Språkcentralen, the mediators usually work separated from the class. This because they are working in various schools and with limited time for each student:

> Study guidance is too rare and too limited in time. And it is usually only once a week. It is usually once a week, because we get our hours distributed among schools and students. So, I have, been assigned four hours with nine students. Then, some study guidance may be in a group. (SWE_M3_M)

When employed by the school the mediators are more integrated in the routines of the school and the classes. They can therefore more often work with the students in class, especially if their language is used by many of the students. This is for example the case with Arabic:

> But, for example, if I only have three students, that means one hour to three students in the ninth grade. There are many speaking Arabic, still they need help. Therefore, I don't only count the three students. I am in the classroom when teachers explain what they should do, what they want to do or how the test should come. When she's done, I come forward and explain in Arabic directly after her. (SWE_M5_F).

This, and another of the participating mediators, work specifically with translanguaging. Concretely, this means, as shown in the quotation above, that they work closely with the teachers, explaining and translating into the mother tongue and then back to Swedish. Another mediator explains:

> It happens all the time that I sit with the teacher, the subject teacher. The teacher asks him [a student], he explains in Arabic, and I translate. It helps. The student feels that "Yes, I can. I can, it's just the language". (SWE_M4_F)

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However, whether working in class or outside, the dependency on teachers planning is the same for all the mediators. The teachers do the scheduling and are then supposed to share it with the mediators. However, the sharing is carried out in different ways and sometimes not at all:

> Either the teacher has sent material in advance or we must work without it, me and the student. But when it comes to the older students, they know most often what they need help with. (SWE_M1_F)

> The majority of teachers set up their planning in Google Classroom and they invite me so I can follow it. But often it's just to come completely unprepared and then get on [with the guidance]. (SWE_M3_M)

> All the mediators talk about themselves as being generalists, meaning that they have to know a lot about the different subjects that the students need study guidance in. This also means that they need to have general knowledge in many subjects, which requires a lot of preparation: "I have to know everything. You know, I have to prepare everything. If the student asks me, then I have to be able to answer. It takes time for me to prepare, to read it all" (SWE_M4_F).

Strategies/tools

Two of the mediators mention explicitly translanguaging as a tool in their work with study guidance. One of them works with the circle method, meaning that she and the teachers use the same theme but in different languages. The teacher in Swedish and the mediator in Arabic:

> We decided that we will work with the family [as a theme]. So, I used the same pictures. First, she found some pictures for different families. Size, skin colour, and so on. I had also from our countries. […]. So, we had the same thing, discussions about pictures. And also, some concepts that she uses in Swedish, I use the same concepts. (SWE_M4_F)

Other tools mentioned by the mediators are online dictionaries, Wikipedia, Google classroom for sharing the planning of class, and reading services (Studi.se, City of Malmö).

> I use fact that I can acquire online. And then there are, for example, reliable dictionaries or Wikipedia pages or NE [National Encyclopedia), which many use as teaching material. (SWE_M3_M)

> The city of Malmö is now developing a great reading service. That's really good. All books are translated into different languages. […]. And they develop some reading service that finds concepts. Under concepts you will find all subjects from grade four to grade nine. […]. They add movies and the film changes language on different topics. Arabic, Kurdish, Turkish, Albanian. […]. During the film there are concepts of words, explanation of words in Swedish and you can change the language. It explains words in different languages. (SWE_M5_F)

One of the mediators would like to have access to more lectures, courses and to have the possibility and time to exchange experiences with other mediators, principals and teachers.

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> As I said, more time, more lectures, for example, gathering all study guides, to exchange experience. Ask, for example, The Language central, or all principals at all schools, gather all study guides and discuss problems, how to solve problems. (SWE_M5_F)

Challenges

The major challenge mentioned by the participating mediators' is the limited time they have in relation to the student's needs:

> With conditions, I think a lot about time. Students need time, students need help. It feels like it cuts to the heart sometimes, that students can but they just need adjustments in their mother tongue. They need more help. (SWE_M1_F)

> Study guidance is too infrequent and too limited in time. It is usually once a week, because we get our hours distributed among schools and students. (SWE_M3_M)

Another major challenge mentioned by most of the participating mediators is that both study guidance and mother tongue teaching has a low status; some teachers do not understand the purpose and meaning of it, they do not appreciate it and do not cooperate:

> Sometimes I feel like a cog in a machine, and I would like to have… get more of an overview of the situation. (SWE_M2_M)

> Not everyone really understands the point of study guidance and does not understand what to do with it and does not really see how we should collaborate. (SWE_M3_M)

> More appreciation to all study supervisors. Leave them to develop students in the right way. Leave them to feel important at work, to make something important. […]. I don't think everyone has a good chance of getting good colleagues. But to me it's great, but some meet teachers who do not appreciate and respect them. (SWE_M5_F)

Other challenges mentioned is when the mediators have to give study guidance to students in different grades and subjects, in the same group at the same time:

> I can have three middle school students, but different classes, different subjects. So, it may be someone who should have guidance in Swedish, one in social science, one in natural science. (SWE_M3_M)

Another is that children in need of study guidance sometimes do not get it. Teachers do not remove students from study guidance groups. This means that others cannot join the group, due to the limited time that the mediators are given:

> Right now I am in such a practical situation, that I have some students, their mentors and teachers judge that there is no need [for study guidance], but they are not very good at dismissing the student [from the group]. This means that I have students who are registered but who do not need it. But until they are removed, I actually have a bunch of newly arrived students standing in line. Because I only get a certain number

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of [total] hours. Hours have to be removed at one school for me to get hours to another school. (SWE_M3_M)

Another challenge is that some of the mediators do not have designated workplaces due to that they work in several schools:

> Too often, study supervisors have great difficulty with premises, especially if you are not at one and the same school. You go into the classroom and pick up a student and then you go out and around and look for a room to sit. (SWE_M1_F)

Working with parents

Two major themes emerge in relation to the mediators work with parents. One is that the contact with the parents differ depending on whether it concerns study guidance or mother tongue tuition. It is the teachers' responsibility to have direct contact with parents in relation to study guidance, and the mediators in relation to the mother tongue tuition.

> My contact with parents concerns the students' development [in mother tongue], those who risk getting their grade lowered, then I contact the parents in good time for a meeting. (SWE_M1_F)

> There are different roles depending on whether it is study guidance or mother tongue teaching. The head teacher is responsible in the first case, in the second case I am more independent. Have my own talks with parents and students. (SWE_M2_M)

> As a mother tongue teacher, there is quite a lot of parental contact. And I have also had some parental contact regarding study guidance. Then it is on the initiative of the parents, because they are interested. […]. I have really tried to make a clear distinction between mother tongue and study guidance, because it should not be their [parents]decision or desire or anything. But they have wanted to talk about it. (SWE_M3_M)

The other theme is that some of the mediators see themselves as cultural mediators between school, parents and children. One task in relation to the mediations is according to one of the mediators to explain how things work in the Swedish school:

> I usually talk to parents all the time. I have to explain to them all the time, because I know the language, I also know their culture. I understand their culture. Some parents understand very easily. And it is directly noticeable on their children's integration into school, and they make friends very easily. And also learn easily. While the others do not understand. (SWE_M4_F)

The mediation also includes explaining why it is important to let girls do activities such as swimming and sports:

> For example, why it is very important for girls to swim, or why it is very important for her to dance in sports class. So all the time it is, you can say, a little challenging,

that I have to explain to them all the time, and every year and every month, that it is
a new society. (SWE_M4_F)

According to the mediator, the explaining how it works in Sweden also relates to gender and
religion:

> I don't want to go deep with this with religion, but sometimes it gets difficult.
> Students are always influenced by their parents. For example, I noticed, "you are not
> allowed to talk to that girl because she is a Christian and you are a Muslim", and so
> on. So I have to explain to both parents and students all the time. (SWE_M4_F)

Another of the mediators pinpoint the importance to quickly get the parents "onboard". She
sees the parents a resource in the mother tongue tuition:

> When I started, I right away called all the parents and I told them "it's only an hour
> [mother tongue tuition]. If I only work with your children myself, they cannot
> develop Arabic. So please, you have to help me. I will share information. I'll try to
> explain. But you have to help me, otherwise there will be no results". (SWE_M5_F)

5. Framing integration and evaluating policies

In this section focus is on integration policy, tools and programs as these are perceived by the
professionals. Integration is a contested policy area, and it has continuously been both critiqued
and revised since its introduction (see Dahlström 2004 for a review). In the view of this, we
shall first contextualise integration policy in Sweden.

Integration policy was introduced by a government decision in 1975. At this time, integration
policy was formulated in terms of 'immigrant policy' (*invandrarpolitik*). This means that it set
focus on rights and obligations of the immigrants, and societal responsibilities in relation to
them. Three goals were formulated: equality, freedom of choice and collaboration. Basically,
the equality goal meant that immigrants should be on equal footing with nationals, the freedom
of choice-goal that immigrants should be able to maintain religious and cultural identities from
their countries of origin, and the collaboration-goal that tolerance and solidarity between
nationals and different groups of immigrants should characterise the work towards the two
previous goals (see government bill Prop. 1975:26 and government report, SOU 1974:69). This
approach to integration was critiqued over time. It was argued that its one-sided focus on
immigrants as a homogeneous group, disregarding the diversity among immigrants, including
e.g. varying levels of education, imposed and strengthened a division between nationals and
immigrants, or 'us' and 'them', which was directly counterproductive for integration. Finally,
and not least in the view of how the size of immigrated population had grown over the last
decades, in 1997 a new direction of integration policy was laid down. This turn meant that
particularistic policy tools were degraded and that integration policy as a designated policy area
was abandoned. Instead, 'integration' was to be mainstreamed within all relevant policy areas
(see government bill Prop. 1997/98:16). This approach to integration is also contested, in the

post-2015 situation more than ever. Nevertheless, this historical development of integration policy has implications for the implementation of the CHILD-UP project which cannot be disregarded.

While this depicts the development on the national level, on the local level municipalities might have different approaches to integration. In our case, Malmö is not only a city with a large share of foreign-born residents, it is usually also depicted as a comparatively 'welcoming' city in Sweden (see e.g. Hansen 2019). This can, for instance, be seen in its approach to integration, which was laid down in a commission work for a socially sustainable Malmö. The commission work was completed in 2013 and reported in a number of reports[4]. Central to its approach to integration, is that it set focus on the whole of Malmö, that inequality and segregation are to be understood as relational dimensions of the city. Obviously, this fits well with the national policy of 1997, seeking to mainstream integration into all relevant policy areas.

It is against this backdrop, along with the demographic situation as presented earlier, that it can be understood that 'integration', at least to some extent, is a contested concept among professionals in schools in Malmö. This also implies that it was challenging for us to ask about 'integration' using this precise word. It did not only make us feel uneasy with the interview person, but it did also not serve to make the interview person talk about their integrational work as a designated way to work with migrant children since a large majority of the children have migrant backgrounds. While we in some cases have asked the interview person to reflect upon the meaning of 'integration', in most cases we have reformulated the question and asked about equality of opportunities in school (*likvärdighet i skolan*) for girls and boys, with and without migrant background. Below follows an analysis of how teachers, social workers and mediators responded to this.

Teachers

Teachers' definition of integration

In some of the interviews the teachers reflected on their understanding of integration. For example. For example, SWE_T5_F believes that integration is important and that she needs to work more with it. She relates integration to out-of-school activities. She thinks integration is difficult to achieve since many students spend most of their time in their neighbourhood and do not meet other children from other areas in the city:

> And to try to activate them in a way after school. That the job also continues there. That they go to different activities or sports or whatever it may be. But it's hard, because sometimes it's like this area is their whole world. There are many who do

not know the way to Gustav Adolfs torg for example or Stortorget (two squares in city centre of Malmö), they do not really know where it is located or how to get there. And there are also many who are afraid, when it comes to attend upper secondary school, that, "oh, now we will meet a lot of others, who may not look like me or come from the same area as me." And it's also a little hard. So, integration I would have liked to work with more, but I do not really know how, because it is a bit difficult. (SWE_T5_F)

SWE_T6_F mentions shortly how she understands integration when she says "Integration is when you… when everyone feels good and participate. Then it does not have to be our way, but it is about creating an understanding of each other's differences, in some way". SWE_T9_M refers to integration in similar ways when he relates it to students being friendly and hang out with each other regardless of where they come from. He also gives an example of how he works with integration:

No. I think integration, that's how you integrate, but both in… with other people here at school, and we are a multicultural school, here are many students from different parts of the world. And the nice thing here, is that you hang out and you are friends, no matter where you come from. Of course, sometimes there can be some conflicts, absolutely. But just this, that everyone is friendly and kind. (SWE_T9_M)

I work with something we call student coaches, and that is that we educate students in grades two and three (in upper secondary school) in different inclusive exercises, and then they go out and work with grade one students and do these exercises. And that's twice a year. It is in August, at the school start, for newcomers to come here to feel safe and taken care of, and then in April, to remind people of the importance of actually respecting and having a democratic attitude. That's what it's about. (SWE_T9_M)

SWE_T12_F talks about that she does not want "we and the others" and therefore her students need to have other ways of expressing themselves, both verbally and gestures/bodily, than how they express themselves with their friends and in the school. Implicit in this is a need of integration in terms of adaption to a norm of how to act, behave and talk. SWE_T12_F explains it further when she says:

Your way of expressing yourself is not wrong, but you must have more ways of expressing yourself in your luggage, because your way will not work everywhere. It will… So, that in a way you understand… You understand the rules of the game in some way, so that you know that you can play with different pieces on different playing fields, that you give a luggage that works even outside our world, so to speak. And it's not that easy, because it's very… It's tough. And it can also be the case that… I mean, a way of expressing oneself can also be a sense of security, something common within in the group. And therefore, I think it is important to say that it is not dirty, but you must have something else with you, which you can use in

another situation, therefore otherwise, in some way, it will not be really… it will not
be true, somehow. (SWE_T12_F)

Collaboration with institutions

The teachers give examples of several different collaborations, both internal and external
collaborations. However, there are also examples of collaborations that may be both internal
and external. One such example is the collaboration with study guidance supervisors (in the
mother tongue), which depend on if they are employed at the school or if they are employed
centrally in Malmö city. If they are employed centrally, they work at several schools and thus
are not a part of the working teams with the other teachers in the schools which hinder the
collaboration, whereas if they are employed at the school, they are a part of the working teams
and collaborations between the teachers and study guidance supervisors can be organized.
Below this collaboration is presented in the sub-theme *Internal collaborations.*

Internal collaborations

In this sub-theme some examples of the different internal collaborations that emerged during
the interviews with the teachers are presented. Examples of internal collaborations, that is
activities and collaborations with professionals within in the school, are the student health team
which includes school nurses, student counsellors, special pedagogues and the study and career
counsellor, the school library, the student coordinators, study guidance supervisors in the
mother tongue and the teachers in school-age educare and special teachers.

When it comes to the collaboration with the study guidance supervisors SWE_T6_F says "I
think the study guidance supervisors (in mother tongue) are super important. They are like… If
school is to be equal, they are super important." SWE_T5_F thinks the collaboration works
very well since they now are included in the work team at the school compared to before when
they were not. Together they both plan the teaching and assess the students' work:

> Yes, well, I think the two I work with ... I think we have a very good relationship. A
> very close relationship too. We also try to co-assess together, so it's not just that we
> plan, but we do this here together, even though I'm the head teacher. But we do this
> together. So, I think it works very well. And now they are much more involved than
> they were before. They are part of the work team. Before it was like it was ... Yes,
> but here were the teachers and there were study guidance supervisors and mother
> tongue teachers and so on. But now they have really included them into school to ...
> (SWE_T5_F)

Several of the teachers mention the school library as a partner that the collaborate with. The
following quotes illustrate what this collaboration may consist of. SWE_T4_F says "We
collaborate on an almost daily basis with the Media library in the school. They are very involved
in our teaching projects. And they also have their own…, book circles and…other challenges
for students". SWE_T9_M says that the library offers "book attacks" to inspire students to read

and SWE_T12_F get help from the library to choose books that match both the students' reading level and their age and interest:

> Yes, they (the library) run an information today about… yes, how to search for books and such. And then they also have… they offer something they call book attacks, and then they come out into the classroom and present a book, and read a little from it and so on, to inspire students to read. And I usually invite them to that, because I think it's nice. (SWE_T9_M)

> And we have also worked a lot together with the library, bringing in fiction, where the content is about teenagers, although the text might be more suitable for grade three, or… So that you do not make it childish, because you make it easy. (SWE_T12_F)

SWE_T5_F mentions that she collaborates with the study and career counsellor to motivate the students in their schoolwork:

> Yes. Yes, I use her as a little motivation for the students when you feel like they are starting to give up a little, that, "do not forget now that you wanted to enter this program (in upper secondary school) or become this. And you need these credits and ... "A bit like a reminder when you feel it starts ... the motivation starts [does not hear 0:41:31] a bit". (SWE_T5_F)

Another collaboration that some teachers mention is a collaboration with student coordinators. This collaboration is highly valued by the teachers which is exemplified by SWE_T8_M when he says:

> Everyone is happy. 100% of the teachers. And we have done that survey in three rounds, I think. Same result every time. So that the student coordinators are a huge resource, and you should have that in more schools, I think. (SWE_T8_M)

> Mm. Yes, and we teachers have a tight schedule when we are here, and we are not available for the students if they need to talk or if a conflict starts or if someone gets a threat somewhere during the day. There is always an adult they can talk to and turn to. So, it will probably be their little security, you could say. It's something we teachers have wanted, to get unloaded with that bit. Especially important at a school like this where there are some conflicts that erupt from time to time. Then it is the contact with the homes that can always be improved, and with the student coordinators it has improved. And when there are certain reasons, they are also included in our meetings with parents and students, whether it is about too much non-attendance or social… social problems or something else. So, the student coordinators are a huge strength we have at this school. (SWE_T8_M)

External collaborations

In this sub-theme examples of the different external collaborations that emerged during the interviews with the teachers are presented. Examples of external collaborations are activities

arranged after school hours or out of school activities and collaborations with other authorities and organizations, such as e.g. homework support, sport clubs and children and youth psychiatry and social services.

There is also a central student health team in the city of Malmö, which the schools and teachers can turn to for advice and support when it comes to special needs education, which is an example of a collaboration that SWE_T3_F mentions. This is not a permanent collaboration; it is initiated when the school needs support. Two other collaborations that some of the teachers mention, are BUP (children and youth psychiatry) and social services. For example, SWE_T7_F says: "Yes, social services are a part, BUP as well". SWE_T7_F describes a collaboration when both social services and BUP are involved:

> We collaborate when it comes to specific students who have difficulties, where there is contact with BUP ... Or they for example are in a treatment. And it may be that the social services also are included. And then we have SIP meetings. (SWE_T3_F)

> But I would like to say coordinated individual plan (SIP-meeting). And it is exactly this that it should be coordinated. That we are then school, social services and children and youth psychiatry together in meetings with the parents so that the parents do not have to go to several different meetings. And that we should get a consensus and a plan ahead for the student. (SWE_T3_F)

Another example of collaboration in one of the schools is a collaboration relating to different sports, that is students getting opportunities to exercise different sports. However, since the teachers are not involved in this collaboration, they cannot say anything about it. Teachers in two of three schools mentions collaborations which involve homework support. However, they do not know which organisation that provide it. SWE_T4_F also talks about organizing school during the students' school breaks. It is arranged all over Malmö, but from the interviews it is not evident if it is a collaboration within the city or something the individual school organize.

> We also have… What is it called? The math cottage or math centre, the math cottage. Yes. They come here once a week for two hours and help the students. Then we have during each holiday, but you have that [do not hear 0:30:15] all over the city of Malmö, holiday school. So that students can come to school when it is sport break, autumn break or Easter break for that matter, we have a holiday school. And it is also a great resource. (SWE_T4_F)

Another collaboration that SWE_T9_M mentions is with Pedagogisk Inspiration (Pedagogical Inspiration), which is research and development department in the city of Malmö. The department provides different ways of support in different school related areas to schools and teachers working in the city of Malmö.

Social workers

Social workers' definition of integration – Enabling diversity

In response to questions about how 'integration' is perceived, the social workers respond in varying ways. Several of the interviewees agree on that integration is when each student is seen and heard, when each student feels recognition, and can receive the support he or she needs to have agency. One interview person expresses this in terms of assisting the student to reach his or her goals. In the view of another interview person, this also includes measures to secure that all professionals can work in appropriate ways, so that equality of opportunity in education can be strengthened.

Several social workers point to the relevance of transculturality, for 'integration' in diverse schools and areas. Many of the interview persons did not only talk about cultural diversity among the students and their families, but also among themselves and how this adds on to their understanding of integration:

> An advantage of growing up in an area like this, is that you easily can shift between cultures. This means that I am not a stranger //…// I don't know how to explain it, it is just part of childhood, you grow up with persons from different countries, from different worlds. I know my native language well … it helps. The world becomes less foreign. But, in some parts of Sweden you might not fit in ... you are a stranger, but the world to me is not so foreign. (SWE_SW8_M)

> My look means that they feel some kind of belonging, that is since I am a person of colour. //…// This is an advantage since it makes them feel more secure in contact with me. Many have prejudices about Swedes and how they think, and are afraid of authorities and even society. (SWE_SW5_F)

Several social workers point to the importance of after-school activities. Below follows one quote from a social worker who experience a lack of this, and then another social worker who has positive experiences of such activities:

> It is … in this area there are very few after-school activities, that is out of school activities. We have, in school we have … well right now activities are cancelled [due to the pandemic], but we have school sports. We try to work with activities //…// so that they can get out and learn about what there is, have the guts to try things out. (SWE_SW7_F)

> Much of this is automatic. For instance, around 2015 when many fled from Afghanistan and Syria, and [name of school] received many. Then we had to adopt our activities, in collaboration with the school, so that they could participate in our activities. //…// and something we soon discovered, was that often the activity *per se* did not demand a language. Rather, if you play football, you learn the language by doing. //…// By participating in activities, you are part of a context where you share more than the language, you share an interest, and it is fun to be there,

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everybody are there with the same purpose. So, we have seen advantages as regards activities. (SWE_SW6_M)

Inclusion measures

The interviewed social workers apply different measures for the inclusion of children. One is to tone down differences, and instead see to what is common.

> And instead of working with national cultures, that is where they come from or where we come from //…// I usually say that cultures also exist in schools. We have a school culture that we work with, not national cultures. //…// when I talk with students about transculture, they say 'yes, but I am Arabic and she is Somali', and I answer 'yes, but I am talking about the school culture. We are talking about school cultures. What is your school culture?' 'Oh, then we have the same'. (SWE_SW1_M)

Another set focus on positive reinforcement. It has its background in the fact the parents were commonly contacted when something negative, a problem, had happened. In contrast to this, and with the purpose of building positive relations with parents they started to contact parents to tell something positive.

> We have a method that we use, that we call parental contact. It stipulates that all personnel each week shall call a minimum of three parents to tell them about something positive that their children have done. (SWE_SW7_M)

In this language plays a role. All of the social workers interviewed speaks Swedish and English, and these languages are used in school. Some of them, speak additional languages that they can use in contact with students and their parents. Sometimes, the social workers ask colleagues and other children to help with translation.

Collaboration

Among the interviewees, collaboration consists of collaboration between organisations and between professions, which can occur both within and across organisations. The interviewed social workers collaborate in both ways, for instance, within their schools they can be part of the Student Healthcare Team, which is interprofessional. They can also collaborate with other instances than the school, and interprofessional collaboration within schools is lifted as central. This includes the teacher that is trained to teach in the subject, the special teacher trained to assist students with learning disabilities, and the social pedagogic trained to manage behavioural problems in the classroom. All these competencies are needed in the classroom, in collaboration.

Mediators

When asked about equality of opportunities, some of the mediators point out mother tongue tuition and study guidance as efforts on national level to create equality in school. The positions

give according to the mediators, opportunities for migrant students to get support in their strongest language by persons who share their language and culture:

> It [the position] is actually part of an equivalent school, so that the students get a chance or opportunity to develop at the same pace as their classmates in the language in which they are strongest. So, I think it is part of that all students get the opportunities or help they need. So, my mission is worth gold and I'm passionate about it. (SWE_M1_F)

> You could say that mother tongue teachers and study supervisors are the only persons, in my opinion, who can help students to integrate in a very good way or bad way. (SWE_M4_F)

According to one of the mediators, study guidance can provide an opportunity to reduce friction when a student transfer from one country school environment to the Swedish. Mother tongue, however, is according to him the best ways to integration: "Mother tongue tuition is the king's path, I think, to integration. […]. Mother tongue teaching is good particularly for those who want to develop both their Swedish and other cultural personality" (SWE_M2_M). Translanguaging is also mentioned, by two of the mediators, as tool for achieving an inclusionary school, "Translanguaging, I noticed that it increases student participation. And it helps a lot with the integration. It does not set a limit or obstacles for the student, for example, that he may not use the mother tongue" (SWE_M4_F). One of them explains that she uses translanguaging to include all (Arabic speaking) students in the classes where she works:

> I am in the classroom when teacher explains what they should do, or how the test should be. When she's done, I come forward and explain in Arabic. She accepts that I repeat after her in Arabic, because many of the students who are weak and do not pass the subject, they need to understand. That's why she leaves me "yes, okay, you can explain to them in Arabic". (SWE_M5_F)

Recommended actions for school equality

Two of the mediators mention actions that can lead to school equality. One action is to raise the status of study guidance and the mother tongue tuition by integrating them to the school's regular schedule. This would increase the students' sense of pride and belonging:

> Now this year, exactly this year, mother tongue is now on the students' schedule. They have Arabic, in the schedule. Then the students get the feeling that "Okay, the mother tongue is in their schedule". It is not outside the school schedule. It also gives a bit of that feeling. (SWE_M4_F)

Another is to have more certified teachers in schools where students have difficulties to achieve the knowledge goals: "They have to count the percentage of teachers that are eligible. […]. All schools must have good teachers" (SWE_M5_F). The two mediators also think that mixing and spreading students would be one way of achieving school equality:

> Most of the students here are Arabic speaking, that's not good. We have to spread them to different schools. Not living… I don't know, of course it is a democratic country, so it… not… living in the same area, it is not good either. It is better that they are spread to other areas. (SWE_M4_F)

> First of all, why is everyone who is an immigrant only in one school? […]. Get a visit … how to say … a visit from Rosengård, students from Rosengård go to Limhamnsskola for a day. You know, it's better to get in touch. It is now that it is being built. […]. And the same thing in high school. There are many high schools, "yes, you are Muslims, go to this high school. Yes, you are Swedish, go to this high school. It's not good. (SWE_M5_F)

Collaborations

All the participating mediators mentions that they mainly collaborate with other professionals in the schools where they work. Some of them mentions that they collaborate with other study supervisors through a network organised by the Malmö city. One of them collaborates with a researcher who wants who is writing about translanguaging. She has had meetings with researcher on two occasions but then the pandemic came and made it difficult to collaborate:

> I met her twice, but since it became corona, now everything is digital. […]. She visited in the classroom when I had study guidance and asked some questions. And then she decided to come in mother tongue, but the corona came. (SWE_M5_F)

6. School during the pandemic

In the Swedish case, the impact of the pandemic is probably more diffuse than in the other country cases. In Sweden, the process of closing down schools were slower than in many countries, and the close down was only partial. Initially, only upper secondary school (ISCED3) were closed down, this happened from the spring semester of 2020. Secondary schools (ISCED2) were closed was closed down in varying degrees and periods in the spring of 2021, depending on the local situation. Close down of primary school (ISCED1) was overall avoided. In the Swedish study, most interviews conducted with professionals, were conducted before close down, and hence in the interviews experiences of this is limited. Further to this, in the Swedish case, issues and consequences of the pandemic was not covered in the interview guide. Overall, the pandemic did not come through as a strong theme in the interviews. Naturally, this does not mean that the pandemic did not impact on schools in Sweden; it did, and not least were people in the housing areas of the two compulsory schools affected by it. This is, since in Sweden as in many other countries, the pandemic struck hardest among poorest (Grander and Salonen 2020).

Nevertheless, some issues did come through, primarily in the interviews with teachers. Hence, what is reported here was not covered in a systematic way in the interviews and it is limited to the interviews with teachers.

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The pandemic and the situation it created in the schools were mentioned in two of the interviews. SWE_T1_F talks about negative consequences whereas SWE_T2_F talks about the consequences in a more positive way. SWE_T1_F talks about the hard work of getting the students to school when the pandemic first started in March 2020 to be able to provide teaching in school:

> It was directly a very hard effort to get the students to school in order to be able to maintain teaching at all. And this is what also happens, that when… because they may not have the same support from home, they cannot get help at home with schoolwork and it may be home environments that may not be so study-promoting. (SWE_T1_F)

SWE_T1_F provided both teaching online and in class at the start to be able to provide teaching for all students. However, she does not think this support is enough and talks about providing support after school hours. She also talks about who is worst effected and why when they have online teaching:

> And then I notice… It is those who have the toughest, they are hit absolutely hardest by a change like this. And something that is also very, very, very clear, is this with the structure, as soon as you leave the schedule, it becomes chaos. It is very difficult with changes for them, it is difficult when there are teacher changes … new teacher, if there are changes in the schedule, if it is a schedule-breaking day. For example, we had to break the schedule for a while because it was… half the teaching staff was sick … … It is important with the safety that they know what is expected, they know what will happen when they come to school, that they know… surprises are not good //..// It quickly gets very turbulent. It quickly gets very turbulent. (SWE_T1_F)

In contrast to SWE_T1_F, SWE_T2_F talks about positive consequences of pandemic situation, which led to a re-organisation of how support is provided for the students:

> Yes, but we probably thought that in the last semester when there was so much with corona and we had to reorganize a lot due to a high absence, both among students and staff, so they ran some targeted efforts against some groups of students, which proved to be very successful. We also noticed that the whole staff became more flexible suddenly, that we had to train in this that oh, okay, what is most important now if I have to… if I only have this time to do it. So, we actually got to test this and tried to take such positive things with us further. And one of them was probably that they reorganized this with support measures. So, we have two special need teachers in grades four to nine, who now work ins small workshops, support workshops. (SWE_T2_F)

7. Recommendations

This section set focus on recommendations to policy and decision makers that emerged during the interviews.

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Teachers

During the interviews the teachers talked about what they need for their work to be improved. Many of the teachers then mentioned more time and resources (which was reported above in…). However, also other suggestions were made that may enhance the students' agency and participation. These suggestions all relate to the students' multilingualism. For example, SWE_T6_F believes that they have to continue to develop their work with translanguaging: "I believe in this with translanguaging. So that there… continuing training in it and developing that work I think would have been good". SWE_T11_F has two suggestions, one which involves a more flexible schedule so that teaching can be organized based on the students' needs. The second involves a larger and closer collaboration with the study guidance supervisors (in mother tongue):

> But then, at the same time, I sometimes think that you need… A more flexible… I think that… Much of the school is so strongly framed. You should have 40 minutes of math, then you should have 40 minutes of Swedish, then you should have 40 minutes of SO, then you should have it… Now I work in high school. There is a schedule that governs every step we take. We always have a schedule to follow. Had you… It's super fuzzy, but if you had not had it, but instead departed from the content areas, themes where you could work together, where you could see what the students needed to achieve the goals in this content area. There were opportunities for larger and smaller groups, where there were opportunities for different teachers with different competences, not least linguistic. (SWE_T11_F)

> So, if you need something more that would be a little more reasonable, it is very much about more support in the students' language. More study guidance (in mother tongue) time. It would have been the very best thing, in fact, to be able to work together with the study supervisors more. During several more hours a week. And also get opportunities to plan together with them, because as it is now, I give them the tasks. So, we do nothing together, they translate what I want them to do. And it would have been very interesting to work with the study supervisors. (SWE_T11_F)

Social workers

Several of the interviewed social workers pointed to the need for more resources, but they also offered other recommendations. One type of recommendation has to do with dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, in school but also on a more overarching societal level.

> I think that one needs to work much more with the transcultural approach, and one have to work much more solution oriented. One has to find many more solutions, not just look at problems, but solutions. (SWE_SW1_M)

> Politicians must secure that everybody have the same opportunities in Sweden. And then that is not 'when you come here you must learn Swedish, pull yourself together, you must fight'. I wished that everybody could understand, that everybody could

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study a course in norm critique, and understood that we must meet people where they are and offer them appropriate conditions. //…// and not see everything as immigrant problems, but our problem. Not 'we' and 'them', but 'we'. The children in this area who are doing the worst. And this must be fixed, as simple as that. (SWE_SW5_F)

As a more concrete kind of recommendations, regards the complimentary competences in school and the after-school activities. Several interviewees plead that these measures shall not be withdrawn but remain. According to their experiences, these resources are needed, and they make a difference.

Mediators

Mediators provided several suggestions to improve their work and thus the effect of students' education, participation and agency. The majority of the mediators' experience that they are excluded from teaching teams and discussions about teaching methods. One recommendation from their point of view is thus to have more structured, long term and intensive collaboration with class teachers, subject teachers and the mentors of the student. This would require that the mediators get more time for tuition and study guidance, and that they can concentrate their work to fewer schools. Another suggestion made, related to discussion about methods, is shared training and knowledge development (e.g., seminars, workshops) with teachers, principals and other study supervisors. This would give professionals working with migrant children possibility to get access to materials and methods, and a collaboration that can result in a more cohesive evaluation of students' needs. The mother tongue tuition and study guidance have according to the mediators a low status. Shared seminars and knowledge development could higher the status of the positions in the municipalities' school organisation. Two of the mediators recommended working with translanguaging as tool to increase student participation and feeling of belonging.

8. Conclusions

The conclusion is divided into a summary of the key findings, consequences of the pandemic and a discussion of theoretical implications.

Summary of the results

Teachers

In all interviews with the teachers, migrant students' difficulties and challenges regarding school performance were brought up, which have consequences for students' possibilities to participate in the schoolwork and thus influence their agency. The difficulties and challenges brought up were related to students lacking basic educational skills and having insufficient language skills in the language of instruction (Swedish). Another challenge that was brought up by the teachers refers to cultural issues, for example differences between the school cultures

in the students' home-countries and in Sweden and thus also epistemological issues. Further, social aspects such as students' behaviours, socio-economic backgrounds and rowdy classrooms were brought up as educational challenges. These are all explanations for their migrant students' performances in school, or rather lack of achieving the expected. These explanations are all grounded in a deficit perspective, meaning that the students do not achieve the expected because of lacking or having deficits in the Swedish language and culture. These kinds of explanations are highly problematic since they enable for blaming the students themselves for not achieving because of their backgrounds and thus (re)produce categorizations of migrant students as students with deficits. Categorizations of people may work their ways into the lives of the people and become a way for them to define themselves, in this case as migrant students with deficits, which have consequences for students' identity formations and agency.

An aspect that is emphasized in the interviews with the teachers as important for migrant students' schooling is the relationship between the teacher and the students. The teachers seem to think of good relations with students as very important, when working with migrant students compared to when working with students of native backgrounds. This includes trust. It is important that the students feel that they can trust their teachers. Thus, creating a good relationship between the teachers and their students may enhance students' agency.

Some key factors for the situation of migrant students that were identified from the interviews with teachers were migrant students' opportunities to participate and have influence. For example, the importance of listening to the students' voices, perceptions of their feelings and needs were stressed.

The interviewed teachers perceive that there are gender differences when it comes to migrant students' classroom behaviour, social difficulties, and home cultures. However, when it comes to gender and school achievement the teachers' perceptions differ, some teachers perceive that there is a gender difference in achievement, and some do not.

When the teachers talked about teaching migrant students different themes emerged. All the themes, implicitly or explicitly, relate to language issues. One theme that emerged was *Something more is needed of the teacher profession* (in relation to teaching students with native backgrounds). Another was *multilingualism as a resource,* which consists of examples of how the teachers say they work in relation to multilingualism as a resource, which means that all languages are viewed as resources for learning and may be used in the classroom. This stands in contrast to a deficit perspective and may enable for students to enhance their agency in the classroom when using their mother tongue for learning, which also may facilitate the students to form identities as multilingual learners with valuable resources.

A third theme, *Language-oriented teaching,* in contrast to multilingualism as a resource, focus on developing students' skills in Swedish, which may enhance students' agency but since

Swedish language skills are the desired it may also contribute to students trying to hide their migrant identities. When it comes to the theme *Scaffolding strategies,* "the teaching and learning cycle" (*cirkelmodellen*), a model presented by Gibbons (2002) and visual support were mentioned. Some digital tools were also mentioned by the teachers when talking about teaching migrant students. Tools that translate into the students' mother tongue were mentioned, but also digital tools to enhance student interaction like Kahoot and Quizlet Live were mentioned by the teachers. These tools may all enhance students' agency since they promote student interaction or facilitate learning by using translating tools.

Other teaching strategies that may enhance students' agency, mentioned in the interviews were warm-up activities, timing student work, name sticks and EPA (Individual reflection, Reflection in pairs, Reflection in the whole class). Another aspect that are valued by the teachers in their work with migrant students is *Study guidance in the mother tongue.* It means that newly arrived students and students in need of language support may be provided *Study guidance in the mother tongue* which focus on both developing knowledge in school subjects and the Swedish language.

Working with migrant children involves, according to the teachers, several challenges. Many of them are connected to the students' in-sufficient language skills in the language of instruction. Challenges, which also relate to this to some extent, that were brought up during the interviews were the perception that several more adults are needed in class. The teachers do not think that it is enough with one teacher in the classroom. The teachers are also of the perception that they need more time. That is more time for their work, but also more time together with the students.

According to the interviewed teachers, parents are viewed as an important resource when it comes to their children's schooling, since involving parents contributes to increased engagement in their children's schooling. Recurring in the interviews were also the teachers' experiences of that parents do not interfere with their work because they are of the perception that the school and the teachers should take care of their children's schooling and not the parents. When it comes to communication with parents some of the teachers talk about difficulties to communicate with parents. One hindrance that is mentioned is related to the parents' educational background, meaning that parents with a low level of education do not communicate with school in the way that is expected. Another difficulty for communicating with parents that is mentioned is that interpreters are needed and therefore teachers perceive that they cannot have a direct communication with the parents. During the interviews the teachers primarily talked about parental support as a deficit, that is a they perceive a lack of support from the students' parents, which they relate to the parents' backgrounds.

The teachers' perceptions of integration are related to out-of-school activities, meaning that these activates enable for migrant students to meet students from other parts of the city, and to

students' opportunities to participate in school. One teacher says that it is about creating an understanding of each other's differences.

The teachers give examples of several different collaborations, both internal and external collaborations. However, there are also examples of collaborations that may be both internal and external. One such example is the collaboration with study guidance supervisors (in the mother tongue). Examples of internal collaborations, that is activities and collaborations with professionals within in the school, are the student health team which includes school nurses, student counsellors, special pedagogues and the study and career counsellor, the school library, the student coordinators, study guidance supervisors in the mother tongue and the teachers in school-age educare and special teachers. Examples of external collaborations are activities arranged after school hours or out of school activities and collaborations with other authorities and organizations, such as e.g. homework support, sport clubs and children and youth psychiatry and social services.

Social workers

In their work with children and families, the interviewed social workers foremost emphasise a holistic approach to the students and their families. Besides engaging with the families also in social activities, it also involves engaging with them both during and outside of the ordinary school, in evenings and weekends. Social relations are emphasised as the most important tool in their work, and the schools have employed so-called complimentary competences to focus on and strengthen this. This is also a way to enabling teachers to focus more on teaching, and less on social problems when these occur in school. The social workers also use a number of systematic tools. Interestingly, the systematic tools are more focused on control, while the relational work, that is more focused on strengthening the agency of the students, is less systematic.

The interviewed social workers, out of whom several have migrant background themselves, frame integration as enabling diversity among the students. This means that they strive to strengthen the agency of girls and boys in the superdiverse cultural environment that the studied schools comprise. Sometimes this involves the use of several languages, not least in situations that involve newly arrived students.

Mediators

The challenges in educational performances of the students that the mediators work with are related to lack of sufficiency in the Swedish language. This concerns newly arrived students as well as students born in Sweden. Other challenges are low levels of educational background of parents, socio-economic factors such as poverty and housing situations. Some of the mediators also pinpoint challenges related to gender, for example, girls having to take responsibility of household chores. Other factors mentioned are related to structural aspects such as low numbers

of certified and skilled teachers, lack of time in relation to the students' needs and lack of relevant material.

The mediators identify both mother tongue teaching and study guidance in mother tongue as strategies enhancing equality in schools. This because they enable the students to get support in their strongest language as well as to strengthen this language by professionals who share their language and culture. Further to this, these strategies are also identified as enhancing students' participation in education, and as being significant for the students' identity formations.

The mediators' strategies for strengthening student participation are to a high degree related to their view of themselves as cultural mediators between students, teachers and families. To parents they explain how things work in school and generally in Sweden, and to teachers and other professionals they introduce the parents' and students' home cultures and languages. Other strategies that mediators use for enhancing participation is translanguaging pedagogy and reading services, such as movies, social media and translation tools.

Challenges to the support offered includes the time given for the classes in relation the students' needs, and the somewhat low professional status of the mediators. To raise the status of the professions would give students a sense of pride of their backgrounds and belongings. Thus, facilitating for migrant students to form multilingual identities that are valued in school.

Summary of the situation of migrant children during the pandemic

In the Swedish case, the impact of the pandemic is probably more diffuse than in the other country cases. In Sweden, the process of closing down schools were slower than in many countries, and the close down was only partial. Initially, only upper secondary school (ISCED3) were closed down, this happened from the spring semester of 2020. Secondary schools (ISCED2) were closed down to varying degrees and periods in the spring of 2021, depending on the local situation. Close down of primary school (ISCED1) was overall avoided. In the Swedish study, most interviews conducted with professionals, were conducted before close down, and hence in the interviews experiences of this is limited such as for example experiences of online teaching. Nevertheless, there are some conclusions to be drawn. One challenge has been to give support to the students who need help with structuring their studies, and those who do not have educational support at home. Many parents kept their children at home in the beginning of the pandemic, which led to difficulties for students to structure their days and keep the motivation for schoolwork. The schools also had to restructure their teaching because of rules of physical distancing. This resulted in the dividing of students into smaller groups and organizing support workshops, which was a positive effect of the pandemic due to that it led to a more flexible organizing of the teaching.

Theoretical implications of the Swedish case

Here we want to highlight three implications that builds on insights from the Swedish data.

Integration and diversity in schools

One issue that the Malmö-case brings along, regards how to study the integration of migrant children as a *particular group* of children. The schools included in this study, but also the city in general, are characterised by migration. The students in the upper secondary school are on the average with the city, and in the two compulsory school the students with migration background are in vast majority. In the view of this, these schools can be described in terms of super-diverse societal contexts (Vertovec 2007). This also fits the descriptions of the interviewed professionals, who describe their students as a very diverse groups of children. They represent persons with different migration and other backgrounds. In the view of this context, on a general level the interviewees understand integration as enhancing an inclusive context were each and everyone are recognised and can have agency.

Language and children's agency

In the interviews, language(s) has an ambivalent position in relation to children's agency. On the one hand, children's lack of Swedish language proficiency is described as a deficit, and on the other hand the use of languages is described as a way forward for inclusion and children's agency. This means that while the 'old' idea of integration as being included into a national context is representative, a response to the super-diverse context is also prevalent. This ambivalence is both unarticulated and unsurprising. The questions are how this is experienced by the students and what impact is has on their identities of belonging and agency.

Children's identities, trust and enhancement of agency

Overall, as presented in our interviews, trust built through social relations is at the core to strengthen children's agency. The strategies to enhance this can be identified at multiple levels of operation. In part this involves concrete methods used in and outside the classroom, the recruitment of new categories of personnel, but also a strategy to create a supportive and engaging social environment in relation to the school, but not limited to the school. This means that the school have strategies to work with peer relations during and after school, and that it supports the involvement of the students' families in activities that are only indirectly related to the school (in the meaning of studies).

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Prop. 1975:26 Regeringens proposition om riktlinjer för invandrar- och minoritetspolitiken m.m. [Government bill about directions for the immigrant and minority policy and more]

Prop. 1997/98:16 Sverige, framtiden och mångfalden – från invandrarpolitik till integrationspolitik [Sweden, the future and the diversity – from immigrant policy towards integration policy]

CHILD-UP WP5 local report - children's perspectives. Sweden

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1. Introduction: Contextualisation and methodology

The Swedish part of the CHILD-UP project is realised in collaboration with three schools in Malmö, the third largest and the fastest growing city in Sweden. The greater Malmö area has a population of around 750 000 inhabitants, and the city itself, which corresponds with the municipality, has 347 949 inhabitants (2020) (Statistics Sweden). The schools included in the study are located in the municipality of Malmö, which we refer to as Malmö City (*Malmö stad*). In this introductory section we shall briefly say something about migration and schooling in Malmö. This serves to contextualise the three schools that participate in the study. We also present the selection of schools and research participants and discuss implications of it.

Migration, segregation and schooling inequality in Malmö

Malmö is located in southern Sweden, just by the bridge to Copenhagen, Denmark, connecting Sweden with continental Europe. This geographical location has implications for its migration experiences. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, when emigration peaked, it was a port of embarkation; contrary, today it is a port of arrival. This is notable in its population. The share of foreign born in the population is 34,6 per cent, compared to 19,7 per cent in the total population. If we include persons born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents, the share of persons with foreign background in Malmö is 47,2 per cent while in Sweden it is 25,9 per cent (Statistics Sweden). In Malmö, people born outside of Sweden origin from 179 different countries and the most common countries of birth are Iraq (11 744), Syria (8 299), Denmark (7 469), Yugoslavia[5] (7 407), Poland (6 720), and Bosnia-Hercegovina (6 395). Persons born in Lebanon, Afghanistan and Iran reaches around 4 000 persons for each country (Malmö City, Population Statistics on webpage).

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[5] The registration of country of birth as registered at the time of immigration, hence this refers to persons who immigrated before the dissolvement of Yugoslavia.

Of interest to this study is the proportion of children with migrant background in schools. In Sweden, the CHILD-UP selection criteria of children, corresponds with grade 5 (ISCED1) and 8 (ISCED2) in compulsory school, and the second year in upper secondary school (ISCED3), hence students aged 12, 15 and 18 years. Preschool (ISCED0) is not included in the Swedish part. As table 1 below illustrates, on average in Malmö City, persons with migrant background in these ages outnumbers persons with Swedish background.

Table 1: Persons aged 12, 15 and 18 years with migrant and Swedish background in Malmö City (December 2020)

	12 years	15 years	18 years
Migrant background*	2 002 (51%)	1 847 (54%)	1 722 (54%)
Swedish background**	1 915 (49%)	1 550 (46%)	1 438 (46%)
Total	3 917 (100%)	3 397 (100%)	3 160 (100%)

*Migrant background includes persons who are foreign born and persons born in Sweden with two foreign born parents

**Swedish background includes persons born in Sweden with at least one parent born in Sweden

Source: Statistics Sweden, Population Statistics

Malmö is not only a city marked by a diverse population, it is also a city of social inequalities and segregation. In fact, compared to the national average, as well as the two larger cities in the country (Stockholm and Gothenburg), Malmö is characterised by large numbers of poor households compared to wealthy households (measured as purchase power per household unit). At the bottom line, this means that Malmö, by national standards, is a comparatively poor city (Salonen & Grander 2019). Further to this, it is also characterised by spatial segregation between poor and wealthy, and between persons with migrant and Swedish background, with a considerable overlap of migration background and poverty in the eastern parts of the city, and of Swedish background and wealth in the western parts of the city. This also overlaps with how different types of housing (home-ownership and tenancy) are distributed (Salonen & Grander 2019). Of relevance for the CHILD-UP study is that, overall, compulsory schools recruit their students from the surrounding housing areas, while in upper secondary schools the recruitment of students is instead to be considered in relation to which study programs they offer. In the next section we describe and discuss some implications of this.

Collaboration with three schools

The Swedish part of the CHILD-UP project builds on collaboration with three schools, two compulsory schools and one upper secondary school. We collaborate with the same schools and collect data from basically the same students across all three empirical work packages (WP4–

6). The two compulsory schools (school_1 and school_2) have classes from pre-school class ('grade 0') to ninth grade, 450–500 students, and they are located in areas with high levels of poverty and large shares of persons with migrant backgrounds in the population. They mostly recruit their students from the surrounding area. The upper secondary school (school_3) is located in central Malmö and have students from across Malmö who have applied and been accepted into the school. It has around 1 000 students and around 80 per cent study a theoretical program, 10 per cent a vocational program and another 10 per cent an introduction program[6]. Table 2 below shows the share of students according to gender, migrant and Swedish background and parents' educational background in the selected schools compared to the Malmö and national average.

Table 2: Share of students according to gender, migrant background and parents' educational background in the selected schools, Malmö and Sweden (October 2019)

	Share of female students	Share of students with migrant background*	Share of students with parents with post-upper secondary school education
School_1	47	87	29
School_2	52	77	43
All compulsory schools in Malmö	49	52	59
All compulsory schools in Sweden	49	26	60
School_3	40	56	50
All upper secondary schools in Malmö	49	51	51
All upper secondary schools in Sweden	47	31	52

*Migrant background includes foreign born persons and persons born in Sweden with two foreign-born parents
Source: Skolverket, Skolblad 2019/2020

[6] An introduction program is a program for students who are not eligible to enter a national program, and it aims at supporting students to enter a national program.

While schools in Malmö, both compulsory and upper secondary schools, on average match the national average regarding the share of students with parents with post-upper secondary school education, the share of students with migrant background is higher in Malmö than in Sweden on average. While the share of students with migrant background in school_3 is close to the Malmö average, in school_1 and school_2 this share is much higher, reaching 87 and 77 per cent respectively. In addition, in school_1 and school_2, the share of students with parents with post-upper secondary school education is comparatively low. In school_1 as low as half of the city and national average. This illustrates how the segregation of socioeconomic and migration-background in the city overlap, as discussed above.

It goes without saying, that this composition of the population, i.e. the share of people with migrant and Swedish backgrounds, in the city and in the selected schools, impacts on how 'integration' is understood and approached, including how it is 'talked about'. Moreover, while 13 per cent in school_1, and 23 per cent in School_2 have Swedish background, this does not necessarily indicate that they identify as Swedish, or speak Swedish as their first language (see WP4 report). This diversity, what some would even refer to as 'superdiversity' (Vertovec 2007), has implications for how diversity is perceived and talked about, which is shown in the analysis.

Access and selection

Data collection was overall challenging. First it was challenging to get access to schools, but even with access in the sense that the headmaster approved of participating in the project, it remained challenging to recruit both professionals and students for data collection (see also report for WP4 and WP5 Professionals). The CHILD-UP project involves data collection from students in all three empirical work packages (WP4–6). In the first year of the project, we collected data with a survey (WP4), and the plan was to collect data through focus group interviews (WP5) and through video recording of a classroom activity, pre- and posttests, and focus group interviews (WP6) in the second year. Overall we expected that students would be hesitant about participating, not least in video recording, but also that it would be challenging to collect informed consent from parents of students under the age of 15 years. These anxieties from our side proved to be relevant. In addition, the pandemic added on to these expected challenges. The schools were closed for outsiders (including researchers) and hence we could not come there, and ISCED2 and ISCED3 had online teaching at home in periods. Overall the situation in school became strained and the teachers and other personnel could not prioritise research collaboration, which was understandable.

With the experiences from data collection for WP4, early on in the data collection process for WP5 and WP6, we realised that it would be difficult to return to the students repeatedly for data collection, and that we would need to organise it so that we collected all data we needed once we managed to set up a meeting with the students. Hence, in order to facilitate, but also to

speed-up the data collection, we merged data collection from students for WP5 and WP6. This meant that we informed about the data collection for the two work packages (pre- and post tests, video recording and focus group interviews) as one set of data-collection, and organised it so that all parts were conducted in one and the same day.

Data for all three empirical work packages was not only collected from the same three schools[7], but largely also from the same students. For data collection for WP5 and WP6 we collaborated with four teachers and their classes and hence, student participants are basically the same for WP5 and WP6. In addition, in two of the schools the student participants for WP5 and WP6 are recruited from the same classes as in WP4. There are however some divergencies. In some cases a student who participated in the video recording could not or did not want to stay for the focus group interview, and in some other cases a student who did not want to participate in the video recording wanted to participate in the focus group interview. This also explains why we have a discrepancy between the number of video recordings and focus group interviews, while we have twelve video recordings, we have only ten focus group interviews (in the application we estimated that we would have twelve of each).

Focus group interviews with children

In total we conducted ten focus group interviews with 15 girls and 15 boys: two focus group interviews in ISCED1, five in ISCED2 and three in ISCED3. In all three schools we first visited the selected classes and presented the project. In two schools these were the same as for WP4, and in one school an introduction class for newly arrived students. This was due to the choice of the school, the school management and the involved teachers. The introduction class is age integrated for students in lower secondary school (ISCED2) and students are typically placed in this class just upon arrival, and then, in a step-wise manner integrated to their mainstream class. At what pace this is done is individual, depending on the student. The focus group interviews were conducted directly after the video recording of each teacher's class activity, except in one case. In this case the focus group interviews were conducted on another day but in the same week as the video recording, and with the same students.

We presented the project orally and the students could ask questions. We also handed out information letter and consent form to all students. Students under the age of 15 years, need parents' consent. We informed about this in the class and handed out parents' information letter and consent form in Swedish and Arabic. In the introduction class, mediators helped in class and parents' information letter and consent form were distributed in native languages to all parents (Arabic, Bengali, Dari, English, Serbian, Tigrinya, Urdu). Students' and parents'

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[7] At least mainly, see WP5 Professionals report for minor deviations as regards mediators and social workers.

consent forms for students under the age of 15 years were collected by the teacher and given to the researcher, or collected directly by the researcher at the time of data collection.

The first three focus interviews were conducted in August 2020, just after the summer vacation. At this point, the schools in Sweden only had minor experiences of lock-downs and this topic is not covered in the interviews. All other focus group interviews were conducted towards the end of May and early June 2021, just before the summer holiday was to begin. At this point questions about experiences of the pandemic had been integrated to our interview guide, and all experiences from the pandemic are drawn from these interviews. As the first focus group interviews were conducted in school_3 and all others in School_1 and school_2, this also means that we only have reflections on the pandemic as these were experienced in compulsory school, while the lock-downs were much more extensive in upper secondary school.

Table 3: Overview of number of focus group interviews and number of children divided by school

Focus Group Interviews	Number of participants (girls)
SWE_F1_ISCED3	3 (1)
SWE_F2_ISCED3	3 (1)
SWE_F3_ISCED3	3 (2)
SWE_F4_ISCED2	3 (0)
SWE_F5_ISCED2	3 (1)
SWE_F6_ISCED1	3 (1)
SWE_F7_ISCED2	3 (2)
SWE_F8_ISCED1	3 (3)
SWE_F9_ISCED2	2 (2)
SWE_F10_ISCED2	4 (2)
Total	30 (15)

All focus group interviews were conducted in the schools and during school time. They lasted between 20 minutes and 50 minutes. Nine were conducted in Swedish and one in English, and all were recorded and transcribed. In the analysis presented below, we found that some interview excerpts were relevant in relation to more than one analytical theme. In order to provide empirical illustrations rich in their nuances, we have on some occasions included the same quotations more than once.

2. School as a lived space

In this section, the participating students' ideal school will first be described, thereafter positive as well as negative aspects of their real school will be described. We also expand on students' view of good and not so good activities in school.

Ideal school – real school

The students' talk about their ideal school coincides to a great extent with how they talk about their real school. In the students' descriptions of an ideal school the teachers are to a high extent in focus. This includes teachers that teach well and have good subject knowledge. Teaching

well includes teachers that can explains things in different ways until one understands, "A good teacher… should be able to explain well, as well as be able to explain in a way… even if you do not understand, they should try to explain in different ways until we understand" (SWE_F8_ISCED1).

A good teacher should also want the students to succeed in school by supporting them a lot in their learning. A boy gives an example of how a positive support is implemented by one of their teachers: "she helps us all the time. If we ask one thing, she answers a hundred times" (SWE_F4_ISCED2). The support is here defined as always answering and not giving up on the students. This approach includes teachers that rephrase or use other languages than Swedish to explain or the mobile phone to translate. As another boy in the same focus group explains when he says "She can try to say it in English or say in simpler words, ... if we don't understand in English, she can write on her mobile" (SWE_F4_ISCED2).

Another way of supporting is to remind and "push" the students to study:

> For example, when we have exams and stuff like that, they nag that we should study, and if we get bad grades in an exam, [they say] that we should take a re-exam as soon as possible, so we do not risk to fail in the subject. So it's good that they're nagging on us to succeed in school. (SWE_F2_ISCED3)

So, in the ideal school, teachers "nag" on the students to succeed. However, they should also listen to the students, and regard their opinion in different matters, "They should try to agree with the students and also do what the students want, because it makes your class better" (SWE_F8_ISCED1).

Good relations between students are brought up as another aspect of an ideal school. An ideal school is a school where no one needs to be alone, where everyone have friends and where the students support each other. This is exemplified in the following excerpt:

> Girl: Then you want everyone to be friends, and friends is important for studies, I think.
>
> Boy: For concentration, you do not have to think "Where would I be now on the break? Would people laugh at me?" (SWE_F7_ISCED2)
>
> Girl1: The thing is that this school is very good because there are no groupings, like everyone is friends with everyone. So, groupings are the last thing you find at this school.
>
> Girl2: Yes. Everyone is different.
>
> Girl1: There are, of course, but rarely. Everyone is with everyone. So this school I would say is good for everyone actually. (SWE_F9_ISCED2)

Good relations between students thus means that there are no group boundaries. This also concerns the relationships between boys and girls: "And everyone is kind of friends with everyone and no guy thinks it's directly embarrassing to be with someone of the opposite sex" (SWE_F8_ISCED1).

Positive aspects of real school

The positive aspects of the real school, coincides with how the participating students talk about their ideal school. Among the most positive aspect is the support that they get from their teachers: "So, I think it's good … We have good teachers who stand up and help when you need help" (SWE_F3_ISCED3). That the teachers challenge the students is also regarded as something positive. By challenging, it is meant that the studies are tough in a good way, it helps the students to become better in the different school subjects, which is good for future studies:

> I: Challenging in a good way. What do you mean then?
>
> Boy2: I mean, it's hard. But these difficulties will help us in the future. For example, if I get a difficult task, then I learn something new from that. Or if I happen to do something wrong, I learn from that mistake, and in high school I will be able to do it better, or have seen it before. (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

Another positive aspect is the support offered by the school organisation, including such as after school workshops and help with homework:

> Girl2: We have teachers who are trained in that subject. Then we also have the extra teachers who are usually in the workshop.
>
> Boy2: Homework help and stuff.
>
> Girl2: Yes.
>
> Interviewer: Does it help anything?
>
> Girl2: It has helped us a lot.
>
> Girl1: We had a national test, there was help with math from half an hour before school, where you could learn extra math if you were a little unsure of yourself. And it helped a lot.
>
> Boy2: They're investing on us.
>
> Girl1: They give us all the opportunities we want. If they see that I need something, they make it available to me. (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

Students that are new in the country appreciate that they can get support in their mother tongue (this is further elaborated on in section 3.3. Support – study guidance in mother tongue).

Social relations among students in class and/or the whole school is another common aspect brought up related to positive experiences of school (see also the section of affective and relational dimension). The majority of the participants find the relations among the students good, it varies from student to student, but it is generally good. Foremost, this is due to that there are very few group boundaries, instead everyone is with everyone (see ideal school). In one of the interviews, teambuilding was mentioned as a way of achieving positive social relations between students. "They [the program] focus a lot on team building, so the first two

years we were out for example to the forest and we slept there for three days in a tent. We got to know each other there" (SWE_F1_ISCED3).

Negative aspects of real school

The negative aspects of school are to a large extent connected to the approach of the teachers; the students' motivation is negatively affected by teachers who are bad at explaining, and unpassionate about their work:

> Boy2: Some teachers are tired and others more passionate.
>
> Boy1: It affects a lot. For those who are boring, you cannot even listen to. You end up in your world of thought and then you miss what the teacher says, and that leads to a worse grade. (SWE_F2_ISCED3)

As the transcript illustrates, the student get unfocused and loose interest, which is also the case when students have to listen to a teacher for a long time "Sometimes when the teacher has a review, and talks about it the whole lesson, it becomes difficult to concentrate. It is interesting in the beginning, but then it gets boring because you have listened for too long" (SWE_F7_ISCED2). The loss of focus and interest often happens in science and mathematics class, with which the students express that they would need to get more help:

> Then, if we are going to talk about the teachers, I think they give the help you need. Although it may be required two teachers when it comes to math for example. Because if you need extra help, you need the teacher sitting next to you explaining. (SWE_F2_ISCED2)

Other negative aspects of real school connected to teachers is that they have different rules:

> There is a difference. For example, if he asks a teacher [pointing at one of the boys], "May I quit earlier?" then it can happen that one teacher go in a little aggressively and say, "But you say it all the time". And then there may be another teacher who says, "Okay, if you're kind." It's just that thing that makes a big difference. (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

Another aspect brought up is related noisy classrooms. Some of the participants are hesitant about the noise, explaining that some might be able to study and learn things with noise in the classroom, while other are not:

> Girl1: Sometimes, there's chaos in the classroom, so you can't focus on things.
>
> Girl2: Yeah, kind of study peace sometimes.
>
> Girl1: Yes, really difficult. When a teacher is teaching something, everyone is talking to each other and not listening to the teacher. So, you can't focus. (SWE_F8_ISCED1)

The participating students also bring up negative aspects of their real school related to organisational aspects, such as a constant change of teachers, which the students believe affect their possibilities to get good grades:

> Girl 1: And some teachers, that we like very much, they usually quit and then we change all the time.
>
> Girl2: You get used to a teacher and then they change…
>
> Girl3: We have had four, five teachers this [year]. (SWE_F8_ISCED1)

Another organizational aspect is badly organized schedules, with too many or too few lessons in one day:

> Girl1: And schedules too, we have a very bad schedule.
>
> I: How does it look?
>
> Boy: You have no lesson on Fridays.
>
> Girl2: Yes, we only have one lesson.
>
> Girl1: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday we finish four and we start like eight, it's really tough. (SWE_F2_ISCED3)

Students also have opinions about school environment and furniture's. In one of the schools, for example, the students in the ninth grade burnt the lockers down the year before, and the school does not have resources to replace them. In effect, the participating student and their classmates do not have lockers to store their study material and outdoor clothing. They find this very unfair, that they must suffer for what some others did: "Just because the ninth graders broke the lockers, we should not get… just because it was their fault. Then they affect us" (SWE_F8_ISCED1).

Others mentioned furniture. That is, they wish for better chairs since the lessons are long: "So we may have comfortable chairs. We sit on these, okay, all day for an hour and 20 minutes, you get hurt when you sit on the chairs" (SWE_F7_ISCED2).

Best activities

The best school activities mentioned by participating students are related to support with their studies. One such is after school activities. In one of the schools, they have an activity called Stahl, which is very much appreciated:

> Girl1: At this school, we have something called Stahl. It is that every teacher gives help with homework. For example, the math teacher has on Tuesdays from four to five, then there are not as many students of course, and you get more help.
>
> Girl2: Then there is more focus on the student who needs help (SWE_F3_ISCED3).

In another school, the students have support with homework, "We always have homework help after school" (SWE_F8_ISCED1).

Another appreciated activity is the possibility for newly arrived students to use English or their mother tongue in their communication with teachers, and in their studies (this is further elaborated on in section *Support – study guidance in mother tongue* below).

Not so good activities

Some of the students mention that they sometimes get assignments for homework which they have not worked with enough in class. They do not have enough knowledge or skills regarding the content, or how to work with the assignment:

> Some assignments, we say, for example, when we have not gone through it in class but still we get it as a homework. How should we write it when we do not know what it is about, or when we do not know how to write? (SWE_F7_ISCED2)

Affective and relational dimensions of school

The affective and relational dimensions repeatedly brought up in our focus group interviews regards social relations among the students, both in class and more generally in school. When asked what they are satisfied with, many refer to a positive social environment in their class and in school:

> Between the students, it's good too. Because I don't feel that someone who wants to start in this school should feel worried that she or he might be bullied. So, I feel that it is good between the students. (SWE_F3_ISCED3)

The lack of gender boundaries are mentioned as one explanation to the good relations between students:

> I: What works well in school then?
>
> Girl1: It's like every one has a friend to be with. Everyone feels good, I think.
>
> Girl2: Yes, we get on well.
>
> Girl1: Yes. Boys, girls, we're all together. We are all playing. (SWE_F8_ISCED1)
>
> I: What does the relationship between boys and girls look like ?
>
> Girl1: It's mixed.
>
> I: Mixed class?
>
> Boy1: That's good.
>
> I: But is the relationship good?
>
> Girl1: We don't distinguish between boys and girls, everyone is together. And when it's group work, we don't separate girls and boys. (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

Another explanation given to why there are positive relations between students is that they themselves create it:

> I: What is it that contributes to the positive relations?

Boy1: I personally think that it is we who contribute to this, rather than the teachers. Because they focus more on the teaching and what happens in the class, but outside the class, it is not the same…

Boy2: They can't do that much.

Boy1: Yes, exactly, you could say that they lose their power outside the class. SWE_F2_ICSED3)

Friendship at school is for some of the participants related to shared language, that is, close friends are the ones with who you share home language, especially if you are newly arrived in the country (this is further elaborated on in section. *Support – study guidance in mother tongue* below).

However, even if the students experience positive social relations in their school, they agree on that the relations are not positive for all students. Some students are bullied and without friends at school:

Girl1: But some are also bullied at school just because they have a functional variation or something.

I: But … so you mean that here are some who are left out or are bullied?

Boy: Yes. Often you do not know who it really is. Sometimes you see them when they are on their own, you think yes, but maybe it's only once? Then you don't notice when you see them alone. So you don't notice it because now it is common for that person to be by their own, and you do not think about it immediately. (SWE_F7_ISCED2)

One example of being exposed to bullying is if you are interested in same-sex relations:

Boy1: Boys who like boys and girls who like girls, I think they would be bullied. There is certainly someone who is, but I don't think they dare to come out.

Girl1: But, I had accepted it but I had not ...

Girl2: Wanted to see it in front of you

Girl1: Or I would not have liked it but I would not have had any problems with it, but I would not have supported it (SWE_F7_ISCED2).

Participating students also talk about conflicts based on that someone is talking about someone else in a nasty or impolite way, or if someone "thinks they are special". If not dealt with, this can have negative effects on the social relations at school, for example between boys and girls:

Girl: If, for example, he quarrels with me, he has a whole group of boys, and I have a whole group of girls behind me, and then it becomes a group and a group. //… // And I think then it gets worse and worse because it gets bigger.

Boy: Yes. And then yes, it can also lead to a big, I would say war between girls and boys, that can destroy our whole sense of community. (SWE_F6_ISCED2)

In the class referred to above, the students explain that there used to be a lot of conflicts between girls and boys, but that this is no longer the case: "But now in our class, now everyone supports

each other" (SWE_F6_ISCED2). When we ask what made the relationships better, one answer is that they themselves contributed to this: "In our class, we usually take care of it ourselves, so that it does not get bigger. So, if I quarrel with him, our class usually talks together and 'do you know what happened?'" (SWE_F6_ISCED2).

Another example of how students themselves resolve conflicts, is to leave private problems and disagreements outside the classroom:

> Girl1: We are more like, when it comes to tasks, even if we have quarrelled, when it comes to tasks, we work efficiently.
>
> Boy1: We do not think that private things should be confused with the studies.
>
> Girl1: When we're in class, we forget what's going on outside.
>
> (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

One way of not getting into conflicts is to work on the social relations. This means, for example, to be able to talk about what they like or dislike about each other and to hang out with each other: "Maybe hang out a little more. Maybe a little more talk about ourselves and stuff like this" (SWE_F6_G_ISCED2).

Teachers and other significant others that the students trust are seen as important when it comes to resolving conflicts. The ones that listen to everyone involved in the conflict are appreciated, as this quotation illustrates:

> There is a teacher [name of the teacher], s/he usually helps us a lot because s/he does not take it overly seriously if… //… // S/he helps both [parties], s/he does not shout at anyone. S/he asks both, and talks with all together about what has happened, trying to solve it. (SWE_F6_G_ISCED2)

Affective and relational dimensions of school also involve relations between students and teachers. Students' good relations with their teachers emerge as a strong theme, that is, that they can talk to them and that they get listened to:

> I think it works well, especially after we have been here three years. You know the teachers better and you feel, yes, you can talk to them a little more. But, before, for example, the first year, it was not the same, you did not have such good contact with the t. (SWE_F3_ISCED3)
>
> Boy: They are patient with everybody, and they are good teachers.
>
> I: Do you mean like, they have a kind of relationship, teachers and students?
>
> Girl: Like friends.
>
> I: More like friends?
>
> Girl: Yeah, more friends.
>
> Boy: Yeah, yeah. You can talk to them. (SWE_F5_ISCED2)
>
> Boy: They show that they understand you and that they listen.

I: Is it that they care, that they are interested in you?

Girl: Yes. (SWE_F7_ISCED2)

However, as has been shown above (see section Negative aspects of real school), there are also negative aspects connected to the relational dimensions between teachers and students.

Further, various significant others are mentioned as sources that the students can turn to if they need help or support. The student counsellor is one such support person, and the student coordinators another. In one school the student coordinator seems to be much appreciated because s/he is a person that the students can talk to about their different problems:

Boys 2: He is responsible for the problems of the student. He is a friend with everyone.

Boy1: He just comes around, only like "What's up? Everything good?", ask everything.

Boy2: Yeah, he is everywhere.

Boy1: And he gave his number to everyone.

Boy2: To call.

Boy1: Anything, just call me. (SWE_F5_ISCED2)

I: Is there anyone you can turn to?

Girl1: The counsellor, or we do not have a real counsellor but so far when I have talked to her she is quite kind. But you can also turn to [name of student coordinator]

Boy: Any teacher.

Girl2: Well, [name of student coordinator] is like that too, you can talk to her about things. (SWE_F7_ISCED2)

The student coordinators check who is in school and follow-up on the students, for example, who are not present in class or online during the pandemic. They also help the students when they get in conflicts with each: "We have [name of two student coordinators]. They are always in place, in case of trouble, so they know about it immediately. And they have always been the ones who manage to solve the problems between the students". (SWE_F9_ISCED2).

In our focus group interviews, the parents seem to be absent as regards schoolwork support. One explanation given is that some of them have not studied in the Swedish school system: "I prefer to do everything here and not so much at home. Because if I take help from my parents for example, they have not studied here in Sweden, so it will be difficult" (SWE_F3_ISCED3). Some of the participants mention that they get help from their siblings: "My mother can almost speak Swedish, but when we do not understand [schoolwork] we ask my brother or we translate" (SWE_F4_ISCED2) and "I always ask my brother about math, because he's good at math. So, I ask him when I have a math problem or something. I will ask him, and he will tell me how to do it" SWE_F5_ISCED2).

The students mention that they talk about school with their parents and that their parents are positive about their school. Their parents also encourage them to study:

> I: Your parents, do they usually help you with schoolwork?
>
> Boy1: Mom and Dad don't go to school. They cannot help me. But they have said that you must study. If you want to play [computer games], you have to study.
>
> Boy1: "He says that my mother and father have said the same thing, that homework is good". (translation from other student Boy2)
>
> Boy1: All mothers and fathers need that their children can speak Swedish, and that then they get a good job and a good life. (SWE_F4_ISCED2)

Educational aspirations

When the participants are asked about the support for learning and schoolwork, their first-hand choice is to turn to the teachers and other support structures offered at school, then schoolmates/friends and lastly siblings/parents:

Study guidance in their mother tongue is an appreciated support that the newly arrived students receive at school:

> I: Do you have anything else [than the teachers, that help you]?
>
> Boy: Yes, study guidance.
>
> I: How does it work?
>
> Boy: When we have news we go to study guidance, or not just news. We have a sample. We'll go to her and she's explaining and she's translating questions. Then we will answer words and she says to write like that. Then we will read and practice. (SWE_F4_ISCED2)

During the lessons it is mainly Swedish that is used, but the teacher also helps in English. The students also help each other in different languages, especially if there is a newcomer who does not speak or understand Swedish:

> Boy: In most cases they [the teachers] speak Swedish but sometimes they can speak English.
>
> I: But you also help?
>
> Boy: Yes, I usually help him [pointing at his friend] with English and Swedish. (SWE_F1_ISCED3)
>
> I: Do you help each other with schoolwork in the lessons?
>
> R1: Yes, when we are together. He does not understand [pointing at boy]. He asks, we help. (SWE_F4_ISCED2)

Various digital support tools, including Google and snapchat with friends, are also referred to as tools for support with schoolwork.

Student participation

Students' opportunities to have influence in school seem to differ depending on whether they have opinions related to structural or classroom levels. On a structural level, the schools have a student council, but some of the students find it difficult to get their voices heard at this level. As illustrated in the quotation below, there seems to be better possibilities to influence on classroom level:

> I: Do you experience that certain things that you bring up … how is it received?
>
> Boy: I was in the class council last year together with another student from my class, and it's like this that she [headmaster] asks like "what does your class think and what do you want to change?" and stuff, then we say it and she listens to it, but it's not always….
>
> I: As something happens.
>
> Boy: Yes, exactly.
>
> I: But did you experience that sometimes something happened?
>
> Boy: Yes, but mostly not.
>
> I: But is it really this channel that you have to express your opinion?
>
> Girl1: Yes, such things that you want to change. Although if there is something small you want to change in a class, then you can just talk to the teacher and then it feels like it changes immediately. (SWE_F3_ISCED3)

In one of the interviews, the students were explaining that they have experiences of growing up in socio-economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods with high levels of criminality. This, they say, is a good experience in their future work as police officers. When asked if the school and the teachers are including such experiences in their teaching or in the school structure, one of the participants says that this is not the case: "Not in a specific way that I have noticed. Maybe they take it as an example. But no" (SWE_F2_ISCED3).

Imagined future

The majority of the participating students from the compulsory schools are planning to continue their studies at upper secondary school. The ninth graders have applied for programs focusing for example social and natural science, childcare, economics and business/accounting and hotel and tourism. In ten years, they think that they have families and careers such as running own businesses, working as a lawyer or psychologist, working with young children, with video editing (for example TikTok), computer engineering and at the municipality "since there seems to be many different jobs" (SWE_F4_ISCED2).

The students from upper secondary school are planning to get into higher education in programs such as preschool teacher, police officer, social worker, IT engineer, architect, dentist, entrepreneurs and stock trading. However, some of the participating students only have vague ideas of their future studies and work. This concerns especially those in compulsory school:

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Girl1: I do not know yet. No one kind of knows.

Girl2: Mostly get jobs and stuff, but…

Girl1: And like not becoming homeless. And maybe get money. (SWE_F8_ISCED1)

From what I know in our class, there are very many who are very insecure about what to do after high school. Like everyone has applied for something, but I do not really know what everyone wants to be after high school. It is still unclear to very many. (SWE_F9_ISCED2)

School during the pandemic

The students in ISCED1 have (until now) no experience of online home schooling because the schools have remained open for them during the pandemic (spring 2020 – June 2021). The students in ISCED2 had online studies from home during the last week of the autumn semester and the beginning of the spring semester 2021. Thereafter, they were in school one third of the time and from the second part of the spring term 2021 that have been taught in schools. The students in ISCED3 had online studies from home during the last part of the spring semester 2020, the last part of the autumn semester 2020 and the major part of spring semester 2021.

It is only in the interviews conducted in May and June 2021, that we asked explicitly about experiences about online schooling from home and the pandemic more generally. In their responses, many describe negative aspects of online teaching. One is that it is challenging due to that they did not receive much support and therefore had to manage the learning alone at home:

Boy1: We barely got help during corona.

Boy2: Yes, we kind of had to manages by ourselves.

I: What help do you get when it comes to difficulties?

Boy1: Google. (SWE_F2_ISCED3)

Girl: If you want to actually study, you have to do it yourself. Because the teachers wouldn't nag on you about that so much. They would kind of just tell you, "do this page and you can go".

I: But did you get help and support?

Girl: Yeah, obviously, if you needed help, you had a question, stuff like that.

I: So, if you could choose, to be in school or have online teaching?

Girl: I don't know. Probably still in school, because the online was like, we had to do it. The school had to go online. But you didn't really learn anything for this couple of weeks. I learned nothing other than Swedish in those classes. (SWE_F5_ISCED2)

Girl: It was like a shock to us.

Boy: Because we're just getting started.

Girl: We did not even know how to use the material we had received.

Boy: It was the first time, they just said: "Click this link and go in". (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

Further, some students perceive the teaching as unprofessional and unplanned:

No, it was unprofessional, I will explain. The thing is that the first week we would have distance, it was a bit … and I understand of course that it is a bit new and that it cannot be perfect, although for example the math was unplanned. Many had difficulties with math. So we had to contact the teacher via email. And next week we came back to school and then next week we had distance again. So it just got complicated. (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

Some students talk about online teaching and not being in school as boring. Boring to be at home, not seeing classmates.

Boy1: Boring. Difficult.

Boy2: It was fun the first few days.

Boy1: Yes, first it was fun, then it got a little boring.

Boy2: But after a while it just got boring.

Boy1: Yes, boring. (SWE_F2_ISCED3)

The situation also put pressure on family relations:

It was hard because my little brother, he makes chaos at home. He runs around and my mother she washes, and she talks to her siblings very loudly. (SWE_F7_ISCED2)

Girl2: Even some parents thought it was hard to see their children just sitting at home.

Girl1: They saw how tired they were.

Girl2: Yes, because it takes a lot of energy, because you have to be awake all the time and look at the screen. While here at school you can ask the teacher "Can I go and get some fresh air?" if necessary.

Boy1: "Can I take a break or something?" (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

However, there were participants who thought that the online teaching was good for them, since they could work better from home, without the distractions in the classroom:

Girl1: Yes, because you got more peace of mind and work peace, and it was just nicer to be home I think.

I: Better to concentrate on ...

Girl1: Yes. Then when you got an assignment, I always did it right away, but now it takes a while before I do it when I'm at school. (SWE_F7_ISCED2)

Other experiences of the pandemic are the loss of social activities such as not being able to meet with friends, missing out on excursions and the big celebration party that is the tradition when finishing compulsory school (ninth grade). One of the girls says "It has affected that we do not have the big party that you usually have in the ninth grade." (SWE_CH9_ISCED2)

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We have had distance teaching, and it is good, but at the same time boring, because you want to meet your friends and that is when you focus better on the lessons. On my own part, I usually fall asleep during the distance lessons, but here [in class] my friends do not let me sleep. (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

The loss of social activities was in some cases resolved by the students meeting outdoors in the neighbourhood:

Girl1: We also tried to get each other out of the house.

I: You tried to go out?

Boy2: Yes, you're home all the time.

Girl1: When we had sports you had to do group work. We all tried to get each other out.

Boy2: Yes, we went out here and played football.

Girl1: We made big groups and played football and we were out, it was sunny and… we did different stuff (SWE_F10_ISCED2)

3. Intercultural relations at school

Experiences of schooling in different countries

The newly arrived focus group participants (SWE_F4_ISCED2) perceive their school as a good school and say that their teachers that support and help them make it a good school. Similarly, the ISCED2 students (SWE_F7_ISCED2) say that some teachers and their peers make their school a good school.

During the focus group interview with newly arrived students (SWE_F5_ISCED2) they compared their current school with the schools they had attended before moving to Sweden, which is schools located in Iraq, Kosovo and London. They believe that the school in Sweden differs from the others when it comes to freedom, learning activities and digital tools:

Boy1: Yeah, there is no … There is a lot of points. But when it comes to teaching, the level of education, it's higher in Iraq. Because what they are studying now, we studied before year [?? 0:02:45] and have something like that. But the …

I: Activities, are they the same?

Boy1: No, we didn't have a lot of activity, we just like, studying, studying, studying.

I: Okay, so you have a math book and then you do tasks?

Boy1: Study, finish it, go to the next one. Finish it, go. That's it.

Boy2: Yeah, same.

Boy1: We don't have these … a lot of activities we're seeing now. Especially with the laptops and these things.

Boy2: Yeah. We didn't have all of this that we have here now. The education, it's not bad, but it's … they wake up with a negativity. It's like they don't like sometimes to teach you.

I: Here in Sweden?

Boy1: No, no, Kosovo.

Girl: Yeah, and they're just like … comparing it to London, it's just like … Not everything was different, but there the teachers were always around you. And the schools that I went to, it was like … you had to wear uniforms, and you had to stand in straight lines, and stuff like that. While here, it's more free. And yeah, [inaudible 0:04:48].

Boy1: Way more free.

Compared to the education is Sweden it seems like the students come from an instrumental perspective on teaching and learning. Whereas, the teaching and learning they experience in Sweden seem to be more activity based or based on interaction among the teacher and the students which enable another type of student agency. The students' opinions on their learning in the different countries differ. The Girl thinks that she has less teaching in Sweden compared to London, whereas Boy2 thinks he learns more in Sweden even if it is more "strict" in Kosovo (SWE_F5_ISCED2):

Girl: Yeah, yeah, it's alright. Just comparing it to London, it's just less strict. And it's just like school … like, work, they teach you less than when I was in schools in London.

Girl: Like, in London it's really strict. Comparing, education is higher than here.

More "strict" in Kosovo, but did not learn as much as in Sweden. One reason is digital tools.

I: Yeah, it was the same that you two …

Boy2: No, I mean like, for the learning, it's like, we … for me, it might look that you learn more in my country, but it's not real. Because it's just that we didn't have laptops. We worked with books more. And it looked that you learned more, but no. For me, no. I learn more here.

The students think there is a larger difference when it comes to learning in their new school compared to their old schools. This they relate to the activities they do in class (SWE_F5_ISCED2), which seem to be more interactive compared to do certain tasks in a textbook:

I: Okay. Is it a different way of learning here?

Boy2: Yeah, a lot of diff…

I: What would you say, the biggest difference?

Boy1: The activities.

Boy2: Yeah. Even in the class.

Boy1: Like, now, when I wanted to learn Swedish, I have the Veckans Nyhet, [The Weekly News] I have the …

Boys2: There's a lot of difference.

Boy1: Yeah, home and consumer studies even is helping. So this [inaudible 0:10:02]. But in our country, for me, it was like "no, this book", [inaudible 0:10:08]. So … [home and consumer studies help learn Swedish]

Boy2: It's like, here it's more fun. Even if they give you a task to do. In my home country, it will be like "go to 20 page, and finish until 40, and give it to me". That's all.

Boy2: But here, you do it with a bit of activity, a bit of like … a joke that … there. And it will … you won't even know that the time was gone by. So it's more fun.

I: Okay. Do you agree, or do you …?

Girl: Yeah, I guess. It's just more independent here, for me. Like, yeah. It's just … they don't … It's just more independent. You have to rely on yourself to study and do more.

In the classes the students attend (SWE_F5_ISCED2), students with different gender, language and religious backgrounds are included, which was not the case in for example Iraq. The newly arrived students seem to appreciate this:

Boy1: Different. There is a lot of points that differ from here. We had way more problems than here. I don't know what to say exactly, but …

Boy2: Because you were separated?

Boy1: Yeah, that's a big point.

I: You were separated? How do you mean?

Boy1: Males and females. Even sometimes like, if I had a Christian friend, he maybe go to another school, because he can't stay in this … there is a lot of points [?? 0:06:41] that differs.

The role of language in relations with friends and classmates

On questions about how language affects the students' relationships their answers slightly differ between the interviews. For example, students in upper secondary class (SWE_F1_ISCED3) seem to think that language matters, but students' common interests like for example going to the gym, the military and food, seem to matter even more:

Boy: Yes, so that you… We say, those who like going to the gym in their spare time, they usually hang out with each other. Those who … Like the military, they are usually in a group and discuss it all the time For example, just because in our class we have a group where those who are most interested in the uniform profession usually hang out with each other, and then there are a couple of girl groups, like [name of girl] here, they like to eat. And then… Yes, so it is…

Girl: Yes. So, then, for example, it is those who speak Arabic who usually talk to each other and people with other backgrounds usually hang out, but like that… It is

usually not based on which language you speak who you hang out with, but it is based on what you are doing during the break.

In contrast to the students in upper secondary school, the newly arrived students (SWE_F4_ISCED2) seem to think that language matters when it comes to peer relations and friendship. They say that they have many friends, but the closest friends, the "real friends" are the ones who they share home language with:

> Boy: We have many friends.
>
> Boy: We have many friends in the school. Like the boy with [not audible 0:08:46] orange sweater. He is also my friend. Because the four of us speak the same language. We are friends.
>
> I: And then you are more ... Are you friends with those who speak the same language or are you friends with others?
>
> Boy: No, there are also those who go on [not audible 0:09:02], they know me. same thing buddy. But not a real friend. Like a real friend in the homeland.

Further, they (SWE_F4_ISCED2) believe that most students have friends at the school, but give an example of a boy who does not. They think it is because his home language is Japanese and that no one else speak Japanese, so he cannot communicate with anyone since he does not speak Swedish yet. Also, the newly arrived students in another focus group interview (SWE_F5_ISCED2) talk about language as important when it comes to friendship. They relate it to the possibility to communicate with each other. One boy gives himself as an example. When he started introduction class he could not communicate with his classmates and did not not make friends with anyone until another boy with whom he can communicate with in English arrived:

> Boy1: No, this is also different, because we don't have the language.… if I know someone who can speak English, I could communicate with them [?? 0:11:58]. Because first thing, you want to make a friend, you need to communicate. You need a language. So … Before [name of boy2] came … because I came, and after two weeks, [name of boy2] came. So before, it was like I had a communication with some of my … In the class. But when [name of friend] came, it was like we got out to shop, we chatted all the time. Like, we had it fine. [?? 0:12:30]
>
> I: Yeah. When it comes … You mentioned it. The … not to say importance, but what role does language have when it comes to being friends?
>
> Boy2: It has a lot.

However, Boy2 adds that you can also make friends with people who you do not share home language, but you would have to find a way to communicate:

> Boy2: It's not that it matters a lot, but you can't communicate freely if you can't … for example, me and him, we can communicate freely in English. If he knows only Arabic, we would be like learning hand sign, or something. We … Yeah, that too.

> But you can also have friends that … they don't know really good English, but you can still communicate a bit with them.

The students (SWE_F8_ISCED1) also believe that language matters when it comes to friendship. Sometimes low Swedish language proficiency can impact negatively on access to friends:

> Those I kind of know or… yes, some… they do not have friends because they do not know the language, which I think is mean. We do not go to the same class and I cannot always be with them if I want to, so it's mean when you are not friends with them just because they do not know the language. You can help them learn and… so teach them and stuff, so that… yes …

This is rejected by the student (SWE_F8_ISCED1), who tries to counteract such situations by inviting classmates to social situations: "And always try to notice people who are alone, try to invite them so you can be with a [not audible] so that it will be so good". The importance of being able to communicate to make friends is also evident in one of the interviews. One student says that students who do not know the language, Swedish implied, but share home language become friends, but if they do not share home language English may work since many students know some English (SWE_F8_ISCED1).

Support – study guidance in mother tongue

During the interviews (SWE_F4_ISCED2 and SWE_F5_ISCED2) with the newly arrived students study guidance in mother tongue was brought up as an appreciated support for their school work. The students (SWE_F4_ISCED2) say that their study guidance in mother tongue help them to translate and explains texts, which help them perform on the tests. According to the students (SWE_F5_ISCED2) their mother tongue teacher (same as study guidance counsellor/teacher) is mostly available, and they can always ask her questions and she will help if she can:

> Boy1: Everyone is helpful. Like, the teachers … even for me, I have my mother tongue teachers in the end of the hallway. So I could … if I need something urgent, I just go to her and tell her I want some lesson [?? 0:21:53].
>
> Boy2: You just don't need to be shy. It's like you can get help with everything.
>
> I: Yeah, it feels okay to ask?
>
> Boy2: Yeah, yeah, you can ask. If they want … say like no, if they … If they cannot help, they will just say "sorry, I can't", or something. But they will always help you.

The newly arrived students also achieve another type of support in their mother tongue than the support directly provided by the study guidance in mother tongue teacher or mother tongue teacher. For example, in mathematics they receive lists of concepts which are translated into their mother tongues (SWE_F5_ISCED2):

> Boy1: Yeah. Even the math teacher gave me a whole, how to say, document.
>
> Boy2: Yeah, same.

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Boy1: With the translations to my mother tongue, from Swedish to my mother tongue, for the math things. Like, the …

I: The concepts and … yeah.

Boy1: Yeah, the concepts and rules, all of this.

I: So then you can do the math, yeah?

Boy1: In my mother language.

Boy2: Yeah, same.

I: Yeah, same with you? Do you also have that, translations?

Girl: Yeah.

Communication

Mainly Swedish is used during class

When asked about language use in school the students in the different focus groups answered similarly even if they attend different schools and grades. Three named languages were mentioned as being used or languages that are commonly used in the schools, namely, Swedish, Arabic and English. In class Swedish is mainly used according to all focus groups. That is, ordinary teaching, is basically only in Swedish. One focus group participant explain that while they are never instructed by the teacher to use their home languages in class, Arabic is talked about as a language that is commonly used in the school since there are many Arabic speaking students in the school (SWE_F8_ISCED1). English seems mainly to be used when interlocutors do not know Swedish and do not share home language, that is when English is the only shared language. This is unpacked and exemplified in the following excerpts:

When asked about language use during class, focus group interviews in ISCED3 answers (SWE_F1_ISCED3):

> I: - Is it always only in Swedish or are different languages used in those teaching situations?
>
> Boy1: - No, it's only Swedish.
>
> Boy2: - it's just Swedish.
>
> Girl: - it's just Swedish.

The teachers speak mainly Swedish with the students (with the exception of the study guidance and mother tongue teachers, and a mathematics teacher who also use Arabic when teaching newly arrived students mathematics). However, if a student does not understand, the teachers and the students sometimes use English. However, when the students do that to help their classmates, they may be told to speak Swedish by their teacher so they develop their Swedish language skills (SWE_F1_ISCED3):

> Boy1: For example, in first year when we just started, then he [referring to a classmate] could speak less Swedish than he can now. So, I know that our teacher

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took that into account. So he helped him with words and sentences and stuff. No one teased him or laughed at him, they just tried to help.

Boy2: He goes to my class, and I see that everyone thinks and takes that into account. So they do as [name of teacher] a little, they help and adapt some studies to him, and then it gets better.

Girl: It has happened, though [??] it was kind of a long time ago, in one. But then the teacher says. They want us not to use a language other than Swedish so that we can develop in the language

In another focus group interview, the participants have teachers who use English to communicate with them since they are newly arrived students who do not master the Swedish language yet. Moreover, they have a mathematics teacher who sometimes communicate in Arabic with them and greet them in their home language:

Boy1: Yeah, and for me, like … [name of teacher], when he … the math teacher.

Boy2: Yeah, they speak also Arabic.

Boy1: They speak also Arabic. When he come, like, he could say hi to [name of Boy2] in Albanian [?? 0:25:42].

Boy2: Yeah, he always greets me in Albanian. It's like, "how are you, what do you do?" also (SWE_F5_ISCED2)

Use language differently depending on who you are communicating with

From the interviews it emerges that the students use their language repertoires differently depending on who they are communicating with. For example, the students seem to use mainly Swedish with teachers and their home languages with friends whom they share home language, mainly during breaks and in the canteen. This is exemplified with the following transcript (SWE_F3_ISCED3):

Boy: It depends on us, and who you talk to [??]. So if you talk to [name of the teacher], then you speak Swedish [??] your mother tongue he will not understand.

Interviewer: No.

Boy: But if you talk to your friends, then it's clear that you use [?? 0:10:40] other languages.

Girl 2: Yes.

Also, in school work, for example in group work and if everyone in the group share the home language, group interview participants explain that they may use their home language to communicate (SWE_F9_ISCED2). In another focus group interview it also emerges that they use their language repertoires differently depending on who they are communicating with. They give an example of how they in class use what they call "ghetto Swedish" with each other, whereas they do not use that type of language in situations like the focus group interview for instance (SWE_F7_ISCED2):

Girl1: But when we say for example you come into our Swedish lesson, then we do not speak Swedish… or not Swedish lesson, just if we say for example math lesson, we speak Swedish Swedish we speak ... says the man and stuff and ... There will be mixed ghetto languages so [laughs].

I: But if you are going to explain a math problem to someone?

Girl1: Then I would have done it in Swedish.

Girl2: "Man, check here ... [laughs] Do so man".

Girl1: Yes, exactly [laughs]. It's ghetto Swedish so it will be ... Yes, as she said, it will be such Swedish.

Boy: It depends on whom.

Girl2: Yes.

Girl1: talk to [not audible 0:21:01].

I: How do you mean depends on who?

Boy: I'm not talking like this right now in this interview but maybe I talked like that with [name of girl2].

Home languages used in different situations

As presented in a previous section, the students say that it is mostly Swedish and Arabic that are used for communication in school, but mainly Swedish during class. However, how the students use their home languages, that is in what kind of situations, also emerged in the interviews. These situations are presented in this section. For example, students use their home languages when they do not want someone to understand what they are saying:

> I think I start speaking in my mother tongue when I do not want people to understand. Although I think most people use it because they meet someone who is from the same country, or because they might get angry. (SWE_F2_ISCED3)

And another student (SWE_F3_ISCED3) says "I feel that I mostly speak Swedish, but sometimes if no one should understand [laughs], then…" Another type of situation when students use their home languages in school is when explaining something in class to another student who does not understand (Swedish), which is exemplified in the following quotes:

> Like if for example… That is, the teacher says something, then kind of, one of us don't understand for example. Then I can say "but it is so", that is, by saying the word in Arabic, you understand "yes, yes, like that". (Girl, SWE_F3_ISCED3)

> And there is also always a kind of… if she kind of… it was a new girl who started and they spoke the same language but she could not speak Swedish, and if she did not know a word or something she helped her to translate it in class. (SWE_F8_ISCED1)

However, sometimes the newly arrived students do not share any language with the teachers and the classmates, such a situation is brought up by the focus group interview with students

from the introduction class. They give an example of a Vietnamese boy, who they care for and try to help by communicating with by using body language and Swedish (SWE_F9_ISCED2):

> Boy 2: We have a newly arrived who comes from Vietnam, and he has class with us every time it is math, sports and…
>
> Girl2: Maths.
>
> Boy 2: Yes. And then during the math class… We have no other Vietnamese in our class, and it is difficult to communicate with him. For example, me, [name of class mate] and [name of class mate], we usually take him in with open arms and help him with some tasks if he does not understand and he can work in our small group or something like that.
>
> I: Do you speak English then or is it body language?
>
> Boy1: It's more body language and Swedish.

A third situation when students say they use their home languages can be related to feelings of belonging. That is sharing home language may mean sharing backgrounds and thus enables for feelings of belonging. This is illustrated in the following quotes from the focus group with three boys (SWE_F2_ISCED3):

> Boy1: Because he has… You connect to the person directly that we come from the same country, we have the same background. So you get a connection with that person.
>
> Boy2: Exactly. It is so. I think that is the case with everyone, even here in Sweden. Swedes too. If you see someone, maybe you connect. That's when you feel, "Yes, we come from the same country" so.
>
> Girl: You have something in common.
>
> I:Yes, do you have it automatically then?
>
> Girl: No, it depends. I'm not talking to every single Arab I see here.

Another type of situation when students use their home languages that emerges in one of the interviews, is that home languages is used when teasing another student: "[laughs] When you tease each other it is Arabic but when you talk to teachers it is Swedish" (SWE_F7_ISCED2).

Mixing languages

As evident from transcripts in the previous sections the students use their language repertoires in different ways and in different situations. However, the students also say that they often mix languages. This means that they mix languages within a situation, they code-switch. That is, students may for example mostly communicate in Swedish but some words or sentences they may say in for example Arabic. This is evident when a boy says: "Mostly Swedish is used. You can say something in Swedish, then you can use words from your mother tongue and then continue in Swedish" (SWE_F3_ISCED3). When one of the focus group with newly arrived students are asked what languages they speak with their friends one girls says "Just mixed"

(SWE_F5_ISCED2) are. However, the two boys say they speak mainly English with each other since they do not share home language.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

In this conclusive discussion we highlight the main results of the analysis of school as a lived space and intercultural relations in school. We also formulate some recommendations for the strengthening of children's agency in school.

School as a lived space

Ideal school and real school

The students' talk about their real school, coincides to a great extent with how they talk about their ideal school. To a large extent the students seem to be content with their school. In relation to their perceptions of their ideal and real school the role of teachers are in focus, both in relation to educational and social aspects. The students think of teachers' subject knowledge as important as well as their ability to explain so that the students can understand the content. According to the students the teachers shall not only give educational support they should also challenge them in their learning.

Although the students are mainly positive about their schools and teachers, some negative aspects are brought up. For example, the students do not appreciate constant teacher turnovers which they think affect their grades, or when teachers have different norms and rules in the classroom. They also do not appreciate noisy and rowdy classroom environments and long teacher monologues, i.e. when they have to listen to their teachers lecturing for a long time.

In the ideal and real school the students highlight the possibilities to receive educational support outside the mainstream lessons. This includes, for example, homework support after school arranged by the school or local organisations.

When it comes to social relations between students, the students refer to a positive environment in their classes and more generally in their schools. The positive social relations between the students seem to be related to that boys and girls interact with each other, both in school work and social arenas in school and are not separated in gender specific groups. In contrast to this, some students say that bullying sometimes occurs.

Affective and relational dimensions of school

The students say that they have good relations with both teachers and other significant professionals, for example student coordinators. The student coordinators are perceived as persons that are always there, and that can support and help them in different ways.

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Student participation

Students' opportunities to have influence in school seem to differ depending on whether it is related to more structural or classroom levels. On a structural level, the schools have a student council, but some of the students find it difficult to get their voices heard at this level. Whereas, at a classroom level they perceive that they have a greater influence.

Imagined futures

Many of the participating students from the compulsory schools are planning to continue their studies at upper secondary school. For example, they want to attend programs in social and natural science, childcare, economics and business/accounting and hotel and tourism. In ten years, they think that they have families and working careers such as running own businesses, working as a lawyer or psychologist, working with young children, with video editing, computer engineering and at the municipality. The students in upper secondary school are planning to get into higher education in programs such as preschool teacher, police officer, social worker, IT engineer, architect, dentist, entrepreneurs and stock trading. However, some of the participating students only have vague ideas of their future studies and work. Especially those in compulsory school.

School during the pandemic

The students' experiences of online schooling from home during the pandemic are mostly expressed in negative terms. For example, the students say that they had to manage their learning on their own at home since they did not receive enough of educational support. They also perceived the online teaching as unprofessional and unplanned. Further, many students thought it was boring not being in school and seeing classmates. Online schooling from home also seems to put pressure on the students' family relations. In contrast to the negative aspects one of the participating students thought of online schooling from home as positive since she could work better from home when there were no distractions from the classmates.

Intercultural relations at school

Experiences of schooling in different countries

In one of the interviews (SWE_F5_ISCED2) with the newly arrived students the students compare their current school with the schools they had attended before moving to Sweden, which are schools located in Iraq, Kosovo and London. They believe that the school in Sweden differs from the others when it comes to freedom, learning activities and digital tools. It seems like the students' prior schooling departs from an instrumental perspective on teaching and learning. Whereas the teaching and learning the students experience in Sweden seem to be more activity based or based on interaction among the teacher and the students. This may have consequences for what kind of agency the students may act.

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The role of language in relations with friends and classmates

Language seems to affect the students' relationships with each other. However, their answers slightly differ. Students in upper secondary class (SWE_F1_ISCED3) seem to think that language matters, but students' common interests they believe matter even more when it comes to friendship. However, the newly arrived students (SWE_F4_ISCED2) seem to think that language matters since they think that you have to share home language to become close friends. The ability to communicate in some way or another seem to be of importance to make friends according to the students.

Support – study guidance in mother tongue

The newly arrived students talk about study guidance in mother tongue as an appreciated support for their schoolwork. The study guidance tutor helps them to translate and explains texts so that the students can continue their learning.

> I: How would you rate the help you receive?
>
> Boy: Our teacher.
>
> Girl2: Well, the teacher. Yes.
>
> Boy: And then kind of friends.
>
> Girl1: First of all, you think about school. We come here to learn, to get help, so the first thing that comes to mind is the teachers and the school. Then, as he said, classmates and friends. Then the last thing you think of is family. (SWE_F3_ISCED3)

Communication

When it comes to language use in school three named languages were mentioned as commonly used in the schools, namely, Swedish, Arabic and English. In class, Swedish is mainly used according to all focus groups. That is, ordinary teaching, is basically only in Swedish. Arabic is talked about as a language that is commonly used in the school since there are many Arabic speaking students in the school. English seems mainly to be used when interlocutors do not know Swedish and do not share home language, that is when English is the only shared language.

The students use their language repertoires differently depending on who they are communicating with. The students seem to use mainly Swedish with teachers, and their home languages with friends whom they share home language, mainly during breaks and in the canteen. In school work, for example in group work and if everyone in the group share the home language, they may use their home language to communicate. According to one focus group, in class they use what they call "ghetto Swedish" when communicating with each other, whereas they do not use that type of language in conversations with other who are not their friends and classmates. Further, the students seem to use their home languages for different reasons such as when they do not want someone to understand what they are talking about,

when explaining something in class to another student who does not understand (Swedish), and to create a sense of belonging. That is, sharing home language may mean sharing backgrounds and thus enables for feelings of belonging. In summary, the students use their language repertoires in different ways in different situations. However, it does not seem to be either or, that only one language is used, the students also often mix languages. This means that they mix languages within a situation, they code-switch and/or translanguage.

Recommendations

Through the focus groups, three different professions emerged as particularly important to the students. The students' teachers, student coordinators and study guidance tutors (and mother tongue teachers) seem to play important roles for the students' schooling. Thus, it seems reasonable to highlight this when making recommendations. One recommendation is that teachers focus on both educational and social support and not solely on one of them. Further, it seems like the students appreciate further social and educational support, which can be provided by student coordinators and study guidance in the mother tongue tutors. Student coordinators focus on the students' well-being and may be a great social support to the students and their schooling and thus another recommendation is that schools employ student coordinators. Study guidance in mother tongue tutors do not only translate texts and tasks, they may also have other resources that they may use when tutoring. This includes for example knowledge about the students' prior and current educational systems and pedagogical practices, and a developed linguistic awareness about differences and similarities between Swedish and the mother tongue. Thus, a third recommendation is to strengthen study guidance in mother tongue for students who need it.

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