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Examining the Practice and Beliefs of Swedish and English Use in EFL Teaching

En undersökning av praktik och tro av svenska och engelska användning i EFL undervisning

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Abstract
There has long been a debate regarding how much Swedish and English can and should be used in the EFL classroom. Some favor using only English, whereas others prefer using a mixture of languages i.e. translanguaging (Garcia, 2012). This study explores the language used by EFL teachers in Sweden. Through observations, we looked into the extent and functions of English and Swedish used by four EFL teachers in Southern Sweden. By conducting interviews, we were also able to ascertain the teachers’ beliefs about teachers’ language use and what factors they perceive to have affected those beliefs. The results were compared to previous research related to the two approaches and they were also related to the steering documents for Swedish secondary schools. The results show that teachers used predominantly English in their teaching and that this usage also corresponded to their beliefs. Some discrepancies were found between their beliefs in using Swedish and their actual practice. Furthermore, the participants' beliefs were found to be mainly affected by their teacher education, research, and their personal language learning experience.

Keywords: EFL, Translanguaging, Target language use, Teacher beliefs
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1. Introduction

Macaro et al. (2014) claims that the language use of EFL teachers is perhaps the most essential issue in the modern EFL classroom. Although it has been nearly a decade since Macaro et al. made this claim, researchers still have not been able to properly address this question. When reviewing the research area, two sides are apparent: one favoring the monolingual approach of mainly using the target language (TL) English (Turnbull, 2001), and one favoring the translanguaging approach, of using more than one language (Garcia, 2012). Multiple studies have been conducted to investigate the extent and functions of language use in the English foreign language (EFL) classroom (Bozorgian, & Fallahpour, 2015; Sali, 2014; Paker & Karaağaç, 2015), and some have also been conducted in the Swedish context (Adolfsson, 2022; Andersson & Khwaja, 2017; Kazemipour, 2018), but they fail to fully answer why teachers in Sweden chose to use the monolingual approach or the translanguaging approach.

In Swedish policy documents, information concerning when and how much of the TL should be used when teaching was briefly mentioned. In the commented material for the syllabus in 2011, one sentence stated that teaching should be implemented to the highest possible extent in the TL (Skolverket, 2011). This sentence was then removed in its entirety from the current syllabus for English (Skolverket, 2022A), and no explicit writing about the use of TL teaching is visible.

In the commented material for the current syllabus (Skolverket, 2022B), it is stated that English should be expressed in a communicative and action-oriented way, which aligns with the Common European Framework of References for Languages, referenced as CEFR (Council of Europe, 2020). It also states that students should be able to develop their linguistic repertoire (Skolverket, 2022B). This means that the curriculum (Skolverket, 2022A) shows that now there is a slight shift in support of using translanguaging in the Swedish EFL¹ classroom (Brevik & Rindal, 2020).

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¹ Regarding the use of the different terms English as a second language (ESL) or English as a foreign language (EFL) we have chosen to use the term EFL since most research in this area uses that term and therefore EFL will be used to reference English education in Sweden.
The monolingual approach to EFL teaching is motivated by the claim that through language exposure, learners will acquire a language. Krashen (1981) theorized this approach with the *Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis*, and nowadays terms such as “immersion” and “language bath” are commonly used to motivate TL use in EFL teaching. Furthermore, more recent studies also give support to immersion and language bath regarding how to increase vocabulary (Lo & Murphy, 2010; Patsaoura, 2019; Gierlinger & Wagner, 2016). In the Swedish context, Lundberg (2010) claims that using Swedish in the EFL classroom will hinder students from developing their communicative skills. This claim is also supported by Lundahl (2014) who explains that students need to use the TL in order to develop their speaking in English. Furthermore, the CEFR advocates that students should learn via direct exposure to authentic L2 use. One of the ways to achieve this could be through face-to-face interaction with a native speaker which, in this case, is a teacher using native linguistic repertoire. To summarize, TL is commonly considered to play an important role in L2 acquisition.

On the other hand, a number of recent studies have shown support for the translanguaging approach. The translanguage theory includes, as a fundamental tenet, that there is a common underlying language proficiency among all the languages of bilinguals. When switching between vocabulary and sentences in the TL and Swedish it should not be viewed as turning on and off two separate bilingual languages, but rather using an individual's linguistic repertoire (Garcia, 2012). A user of languages is not considered to “have” a language, but rather the language is a communicative practice and it should be action-oriented, something that corresponds with the CEFR. Further, the theory of translanguaging opposes that there is a first language or second language, and the place native speakers have. Instead, there are many languages in the linguistic repertoire and they are at different points on a bilingual continuum (Garcia, 2012). For example, studies claim that translanguaging can boost vocabulary learning (Brown, 2021; Leonet, Cenoz, et al., 2020; Yazar & Dikilitas, 2022). Additionally, Lundahl (2014) claims that feedback should, if needed, be performed in the L1 since feedback is useless unless it is understood. This means that, in some instances, the translanguaging approach is effective in the EFL classroom.

The teaching practice a teacher chooses is largely dependent on teacher beliefs. (Vartuli, 2005). A previous study has examined teacher beliefs regarding the use of languages in the classroom.
(Källkvist et al., 2019) and they found a generally positive attitude toward bilingualism. In our study, teacher beliefs will be examined since it is one of the factors that affect the general teaching principle in the language classroom (Johnson, 1999). We will also seek to understand if any specific factors have influenced those beliefs. Potential factors can show a notion of how Swedish EFL teachers’ practices are influenced.

To summarize, it is apparent that both the monolingual and translanguaging approaches have their advantages. The current study uses previous investigations (Adolfsson, 2022; Andersson & Khwaja, 2017; Kazemipour, 2018; Johansson, 2014) as a starting point and then investigates teacher beliefs in an attempt to provide new data to help identify which approach is viewed as being more effective in the Swedish context. Comparing our findings with research is also vital since the Swedish Education Act (SFS 2010:800, kap. 1 § 5) states that education should be based on “science”. Lastly, as Brevik and Rindal (2020) claim, the issue in this research area is not whether or not additional languages should be used in the EFL classroom, but how teachers should balance the use of the TL with the use of additional languages. With this investigation, we want to add our voice to the debate regarding how this balancing act should be performed.
2. Aim and Research Questions

Our aim is to investigate how, when, and why EFL teachers use English and Swedish in the Swedish EFL classroom. We will examine the functions of translanguaging when English and Swedish are used, in EFL teaching, and the reasons why they use the chosen language. Additionally, we want to explore the perceived beliefs of their English and Swedish practice, as well as factors affecting the beliefs. This will be compared to previous research, language theories, and policy documents. Through this investigation, we hope to fill a gap regarding how EFL teachers in Sweden should consider their language choice, with the support of research. Our specific questions are as follows:

1. To what extent and for what functions do EFL teachers use English and Swedish in the classroom?
2. What beliefs do teachers have about the use of English and Swedish in the classroom?
3. What factors have influenced those beliefs?
3. Background

This section will cover key concepts, the monolingual approach, the translanguage approach, and teacher beliefs, which will constitute the foundation of our research. The last two paragraphs, context and policies, will describe the environment in which EFL teaching takes place and the policies that guide the teaching.

3.1 The monolingual approach

The support for the TL approach, or the monolingual approach, is primarily based on the concept of exposure. Krashen (1981) uses this concept in his Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis and claims that a language learner needs to be exposed to a language in order to learn it. This theory has been applied in many different contexts and is fundamental for the immersion method (Swain & Johnson, 1997) and language bath approach (Håkansson, 2019). Since these terms are so similar, they will both be referred to as the immersion method. At its core, the language immersion method entails that a subject is conducted in a second language (Curtain, 1986). All the interaction and instruction are performed in the TL with minimal presence of any other language. The theory claims that learners benefit from language exposure in their language development. One can problematize this method regarding which context it is applied to. We argue that a clear distinction needs to be made regarding if this method is applied in reference to total immersion, or partial immersion. Total immersion is when the teaching is performed fully in a foreign or second language (Met, 1987). This can, for example, be when a language learner attends an exchange in a foreign country, or when a school decides to perform all of the teaching in a specific language. Contrarily, partial immersion is when teaching is performed in two languages during a school day (Christoffersen, 2017). This can, for example, be within certain subjects. This means that, in partial immersion, the immersion will cease to exist at a certain point. This distinction between total immersion and partial immersion is important because it means that there are varying degrees regarding how much exposure the students are receiving. Students engaged in total immersion will undoubtedly be exposed to, quantitatively, more of the foreign language than students who are engaged in partial immersion.
With the difference between partial and total immersion in mind, it becomes important to evaluate immersion as a teaching approach. For instance, Swain and Johnson (1997) give weight to the immersion method in their findings, however, one needs to consider the context of their study and compare it to the context of Sweden. Swain and Johnson investigated the immersion method in the context of Canada, a country with two official languages, meaning that in their context, French and English are obtained as second languages and students are immersed in both languages outside of the school context as well. This does not make their findings irrelevant to our study, since they investigated whether young students' first language acquisition would be impaired with the immersion method. Their results suggest the immersion method does not impede language acquisition and instead illustrate that learners become bilingual language learners through the immersion method. Doing an accurate language context comparison between Sweden and Canada is difficult, but since English in Sweden has a strong position (Bolton & Meierkord, 2013), similarities can be observed and therefore the immersion method could have benefits for EFL learning in the Swedish context. The Swedish context will be further explained in section 3.4.

Recently, support for the immersion method is seen in studies by Lo and Murphy (2010) and Patsaoura (2019), who investigated the effect of language immersion and its effect on vocabulary acquisition in EFL learning. Both studies used an experimental approach and found that the participating immersion group achieved better than the control group which did not use the immersion method. Similarly, Gierlinger and Wagner (2016), describe that in CLIL research, immersion improves vocabulary acquisition.

Lastly, it should be noted that EFL teachers might not use the monolingual approach due to learning benefits, but because it also increases their credibility as language teachers. Hughes et al. (2006) found that EFL teachers considered high TL use to increase their perceived language proficiency and credibility as language teachers. This is in line with Alshehri’s (2017) study which found that EFL teachers felt ashamed when they used the L1 in their teaching. Both these sources show that teachers might want to exhibit that they use a lot of TL in their teaching. When conducting our investigation, this is something we will consider.
3.2 The translanguaging approach

In the EFL classroom, there has long been a debate about what language to use and to what extent. The current teaching of EFL has changed from promoting the extensive use of TL to the use of other linguistic resources (2022A). In this paper, we will address the use of English with the support of Swedish, as the translanguaging approach.

The translanguaging theory has its origin in North America with prominent scholars Jim Cummins (2007) and Ofelia Garcia (2012) focusing on the bilingual speakers of English and French and, English and Spanish. The theory of translanguaging is based on bilingual language use in contrast to monolingual language use (Garcia, 2012). According to translanguaging, the users of languages are not considered to “have” a language but rather that the language is a communicative practice and that it should be action-oriented, something that corresponds with the CEFR. Further, the theory of translanguaging contests that there is a hierarchy amongst languages and, the apparent place native speakers have. Instead, there are different languages in the linguistic repertoire at different points on a bilingual continuum (Garcia, 2012).

However, the concept of translanguaging has recently become applicable in the research field of multilingualism. In the field, it is used as a generic term for integrating students' entire linguistic range in order to achieve communicative goals (García, 2012). Garcia (2012, p.1) further states “Translanguaging refers to the language practices of bilingual people.”. Furthermore, when using English and Swedish it is not just the use of different languages, one at a time. This view would be perceived as going from English to Swedish as switching off English and turning on Swedish. This would imply that the languages would be used without any association with the other language. Taking this approach towards the two languages would be a code-switching approach according to Garcia (2012). In our study, we will apply the translanguaging theory within the Swedish school context and the EFL teaching context. In our context, we will consider the different languages to be English and Swedish and that the two languages are parts of one linguistic repertoire, and together they are a part of the common underlying language proficiency (Cummins, 2007).
According to Cummins (2007), there is a common underlying proficiency amongst all bilinguals. He claims that languages cannot be divided into different compartments but rather that all languages create a common underlying proficiency. Proficiency is the base of an oblivious knowledge of how a language works. Common underlying abilities can be the transfer of metacognitive and metalinguistic learning strategies such as strategies to summarize and strategies for visualization (Cummins, 2007). Another underlying proficiency is the transfer of linguistic structures such as bending patterns of verbs and concept information such as grammatical structures (Cummins, 2007). This means that, when students are exposed to both English and Swedish, it enhances the occasion for learning and language development.

The linguistic effects on cognitive functions show a positive outcome when using translanguaging. When teachers use the bilingual approach and use both languages, students’ learning enhances and it promotes the development of cognition and knowledge development. This is according to Barac & Bailystock’s (2011) knowledge overview, which examined the connection between students' bilingualism and their language development. Additionally, the most prominent finding from their study is that bilingual pupils demonstrate a more developed awareness of linguistic structures and functions (Barac & Bailystock, 2011). This is more commonly referred to as metalinguistic awareness according to Cummins (2007). When students move between languages they are exposed to multiple opportunities for language learning and this increases metalinguistic awareness. It should be noted, that the interpretations of these studies have been questioned by some scholars, who state that the evidence for cognitive control, for example, is weak or non-existing (Paap & Greenberg, 2013; Humphrey & Valian 2012).

Recent studies have examined the effect of translanguaging on vocabulary learning. Through experimental approaches, translanguaging was found to greatly increase vocabulary learning (Brown, 2021; Leonet, et al., 2020; Yazar & Dikilitas, 2022). The studies all reported that students found it beneficial to be able to use the L1 in order to facilitate their learning of the L2. Leonet et al. (2020) specifically studied the increase of morphological awareness, but as Nation (2008) claims, this is a very efficient method of learning vocabulary, and therefore they were able to come to this conclusion.
Additionally, our main focus will be metalinguistic awareness and common underlying proficiency of the translanguaging theory. For example, when we register that a teacher uses Swedish, to facilitate understanding, we do not perceive it as switching on and off two separate bilingual languages, but rather that the teacher is using their entire linguistic repertoire (Garcia, 2012).

Moreover, to examine how teachers use translanguage in the classroom we must break down its reasons and categorize the different functions of translanguaging. The use of the L1 in the EFL classroom has long been seen as an impediment to learning. However, due to the entry of the translanguage theory in EFL teaching, the L1 can now have a positive effect on learning (Garcia, 2012) and L1 facilitates a fuller and deeper understanding (Lasagabaster, 2013). Sapitri (2018) has examined the use of translanguaging in the EFL classroom and divided the functions of translanguaging into 1) knowledge construction, 2) classroom management, and 3) interpersonal relations. According to Sapitri et al. (2018), there are additional reasons why teachers use these functions of translanguaging. In our research, we will examine the answers from the interviews, these functions, and reasons for using translanguaging when teaching English in an EFL classroom.

3.3 Beliefs and practice

Teacher beliefs affect teachers’ practices (Isenberg, 1990), and because of this, it becomes relevant to examine teachers’ beliefs and the factors that affect those beliefs. Concerning the latter, Vartuli (2005) explains that teacher beliefs are shaped by “personal experiences, education, and values” (p. 76). In our study, the theoretical framework behind teacher beliefs is based on Phipps and Borg (2009). In their studies, they have found that teachers teaching grammar distinguish between core beliefs and peripheral beliefs. Core beliefs are deeply rooted beliefs that are very important to a teacher. This could be, for example, that all students should receive an equal education, and teaching should be carried out in the same manner. In our study, one such belief could be that teachers teach English with the same amount of TL use no matter what students they teach. On the other hand, peripheral beliefs are beliefs that are important, but not more important than core beliefs. Phipps and Borg (2009) found that EFL teachers abandoned peripheral beliefs due to contextual factors such as students’ expectations and policy documents and that the most influential factor to shape teachers’ practice would be the core beliefs. Additionally, this
corresponds to Fang’s (1996) research overview that also supports that teachers sometimes need to abandon their teaching beliefs due to various outlining factors. In our study, we will examine if the use of English and Swedish are considered core beliefs among teachers, or if other factors make them peripheral beliefs.

3.4 Context

In our investigation of the use of English or Swedish in the classroom, it is important to understand the context in which the language is used. By this, we mean a brief overview of the role that English has in Swedish society. We are investigating language use in the EFL classroom for learners aged 13-16. According to Huang (2017), learners in this age group encounter English on a regular basis. This is not a revolutionary statement, and this daily exposure gives support to the notice that English is such a predominant language in Sweden, that it might be considered a second language. Bolton and Meierkord (2013) explain that there have been many discussions regarding if English should be considered an official language. As of this writing, English is not an official language in Sweden, but it can still be argued that in practice English is a second language in Sweden, but in theory, it remains a foreign language. This idea is in line with Ushioda’s (2013) theory that although some countries consider English to be a foreign language, circumstances around the world have caused their relation to the language to change in various ways. In the case of Sweden, we argue that technological advancements have impacted the exposure young learners receive in order to give it the status of a second language.

However, although English can be considered a second language for many learners in Sweden, one cannot assume that the same holds true for all students. Sundqvist (2009) highlights this expectation and explains that young learners in Sweden are expected to have a good knowledge of English. This expectation is troublesome because there are, simultaneously, many learners in Sweden who have not been exposed to English to the same extent as other learners. This difference needs to be considered by English teachers. For example, Sundqvist and Sylvén (2014) found in their study that there was a large gendered difference between learners' extracurricular language exposure. They found that boys reported more than twice as much time spent performing extracurricular activities in English than girls. This means that, in their study, the participants received a very varied amount of exposure to the English language. The reasons for this
phenomenon would require its own investigation, but one factor to this difference could be the fact that language learners need to be proficient to some degree in order to understand and engage with a language medium. For instance, Quigley (2018) claims that one needs to understand 95% of the contents of a text in order to fully comprehend it. What we mean by this proficiency requirement, is that some English learners in Sweden might not engage in extracurricular English activities since they have not crossed this proficiency threshold (Council of Europe, 2020). As a result, extracurricular English activities will make some learners of English more proficient in the language, while also making other students fall behind since they are not improving their English through extracurricular activities.

Moreover, an answer to this issue is that this gap in English exposure is filled during English lessons. However, this raises the question of whether the monolingual or translanguaging approach should be used since they both have their advantages and disadvantages. The monolingual approach has the benefit of providing the students with exposure, filling the quantitative gap some have due to not engaging in extracurricular English activities. The negative aspect of this approach is that it requires the teacher to be able to accommodate their TL usage to all learners in a given classroom since students will not be able to learn the language if the language use is too advanced. This corresponds to Krashen’s (1981) Comprehensible Input and Vygotsky’s (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), and, in this context, means that the knowledge received by the learner will only be learned if it is at an appropriate level compared to their current proficiency. The translanguaging approach compensates the negative aspects of the monolingual approach by bridging the learners’ lower proficiency of the TL by using the L1 for support (Garcia, 2012), and therefore gives the students a more qualitative exposure to English. However, the disadvantage of the translanguaging approach can be that the quantitative exposure to English can be lowered if, for example, both the students and teachers choose to speak less English due to the translanguaging approach. This was found in Krulatz et al. ’s (2016) research, where it was shown that 38% of EFL teachers have less than 55% of target language use in the classroom. In summary, the issue concerns quantity and quality, and of course, greater quantity can mean better quality and the other way around.


3.5 Policies

Concerning policies, our starting point is the CEFR. An important aspect of the CEFR is the proficiency level of the user which is adopted in the Swedish curriculum. The CEFR states that there are three stages for the learner progressing from A: basic user, B independent user, and C: proficient user. Based on these metrics, the students in our study will be both beginner users and independent users. This is something we will take into account in our investigation of the use of English and Swedish when teaching in an EFL classroom. Related to different learners' proficiency, Lundberg (2010) argues that target language exposure in the EFL classroom is essential to increase language learners’ proficiency. Hearing the language being spoken might, for some pupils, be the only time they are exposed to the English language. However, as mentioned previously, the amount of exposure that students receive can differ greatly, and this enables some learners to become independent learners, while those who do not receive this extracurricular exposure continue being basic users. Because of this, if the level of TL in the classroom would decrease, the learners with a high degree of extracurricular exposure would not suffer as much. Comparatively, for students considered to be basic users, teaching in the TL may be the only exposure to the English language they receive, and removing that exposure could be detrimental to their English language development.

Moreover, the syllabus for English (Skolverket, 2022A) contains no guidelines as to how much of the teaching should be performed in English or Swedish. The above-mentioned difference in learners’ proficiency and exposure creates a conundrum for secondary teachers in the Swedish context. Instead, guidelines on this topic can be found in the commented syllabus for English (Skolverket, 2022B), which states that students should be able to “interpret and understand”. If we assume that year 7 primarily consists of basic users one can question the necessity of teaching only in English as opposed to taking a translanguaging approach, which is arguably effective in addressing the need for interpretation and understanding.

Furthermore, a document that does provide guidelines for this issue is the English subject’s commented material for upper secondary school (Skolverket, 2022C). In this document, there is much support for teaching in English as much as possible. It states that “...in all materially, teaching should be conducted in TL respective English”. The plan further states the benefits of
teaching predominantly in English “Students will hear more of English and the linguistic exposure increases.” (p. 10). The positive effect it has on students’ practice is likewise mentioned as the authenticity of the use of English, something that is frequently supported in various research (Alshumaimeri & Alzyadi, 2015; Shuang, 2014). However, the commented shared subject plan does not prohibit the use of other languages when teaching. The document states: “It prerequisites a professional estimation if there are situations where the use of another language than the TL can benefit the student’s knowledge development. In such situations, the teacher can stimulate the student to use their entire linguistic repertoire as a resource” (p.10). The latter part is a direct reference to the translanguaging approach.

Lastly, Börjesson (2022) has made a supporting document for secondary school with reference to the use of the TL. It states that “All language teachers should use the TL as much as possible in teaching.” (p. 17) and that “Exposure to the TL is essential to develop the language and to enhance the vocabulary” (p.14). However, the document does not state what strategies or approaches to use on different levels of learners, instead it only distinguishes between lower and higher levels of learners. Börjesson argues that, for lower-level learners, TL use can be challenging when teaching, and for higher-level learners, TL offers fewer challenges. Conclusively, although the document provides some guidance on this issue, it is too vague concerning the different levels of learners. The two levels of learners will be used in this paper concerning why and how much teachers use TL when teaching.

To conclude, how much English or Swedish should be used in the classroom is essential when it comes to language teaching, and for what functions it is used. Additionally, the teachers' perceived beliefs about their practice and the perceived factors affecting their beliefs are also vital to investigate.
4. Method

The current study uses a combination of classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to investigate when, how, and why EFL teachers use English and Swedish. The interviews are meant to help us identify what perceived beliefs the teachers have regarding the use of English and Swedish when it comes to teaching, and which factors they perceive to affect those beliefs. The following subsections will describe our methodological approach and the context for the data collection in greater detail.

4.1 Methodology

Our interview guide and observation scheme are based on previous studies within this research area (Adolfsson, 2022; Johansson, 2014). This increases our study's generalizability (Hays & McKibben, 2021), allows us to triangulate our findings (Christoffersen & Johannesen, 2015), and therefore increases the credibility of this qualitative study. Furthermore, we aimed for rich and detailed data within the limited scope of the degree project, providing us with a contextualized understanding of the use of English and Swedish, beliefs, and factors influencing the beliefs (Christoffersen & Johannesen, 2015). To gather this data, we used a qualitative case study to explore the real-life context of an EFL teacher. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were used to give us ample data within a limited time. To support our data and strengthen its reliability, we performed the observations prior to the interviews.

4.2 Participants

The participants in our study are four secondary school teachers with a range of 5 to 25 years of teaching practice. The schools were two public schools and two private schools in a major city in Southern Sweden. The requirements for our study were that the teachers were licensed teachers with more than two years of experience and that they are currently teaching at a secondary school. The reason for this is to interview teachers with a solid base of practice and experience. In our results and discussion, the participants will be labeled: T1, T2, T3, and T4. The selection of participants was a combination of a convenience selection and a random selection. We started out by contacting schools and teachers that we have encountered throughout our teacher training and
collected three teachers in that manner. After that, we randomly contacted two schools and collected two more, but unfortunately, one of these two was rescheduled and later canceled on us. We assume that the teachers that participated were interested in how English and Swedish are used in the EFL classroom. Another assumption is that we think that they did not have any problems with getting their teaching reviewed by other parties. Our conclusion concerning the selection of participants is that we are aware that our data could be overrepresented by teachers that are confident in their use of English in the classroom.

4.3 Instrument

Data was collected using classroom observations, based on an observation scheme, and semi-structured interviews. The combination of observations and interviews gave us the opportunity to collect valid data for our research. The observations reflect actual teachers' behavior and actions in the classroom. The interviews provided us with information about the use of Swedish and English beyond the observations, as well as their beliefs and factors that the teachers perceived to affect the beliefs. The procedure for the data collection was that the observation preceded the interview, which made it possible to ask follow-up questions if there was something in the observations which needed further investigation. We discuss both instruments in more detail in the following sections.

4.3.1 Observations

The method of observation was chosen because it was expected to help us gain a large amount of data in a focused area (Mackey & Gass, 2021). Furthermore, observations allow the researcher to absorb the phenomenon firsthand (Mackey & Gass, 2021), and this is particularly interesting since we want to find out how English and Swedish are used in the EFL classroom. If classroom observations were not conducted, we could simply have asked our participants during the interviews about their use of English and Swedish, but then we might not have obtained accurate answers since interviewees sometimes have difficulty defining their own behaviors and practices (Wynder, 1994). Instead, we would have only gained their perceived practices, instead of their actual practices. Our observation guide is based on observations used by previous studies.
(Adolfsson, 2022) and the functions of translanguaging (Sapitiri et al., 2018). The ten points of the guide were divided into Sapitiri et al.’s (2018) three functions of translanguage (Appendix 1.).

The procedure of the observations was that we briefly introduced ourselves to the class, and explained the purpose of the study. Then we sat quietly at the back of the classroom and marked the number of instances the observed teacher used English and Swedish in each category. By sitting in the back, quietly, and not taking part in the interaction, we aimed to minimize our effect on the class and the observed teacher (Christoffersen & Johannessen, 2015).

The aim of the observation guide was to properly apply the concrete practices of teachers to the functions of translanguaging to accurately analyze the language choices of EFL teachers. In actual practice, it should, of course, be noted that our observations are subjected to the Observer’s Paradox (Denscombe, 2009), meaning that our presence can affect the behaviors of our participants. This issue is difficult to mitigate, and there is always the risk that it might affect our results in some way.

4.3.2 Interviews

The semi-structured interview gave the interviewee the possibility to answer openly within the scope of the concept and provided us with broad data but with the beneficial limitation of not wandering too far off-topic (Christoffersen & Johannessen, 2015). The interviews were recorded in order to allow transcribing more effectively, Alvehus (2013) notes that this aspect might make the interviewees uncomfortable, but we tried to comfort this by ensuring that none of the recordings would be accessible online. The interviews were conducted in Swedish to ensure that the interviewees could speak freely and comfortably without any language barriers but were then translated into English during the transcribing phase. The themes for the interview guide were the use of Swedish, the use of English, the mixed-use of Swedish and English, and beliefs and factors that have influenced the beliefs (Appendix 2). The themes for the used interview guide were replicated from Johansson’s (2014) study. A follow-up question via Email was sent to T1 regarding what language they used when teaching grammar. The answers to the questions were then categorized according to Sapitiri et al.’s (2018) three functions of translanguaging, knowledge construction, classroom management, and interpersonal relationship. The function, of knowledge
construction was divided into three subsections, to facilitate understanding, to provide L1 and TL comparison, and to elicit students' responses. Each question was tagged with a comment on each function and reason in this deductive coding of data. Regarding the answers to teacher beliefs, each of the interview answers was analyzed and then coded with “belief” leading us to three beliefs, the monolingual approach, the translanguage approach, and the level of proficiency. Answers from “factors affecting beliefs” were inductively coded into main points: teachers' training, personal teaching experiences, other colleagues, supporting documents, and the beliefs of students' extracurricular learning. The answers from teachers' beliefs and factors affecting beliefs were coded in an inductive approach due to the partly open semi-structured interview questions. We simply did not know what type of information each question would produce. The aim of the interview guide was to thoroughly examine to what extent and for what functions EFL teachers use English and Swedish in the classroom, their beliefs about the use of English and Swedish in the classroom, and what factors have influenced those beliefs.

4.4 Analysis

The observation and the interview aimed to capture English and Swedish use, beliefs, and factors influencing those beliefs. Regarding the use of English and Swedish, the observation and interview answers were categorized and coded to fit Sapitiri et al.’s (2018) three functions of translanguaging. Categorizing and coding the answers this way increases the opportunities for high validity, i.e. it gives us answers to what we wanted to know about the use, beliefs, and factors influencing the beliefs.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Regarding the interviewees were taken into account and procedures concerning “Good research practice” (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017) were used. When we contacted the teachers we informed them clearly what the study was about, examining the use and beliefs of Swedish and English in the classroom. This could on the other hand contribute to an increased use of TL in the observations. Written and oral consent was collected from all teachers making the data collection clear and transparent. To follow GDPR, teachers' anonymity was preserved and the data was stored on offline devices to prevent unwarranted access to the information (Denscombe, 2017).
5. Results

The aim of this study was to examine how, when, and why EFL teachers use the TL and Swedish. We have divided the results into four subsections. The first two subsections cover Sapitri et al.’s (2018) 3 functions of translanguaging. Subsection 5.1 is based on the observation; to what extent and for what functions do EFL teachers use English and Swedish in the classroom? Subsection 5.2 is based on the interviews; functions of translanguaging - why do teachers use Swedish? The third and the fourth subsections 5.3 and 5.4 are based on the interview; what beliefs do teachers have about the use of English and Swedish in the classroom and, what factors have influenced those beliefs?

5.1 To what extent and for what functions do teachers use English & Swedish?

The result of our observation is divided according to Sapitri et al.’s (2018) three functions of translanguaging: knowledge construction, classroom management, and interpersonal relations. We were able to observe the concrete functions and reasons described in our observation guide (Appendix 1) and received an insight into how EFL teachers use English and Swedish in the classroom. The observation guide divided the function knowledge constructions into three reasons: to facilitate understanding, to provide L1 and TL comparison, and to elicit students' responses. In the observation, the functions of classroom management and interpersonal, relations were not divided into their respective reasons. The reason for this was twofold, Sapitri et al.’s (2018) study generated the highest number of hits in the function of knowledge construction. The other reason was that we examine the translanguaging theory with a focus on cognition. Figure 1 gives a general oversight into the combined extent and ratio of the language used in the classroom for each reason for the function in knowledge construction, classroom management, and interpersonal relations (Sapitri et al., 2018).

Figure 1

*Usage of English and Swedish for each function of Translanguaging*
Figure 1 shows that although English is used to an extensive amount, approximately 82% of the time during our observations, Swedish fills certain functions. In particular, the function, knowledge construction, and the reason to facilitate understanding, when reading vocabulary learning. The other function of Swedish is classroom management. Our observations also show that teachers mainly use English for the function of knowledge construction and the reasons, to facilitate understanding and to elicit students' responses. On the other hand, Swedish was commonly used to provide L1 and TL comparisons. Lastly, concerning the functions of classroom management and interpersonal relations, the usage of English and Swedish was quite even. Of course, one should note that individual differences did occur, but those differences concerned, the occurrences of the aspect as a whole, rather than the language used. By this, we mean that some of our participants, for example, asked more questions to the pupils, than other participants. We primarily believe that this is affected by the type of lesson that we observe. For example, one participant held a lesson focusing on reading and discussion and therefore they asked their students many questions. By presenting all of the instances made by all participants combined, the general patterns for each function are shown.
5.2 Functions of translanguaging - why do teachers use Swedish

The interview questions were divided into three areas 1) questions about their perceived practice, 2) questions about their perceived beliefs, and 3) questions about the factors affecting those beliefs. The results of the first area from the interview are, as to the observations, divided according to Sapitri et al.’s (2018) functions of translanguaging. The functions are knowledge construction, classroom management, and interpersonal relations.

5.2.1 Knowledge construction

The first function of translanguaging is knowledge construction, and there are three reasons why EFL teachers use this function: to facilitate understanding, to facilitate L1 and TL comparison, and to elicit students’ responses (Sapitri et al., 2018).

5.2.1.1 To facilitate understanding

The reason to facilitate understanding is to draw on students' bilingual assets in the translanguaging theory and that the use of L1 supports the TL (Sapitri et al., 2018). All of the participating teachers believed that Swedish could be used to enhance the learning of English. This was stated several times during the interviews. For example, T1 states that “But, in order to get all the students involved, I need to use Swedish, so perhaps a translation or summary or above all for instructions.” Similarly, T2 case that “extra explanations to English instructions. To translate vocabulary if the explanation is not working”. T3 also states that “Grammar always Swedish especially in year seven and eight”. In addition to that, T4 state “my weak students’, in English, to make them understand” and that she speaks Swedish to them. To summarize, to facilitate understanding, all four teachers acknowledge that they use Swedish to convey a deeper and fuller understanding.

5.2.1.2 To facilitate L1 and TL comparison

The second reason for knowledge construction is to facilitate L1 and TL comparison. According to Sapitri et al.’s (2018) study, when teaching EFL, the support of L1 would give meaning to concepts. In our study, all four teachers stated that they use Swedish partly or fully when teaching grammar. T2 states that “Grammar as an example I run in Swedish and then say what it's called in
English. To know that the concepts are also available in English. Concepts can be difficult to understand.” On the other hand T1 and T3 case that at the beginning of secondary school, they use mainly Swedish but at the end they might as well use English. T1 states that it is a matter of progression “In the beginning a lot of Swedish, but gradually as much English as possible” T3 further case that it is a matter of repetition and that she might as well use English in year nine. T3 expresses “Grammar always Swedish especially in year seven and eight and then maybe in year ninth when there is repetition and we have done it once before then I can very well take it in English.” Moreover, T2 claims that she mainly uses Swedish for the most part when teaching grammar, but also uses a mix of Swedish and English “But that situation and then I also do it at grammar, reviews because for the most part. Or that I mix things up, I usually use terminology in both English and Swedish.” To sum up, concerning L1 and TL comparison, all four teachers stated that they all use Swedish during grammar teaching. T1 teaches mainly in Swedish, T2 passes to English if it is a matter of repetition in year nine, T3 increases the degree of English over time and T4 uses both English and Swedish terminology.

5.2.1.3 Elicit students' response

The last reason for the function, knowledge construction, to elicit students' responses, did not get any answers from the interviewee’. Asking questions to elicit students' responses of something factual information, factual questions, or referential questions, when you want the students to elaborate on a topic, was not mentioned in our interview with any of the teachers in our study.

5.2.2 Classroom management

The second function of translanguaging is classroom management. The reasons for this function relate in one way or another to managing students' behavior. Another way to address the reason is to manage or discipline students (Sapitri et al., 2018). The way to do that is to utilize the Swedish language in the EFL classroom. The reason to manage or discipline students was mentioned by two of our participants, T2 and T3, as “manage” or “discipline” students. T2 states “Yes, in the case of reprimands there are advantages because then it is better to listen. Greater effect than in English. One becomes a barrier. It is sharp mode when I speak Swedish.”. T3 states that “if I lash out at someone or reprimand someone like I did today, I step out of the role of teacher and be myself more and Swedish is my emotional language.”. However, T1 does not mention his actions
in managing the students but mentions that he always speaks English when addressing students when using vernacular English that everyone understands. T1 states that “Always English when they enter the classroom, welcome, take your place, cap off, screens down. Cap off and screens down is clearly a case of managing students”. To summarize, T2 and T3 mention that they both use Swedish when disciplining and managing pupils. T3 does not acknowledge that he disciplines or manages students but uses English for reprimands such as “screens down”. T4 does not mention anything that indicates the use of disciplining or managing students nor in English or Swedish.

5.2.3 Interpersonal relations
The third and last function of translanguaging is interpersonal relations. The reason for EFL teachers to convey that is to develop deeper personal relationships with the students as well as to create a secure and safe classroom atmosphere (Sapitri et al., 2018). Two of our four interviewees, T3 and T4 mention the use of Swedish to develop deeper personal relationships. T3 states “To comfort or to motivate, when it is something related to emotions. Then I think it is more effective to use the mother tongue.” Also, T4 states “but also to push them, to get them, I don't speak, I mix, I guess my goal is at least to mix, but yes, that, usually it's with weak students.” To sum up, two of the four teachers use Swedish to enhance interpersonal relations, T3 exclusively in Swedish whereas T4 used a mix dependent on the proficiency of the learner. T1 and T2 did not mention interpersonal relations at all.

5.3 Beliefs
Beliefs affect what you do and how you teach. This section is divided into sections regarding beliefs of the monolingual approach, the translanguaging approach, proficiency levels effect, and other contextual factors.

5.3.1 The monolingual approach
All participants in our study claimed to have a belief that English should be used to a great extent. Notions of exposure, communicative practice, and willingness to make students use English were aspects of this belief. T1 and T2 mentioned exposure as the main reason for choosing the monolingual approach. T1 said “120 minutes of English a week, that’s not much. Then the 120
minutes must be in English as much as possible.”. Furthermore, T2 explained that “I think that the majority of English education should be in English. If you have all the information besides the text- and exercise book in Swedish then the language use (English) becomes a little thin.”. Communicative practice was remarked on by both T2 and T3. T2 stated “At discussion questions, and we are going to discuss a question, then it is just English… Then I try to do it to 100 % but that does not mean that I do it to 100 % because sometimes I use Swedish” and T3 maintained that “for communication exercises, one should stick to English”. The aspect of prompting students to use English was mentioned by T4 who stated “I want them to switch to English. Then I have to be consistent in my use (of English)”. This meant that they believed that the teachers' language use affected the students' language use. Conclusively, all participants claimed to believe in using English to a large extent in the classroom. However, our findings indicate that the reasons for this could vary between teachers. Furthermore, our interviews showed that the participants did not favor the language bath method, despite having a strong belief in the use of English. This is explicitly stated by T2 “When Swedish is needed it should be used, language bath is not a requirement”.

5.3.2 The translanguaging approach

The general belief, held by all our participants, was that the L1 was useful in the EFL classroom. This was expressed in many different ways. T1 mentioned it as a supporting tool for learning the TL “That it is necessary to, that is one of the tools to develop English, that is my belief. That, with Swedish as support you develop English”. L2 claimed that it sometimes could be required to use to facilitate understanding “L1 is required sometimes”. T3 explained that a mixture of Swedish and English is the method they believe in “It is that one I would say that I use more in that case, well it is mixed, I should say, it is great, no but, no that suits me I should say”. Lastly, T4 stated that the L1 is an effective tool for facilitating understanding “It is a tool that could be used for when you notice that when I notice that the student has not understood me”. However, it should also be noted that three of the participants expressed ambivalence about the use of translanguaging. The reasons for this could be that students simply were not proficient in Swedish, making English more effective. “Two students in this class do not speak Swedish so then it becomes English (T2)”. Furthermore, T3 believed that “The student switches off when it is in English since they know that
it will come in Swedish anyway”. To summarize, it becomes clear that this approach was viewed differently by our participants.

5.3.3 Proficiency level
All participants expressed a belief that proficiency levels among students affected their language choice. With students with lower proficiency in English, they believed that they used, and were required to use, more Swedish than English. For example, T1 stated that “In English, I experience that the proficiency levels are so huge, maybe the subject that has the biggest difference in levels, so Swedish is necessary sometimes”. Likewise, T2 explained that “If I have a class where the level is lower then it more often becomes English than an explanation in Swedish”. This shows that the participants had a major belief that Swedish could be used to bridge the gap in students’ proficiency levels.

5.4 Factors affecting beliefs
To further our discussion and give an explanation as to why they held their particular beliefs, we asked them about factors they perceived to have affected their beliefs. The perceived factors affecting our participants' beliefs were: teacher education, personal language learning experience, supporting documents, colleagues, and extracurricular exposure.

All participants reported that the teacher's education had affected their beliefs regarding language use. For context, the participants had graduated between the years of 1996 to 2018. As an example, T1 who graduated in 2018, expressed that “it is when you attend teacher education that you read a lot of theory and research that points to that one should use a lot of the language we are learning. And my teachers at the university were very pro towards it (TL use)”. Similarly, T2 who graduated in 2003, stated that “When I studied everything should be done in the TL”. This shows that teacher education in Sweden has supplied a similar belief about TL use for a long period of time.

Personal language learning experience was mentioned by T3 and T4 as being a contributing factor to their beliefs. This was framed by them having experiences of being novices in a language, and or learning language through immersion. T3 stated that “I studied Spanish in Spain, so it is kind
of experiences of your own studies and what you once were taught to do which makes one believe in it”. Likewise, T4 explained, “Since I myself have lived, experienced and traveled a lot I believe, basically, that you learn by practicing”.

Supporting documents were given slight support towards contributing to the participants’ beliefs about language choice. T3 stated that they perceived supporting documents to have no effect on their beliefs “No it does not no”, whereas the others perceived them to have some contribution. It was clear that the participants were not sure about the exact formulations of TL use in the supporting documents. T4 even mentioned that they believed more that the supporting documents intended to indicate that TL should be used in EFL, rather than the supporting documents actually stating so, explaining that “but, as I see when I read them, then it is that the TL should be used in the classroom, I feel that even though it doesn’t say that in the curriculum”. This gave us the overall picture that the supporting documents have an effect on teachers’ beliefs in this regard, but that this effect is not so great. This topic also highlighted the confusion that a lack of guidelines can instill in teachers, given that none of them expressed that they fully knew or understood what approach the curriculum advocated for.

T1 expressed that other colleagues had affected their beliefs about language use. Through either discussion or observations, T1 stated that “you have seen from teacher colleagues that it yields good results”. This can, again, be related to personal experience (Vartuli, 2005), but can also be due to the Education Act’s (SFS, 2010:800) notion that teaching should be based on proven experience. Of course, according to Skolverket, there are certain prerequisites for this term, but we interpret it as such that the term might be affecting the participant’s beliefs.

Lastly, students’ extracurricular exposure to English was deemed to be a factor that affected teacher beliefs. T4 explains it like this “That they (the students) are used to hearing English (in their spare time) is a fact and I do not believe that you need to motivate why one should speak or use English”. With this, they meant that since students receive so much exposure to English during their extracurricular activities, their belief regarding the usage of English had been positively affected.
6. Discussion

In this investigation, we aimed to investigate the following research questions:

1. To what extent and for what functions do EFL teachers use English and Swedish in the classroom?
2. What beliefs do teachers have about the use of English and Swedish in the classroom?
3. What factors have influenced those beliefs?

In this discussion, we will look into these aspects and summarize our main points, connect to previous research, relate our findings to the steering documents, comment on how this relates to teacher education, and comment on what this means for EFL teachers in Sweden.

6.1 TL use

In our study, the participants were observed to use a majority of English, approximately 80%. This usage is higher than in Brevik and Rindal’s (2020) study but we believe that the nature of our investigation might have affected this. Since research has found that teachers believe that TL use increases their perceived proficiency and, by extension, credibility as EFL teachers (Hughes et al. (2006) and that teachers feel ashamed to use the L1 in their teaching (Alshehri, 2017), it is logical to assume that the participating teachers in our study might be teachers who use a lot of English in their teaching. This could be because of many different reasons, but one could be that their student groups consist of learners with high proficiency in English, so-called independent learners (CEFR) and that the teachers, therefore, can use a lot of English in their teaching. To add to this point, other teachers declined to participate in our study and one reason for this could be that they do not use the TL to a large extent in their teaching, and therefore did not want to show this. As previously mentioned, the curriculum for English (Skolverket, 2022A) does not mention the extent of TL use that teachers should adapt to, but still, the participants in our study used predominantly English. This might be because of the influence of previous curriculums stating the extent of the use of the TL (Skolverket, 2011), and therefore the changes that the newer curriculum has made might not be visible yet. It should also be noted that the changes in the new curriculum, in this regard, are mostly an exclusion of the wording, rather than a new recommendation. We interpret that this could mean that the new curriculum is more open to interpretation and gives teachers greater freedom to conduct teaching as they want to. However, a downside of this aspect is that there
might be a greater discrepancy among teachers regarding how they teach, giving students different prerequisites for learning depending on which school they attend. This issue is something that Skolverket (2018) has highlighted and our findings might indicate that a lack of guidelines in the curriculum (Skolverket, 2022A) could contribute to this. It should be noted, as previously mentioned, that there are supporting documents (Börjesson, 2022) that provide some guidelines concerning language use. However, we do not consider these to give proper support since they are not easily available to EFL teachers in Sweden. This claim is supported by the fact that none of our participants mentioned that supporting documents had shaped their beliefs or practice on this topic. This means that the extent of English use can vary to a large degree between different EFL teachers, and through this investigation we advocate that English teachers in Sweden should reflect upon their own language use. Additionally, to provide even more clarity, we call for a national examination of the use of TL in the classroom, what level of TL use is the most effective, and in what situations.

Concerning the functions that the language use filled, it was unclear to fully interpret what this means for EFL education in Sweden. As mentioned, the functions that English filled in the classrooms we observed were to facilitate understanding and to elicit students’ responses (Sapitiri et al., 2018). This means that our participants considered English effective for filling these functions. This could be supported by the studies of Lo and Murphy (2010) and Patsaoura (2019), concerning TL use and its positive effect on vocabulary learning. However, since Swedish was observed to be used for providing comparison between the L1 and TL (Sapitiri et al., 2018), it also became clear that the L1 also can be used to increase vocabulary learning, in accordance with the studies of Brown (2021), Leonet, et al. (2020) and Yazar and Dikilitas (2022). The fact that both our observations and the research give support to both approaches might indicate that vocabulary learning can be taught with both approaches. For the subject of English, this means that the teaching profession does not know in what situations the use of English or Swedish, is most effective for vocabulary learning. Even so, we believe that this aspect needs to be further investigated since we merely observed the instances of language use, and did not record or analyze which kind of words were used by the teachers.

Moreover, the participants in our study reported during the interviews that they believed in high
usage of English. If compared to the observations, this means that there is an overlap between their beliefs and their actual practice. This means that, to a large extent, outlining factors have not impacted their beliefs, as compared to what Fang (1996) describes. This shows that TL use was a core belief (Phipps & Borg, 2009) Furthermore, although the participant held the same belief regarding language use, the reasons for why differed. Some mentioned exposure, whereas others did it to promote discussions using English instead of Swedish. Worth noting, is that although all participants expressed that they had a strong belief in using English, they did not argue towards an immersion or language bath approach. By this, we mean that they did not claim that English should be the only language in the EFL classroom. All participants expressed this implicitly, stating that Swedish could be used in the classroom for certain functions, but one participant, T2, also expressed this explicitly. This illustrates that even though EFL teachers hold a strong belief regarding using the TL, it does not translate into a favoring of the language bath method, or that English should be used 100 % of the time.

6.2 Translanguaging use

All of the teachers in our study mentioned that the Swedish language plays an important role in EFL teaching, being commented as a tool for TL learning, in accordance with Garcia´s (2012) theories for translanguaging. As stated above, all participants do not believe in English only or language baths, but they had a strong belief that the majority of output from the teachers should be in English. According to Sapitri et al.’s (2018) functions of translanguaging, there are several reasons why EFL teachers use bilingual resources. Similar to Sapitri et al.’s (2018) findings, the main use for Swedish use in EFL teaching is to facilitate understanding, corresponding to the respondents of your study. These results are supported by Lasagaster’s (2013) findings that if the input is comprehensible, translanguaging use of bilingual resources, using L1 will facilitate a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter.

Additionally, all of the teachers stated that they fully or partially use Swedish when teaching grammar. It also gives support for the translanguaging theory and the support that common underlying language proficiency among bilinguals and that linguistic structures such as grammar can be used to facilitate L1 and L2 comparison (Cummins, 2007). Our interpretation is that teachers' practice when teaching EFL is that the teachers strongly believe that the Swedish
language is a bilingual resource to gain better comprehension (Lasagabaster, 2013). When it comes to managing students and creating interpersonal relationships, the participants expressed that they prefer talking in Swedish, even though they used TL during our observations. They claim that TL serves as a barrier and that if they want to reach through to the students they need to use Swedish (Lasagabaster, 2013).

Moving on to the policy documents. In the syllabus for English, there is no support for the use of translanguaging. Reviewing older editions of commented material (Skolverket, 2011) findings of the statement “Teaching should in the highest possible extent be completed in the TL” is something that the updated curriculum (Skolverket, 2022A) excludes. Instead, it is replaced with statements that students should be able to use their multilingual assets. Brevik and Rindal (2020) describe this as the quiet entrance of translanguaging in the syllabus for English.

Continuing, the implications for EFL teaching is that the translanguaging approach is accepted in the classroom. However, a deeper knowledge of the theory does not seem present and this could lead to less effective teaching methods. If the exposure is in line with our examined classes, there is no need to be alarmed by the beliefs that our participants express in the functions that translanguaging can fill. We claim this because although they express this belief, they still use a large amount of TL in their teaching, around 80 %. However, if the exposure would decline to below 55% of TL use in the classroom, as the results from Krulatz et al. (2016), then we might have a developing problem due to low exposure.

6.3 Proficiency level of the learners - grade of exposure to English

The teachers in our survey, in one way or another, address the proficiency levels of learners, either as groups or as individuals, referring to high or low-performing classes or weak or strong learners. Only one of the teachers stated that she does not adapt to the choice of language due to the class she is teaching, but, contradictory, she also states that she adapts to teaching grammar in Swedish or English depending on what grade she is teaching. Additionally, all teachers state that if it is a high-performing class they could speak English only, but as the level of performance in the class decreases and the number of weaker students increases, the amount of English decreases. As mentioned above, the beliefs of extensive language exposure are strong amongst the teachers in
our study with statements like “as much English as possible”. However, all teachers state that the level of English depends on the level of the learner. They state that the proficiency level of the learners in a class differs widely and the pre-knowledge is vast due to extracurricular activities such as online gaming and extensive traveling (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2014). This would imply that a student with high proficiency, due to extra-curricular activities, will be exposed to more TL in the classroom. If we would categorize this learner it would be an independent learner according to the CEFR. An independent learner is categorized by the CEFR as a learner who has reached a threshold level meaning that they are at a point where something starts to happen (Cambridge University Press, n.d.). Weaker students with less or no extracurricular exposure, due to their low proficiency level, will be exposed to less of the TL according to the results of our study. If we would categorize this learner it would be a basic learner according to the CEFR, not meeting threshold requirements. To generalize it a step further, if students who need to hear English the most in class and have less English exposure than the students with high exposure overall and fewer needs, it could be problematic. For the profession, this means that TL exposure is lower for low proficiency students, which can affect their EFL learning.

Moving on to the input and the understanding of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1981). In recent studies, evidence indicates that it is not the choice of English or Swedish that facilitates understanding but rather the complexity of the concepts. In (Andersson & Khwaja, 2017) study of how students understand the learning criteria in the Syllabus for English, they declared that the language and the concepts were difficult or impossible to understand due to their complex meaning. It did not matter if the criteria were produced in English or in Swedish. Relating this to the weaker learners in our study and their particular need for English exposure and the input they need to receive to enhance their learning. Our understanding of this area is that the level of the input should be reviewed and made comprehensible for the student at their level. This could address issues such as learners “switching off” and switching to Swedish when it comes to vocabulary teaching in particular and teaching of concepts.

6.4. Factors affecting beliefs

The main factor that our participants described to be affecting their beliefs was teacher education. Interestingly, since the participants had received this education during a span of over 20 years, it
can be concluded that even very experienced teachers claim that teacher education affects their beliefs. This shows that actual teaching experience does not diminish the beliefs supplied by teacher education and further supports the importance of teacher education.

Furthermore, by analyzing the factors that the participants believed to have affected them, it also becomes clear that personal experience has an important part in shaping the beliefs regarding language choice. This is in line with Vartuli’s (2005) ideas that personal experience shapes teacher beliefs. Additionally, the different opinions on the impact the curriculum had on their beliefs concerning language use, give us the conclusion that personal experience is more important in this aspect than what is indicated by the curriculum. The notion that the curriculum, with its lack of guidelines, instilled confusion is also worrisome. The fact that two participants expressed that they believed that the curriculum mandated a high use of TL, despite there being no such precept, shows us that a high belief in TL use might make teachers interpret the curriculum to fit their beliefs. Similarly, as concluded previously, we see this as providing teachers a large degree of freedom to implement their beliefs, without institutional constraints. Related to Borg and Phipps (2009) theory of core and peripheral beliefs, these findings could mean that, for our participants, beliefs concerning language use in the EFL classroom are more central than beliefs supplied by the curriculum. Or, in another perspective, the core beliefs the teachers held about using primarily the TL had been shaped by other aspects than the curriculum. For example, teacher education and personal language learning experience.
7. Conclusion

To conclude, this study aimed to investigate Swedish EFL teachers’ use of English and Swedish, their beliefs about language use, and factors that they perceived to have affected these beliefs. It was found that the participating teachers used English extensively, and believed in this approach, but they also believed that Swedish is important for certain functions in EFL teaching. Both English and Swedish were used for knowledge construction (Sapitiri et al., 2018), although English was observed to be used in more instances overall. Swedish was primarily used to provide comparison between the TL and the L1 (Sapitiri et al., 2018). Concerning the functions of classroom management and interpersonal relations (Sapitiri et al., 2018), the participants reported a strong belief in using Swedish, but the observations showed only support for this concerning classroom management.

By analyzing our data, we concluded that Swedish could be used in EFL teaching, but only for certain functions. Moreover, by examining the interview responses, it was concluded that learners’ English proficiency affected the teachers' use of language. Furthermore, data regarding factors affecting beliefs gave the conclusion that teacher education and personal language learning experience affect beliefs to a great extent. Concerning personal language learning experience, our findings also showed us that it might have a greater influence in this research area than what is stated in the curriculum.

The results indicate to us as future teachers in the EFL classroom, that using Swedish and English is a balancing act. In order to provide all students with exposure in the TL, English needs to be used. However, as seen in our observations, interviews, and previous research, the L1 can be effective in providing students with a deeper understanding (Lasagabaster, 2013). The findings also illustrate the importance of reflecting upon our beliefs regarding language use, as well as what factors have influenced them. Through reflection, decisions based on evidence can be made.

The strengths of the study are that all participants were observed with the same observation scheme, the interviews covered the same questions, and two investigators conducted and analyzed the data. The analysis was first performed separately and then followed by a cooperative analysis discussion. The limitations of the study are that it only has four participants and four observed lessons. This decreases the study's generalizability. Another limitation is the short time span the
study was conducted. 10 weeks is a very short period to perform a thorough literature review, data collection, and analysis. With more time, participants, and observations, the study's validity, reliability, and generalizability could be improved.

For future research in this area, we consider that vocabulary learning and the effectiveness of extensive use of English to be investigated. In our study, vocabulary learning was found to be supported by both research and our findings. However, our investigation did not focus on the types of words that this concerns. Future research could look more closely into this. Furthermore, although we found English to be predominantly used, we could not conclude if this was more effective. For this, one would need to look at teachers' use of English, and their students’ results, and compare a large sample of teachers and observed classes.
References


Humphrey, A. D., & Valian, V. V. (2012). Multilingualism and cognitive control: Simon and flanker task performance in monolingual and multilingual young adults. In *53rd Annual meeting of the psychonomic society, Minneapolis, MN.*


Turnbull, M. (2001). There is a role for the L1 in second and foreign language teaching, but…. *Canadian modern language review*, 57(4), 531-540.


## Appendix

### Appendix 1. Observation guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher interaction</th>
<th>L1</th>
<th>L2</th>
<th>Mix (code-switching)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving instruction (knowledge construction - facilitate understanding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback (knowledge construction - facilitate understanding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clarification (knowledge construction - facilitate understanding)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving explanation on a grammatical point</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowledge construction - L1 and TL comparison</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving explanation of a vocabulary item</td>
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<tr>
<td>(knowledge construction - L1 and TL comparison)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factual question (knowledge construction - elicit students response)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Referential question (knowledge construction - elicit students response)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal relations</td>
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</table>
## Appendix 2. Interview guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>How many years of experience do you have from teaching English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish use</td>
<td>1. In general, what do you think of the use of Swedish in the English classroom?</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. In what situations do you prefer to speak Swedish?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Are there moments and situations when you always speak Swedish? When and Why?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>4. Are there advantages to changing into Swedish when teaching?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. Are there occasions when you speak Swedish and it was not planned ahead? When is that? What situations make you change to Swedish?</td>
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<tr>
<td>English use</td>
<td>6. Are there moments and situations when you never speak Swedish or try really hard not to? When and why?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Are there any disadvantages when changing to Swedish when teaching?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proficiency level</td>
<td>8. Is your choice of language dependent on the classes you are teaching?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Beliefs                                                                 | 9. What are your beliefs about using English in the classroom?  
|                                                                      | 10. What are your beliefs about using Swedish in the classroom?  
|                                                                      | 11. What are your beliefs about using a mix of English and Swedish in the classroom?  
| Factors that have influenced beliefs and/or actual use | 12. What factors have affected your beliefs on the degree of the use of target language in teaching? |

**Appendix 3. Interview questions**

1. Vad tycker du om användningen av svenska i det engelska klassrummet generellt?
2. I vilka situationer väljer du att prata svenska?
3. Finns det tillfällen och situationer då du alltid pratar svenska? När och varför?
4. Finns det fördelar med att byta språk till svenska i din undervisning?
5. Finns det tillfällen och situationer när du aldrig pratar svenska eller anstränger dig extra mycket till att inte göra det? När och varför?
6. Finns det nackdelar med att byta språk till svenska när du undervisar?
7. Finns det tillfällen när du pratar svenska när det inte var planerat i förväg? När inträffar detta? Vilka situationer får dig att byta till svenska? Varför använder du svenska i de situationerna?
8. Är ditt val av språk olika beroende på vilken av dina klasser du undervisar?
9. Vad är din tro om att använda engelska i klassrummet?
10. Vad är din tro om att använda svenska i klassrummet?
11. Vad är din tro om att använda en blandning av engelska och svenska i klassrummet?
12. Vilka faktorer tror du har påverkat din tro om språkanvändning i klassrummet?
13. Har faktorer relaterat till styrdokument och stöddokument påverkat din tro om språkanvändning i klassrummet?