

Session 5, NW 14

14:20 - 15:35 Thursday, 6th March, 2025

U4075

Network 14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation type Symposium

Nordic languages as second languages: Rethinking policy and practice in the education of multilingual students in the Nordic countries - PART 1

Dropdown

symposium

Chair

Line Møller Daugaard
VIA University College, Denmark
Finn Aarsæther
Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

Discussant(s)

Angela De Britos
University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom
Clare Mouat
University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Description

In recent years, the Nordic countries have received large numbers of migrants as a result of forced and voluntary migration, leading to a great diversity of engagement with Nordic languages as second languages. Statistics reveal that education for migrant learners remains complex, both within and beyond the Nordic countries. More attention, exploration, and potentially a new vision of policy and practice are urgently needed to meet the needs of multilingual students, including newly arrived migrants, in the Nordic countries.

These concerns have been the impetus for the establishment of the NORDPLUS network Nordic Languages as Second Languages, from which this symposium springs. In this symposium, we present reflections and findings from ongoing work with the aim of also reaching out to a broader Nordic research audience in order to strengthen dialogue, reflection, and mutual learning as part of the development of our broader research.

The symposium brings together perspectives from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, but also Scotland through the voices of the discussants. The symposium's paper presentations foreground cases from the different countries, highlighting the dilemmas and potentials of education of multilingual students in the Nordic countries. The overall research relates primarily to multilingualism and second language teaching-learning, but important topics around student well-being, multicultural education, and social justice are also included.

In the presentations, we explore formal educational settings from primary schooling to adult education and teacher education, in addition to non-mainstream learning spaces such as language centers and family settings. The symposium includes the perspectives of students, teachers, parents, and analyses of curricula. Together, the presentations invite investigations into differences and similarities through a cross-Nordic lens. A central aim is to produce new research-based knowledge to improve quality in the education of multilingual learners.

The symposium is organized in two segments. Part 1 contains a brief introduction by the organizers, and five individual paper presentations. Part 2 contains three paper presentations, a reflective presentation by the discussants, and ample time for the audience to engage in dialogue. As a whole, the symposium strives to establish a productive space for rethinking policy and practice in the education of multilingual students across the Nordic countries.

Children's views on their multilingualism and linguistic identities through language portraits

Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, Renata Emilsson Peskova, Kriselle Suson
University of Iceland, Iceland

Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

With a small total population of less than 400,000, changing demographics as a result of migration have had an impact on Icelandic society as well as the education system.

Nearly 30% of pupils in compulsory schools have a foreign background [or have other heritage languages] in 2023 (Statistics Iceland, 2024).

This paper draws on data from the qualitative research project, *Language policies and practices of diverse immigrant families in Icelandic and their implications for education* (LPP) which aimed to critically explore the family language policies of 16 different immigrant families with diverse educational and socioeconomic backgrounds living in four different municipalities.

The aim of the paper is to explore the views of 10 children in these families on their bi- or multilingualism and their linguistic identities through the lens of language portraits (Dressler, 2014).

The theoretical framework includes language agency of children and their multilingual development (Said & Hua, 2017). According to Lanza (2007), children should be viewed as active social agents who contribute to adult society, while at the same time producing their own culture. Research has shown that children are active participants in creating their own knowledge – and have the ability to express themselves about their views on language learning and language policy (Palviainen & Curdt-Christiansen, 2022).

Data was collected in 2022 and 2023 in semi-structured interviews with altogether 10 children (age 13-16) about their multilingualism and linguistic repertoire, in addition to a dialogue with them about their language portraits where they expressed their views on their languages and language preferences. Language portraits and interviews were searched for markers/children's views and expressions of the categories of competence, affiliation, and inheritance (Dressler, 2014), as well as their perceived use of the languages in the future (Emilsson Peskova, 2023).

The findings indicate that the children have clear ideas about their languages and have preferences regarding each of these. They make decisions about what languages they use and in what contexts, to the degree that circumstances and their competence in the languages allow.

The main value of the paper is providing insight into children's agency in utilizing their multilingualism and negotiating their linguistic identities in different settings and their agency in developing family language policies. Examples of these multilingual children's language use and preferences can lead to rethinking the support that the maintenance of children's active bi- and multilingualism requires and will provide important information for in schools in Iceland as well as in other Nordic countries on how to support children's active bi- and multilingualism.

References

Dressler, R. (2014). In the classroom. Exploring linguistic identity in young multilingual learners. *TESL Canada Journal*, 32(1), 42–52.

Lanza, E. (2007). Multilingualism in the family. In A. Peter & W. Li (Eds.), *Handbook of multilingualism and multilingual communication* (pp. 46 – 47). Mouton de Gruyter.

Danish as a Second Language in the Primary and Lower Secondary School in Denmark – a subject or not?

Mette Rose Kjær Thomsen

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Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

Drawing on an ongoing PhD project, this presentation unfolds as a discussion of Danish as a second language (DSA) in the Danish primary and lower secondary school in a subject didactic perspective. Is DSA a subject, a so-called 'special subject area' or something third?

In Danish school legislation, it is stated that 'To the extent necessary, teaching in Danish as a second language is given to bilingual children in primary school' (LBK nr 989 af 27/08/2024, §5 subsection 6, my translation). Here DSA is referred to as 'teaching'. In the official curriculum, Common Objectives [Fælles Mål], it is characterized as a 'subject' offered to bilingual children who have a need for linguistic support in Danish (BEK nr 699 af 07/06/2023, my translation). On www.emu.dk – a ministry-run platform targeted towards professionals and school managers – DSA is instead characterized as a 'special subject area' [et særligt fagområde] having two sets of Common Objectives (DSA basic and DSA supplementary).

The different terms employed in official policy documents illustrate some of the complexity concerning DSA in the Danish primary and lower secondary school. Drawing on subject didactic theory (Gundem 1997; Nielsen 2007; Krogh & Nielsen 2011), I will in the presentation discuss how – if at all – DSA theoretically can be understood as a subject. The main method used is document analysis (Mik-Meyer 2005). As a part of the document analysis, I will also draw on some supplementary empirical material from interviews with school administrators, managers and teachers, all working with DSA.

In relation to the symposium, this presentation will discuss the results in a post-migrant perspective (Foroutan 2019; Schramm et al. 2019) as a possible way to rethink policy and practice of second language instruction in primary and lower secondary schools in a Nordic perspective.

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- Krogh, E. & Nielsen, F. V. (2011). *Sammenlignende fagdidaktik*. Kursiv nr. 7.
- Mik-Meyer, N. (2005). Dokumenter i en interaktionistisk begrebsramme. In M. Järvinen & N. Mik-Meyer (red.), *Kvalitative metoder i et interaktionistisk perspektiv*. Hans Reitzels Forlag, pp. 193-214.
- Nielsen, F. V. (2007). Fagdidaktikkens kernefaglighed. In K. Schnack (ed.). *Didaktik på kryds og tværs*. Danmarks Pædagogiske Universitets Forlag.
- Schramm, M., Moslund, S. P., & Pedersen, A. R. (2019). *Reframing Migration, Diversity and the Arts: The Postmigrant Condition*. Routledge.

Looking for multilingual pedagogies

Helene Fulland, Finn Aarsæther
OsloMet, Norway

Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

This paper is based on data from a study investigating education of newly arrived migrant students in a separate class, at a lower secondary school in Norway during the school year 2022/23. One of the dimensions analyzed is the school's and teachers' approach to the use of the students' different first languages, at the attitudinal level as well as at the pedagogical level.

A prominent finding is that while teachers and management express positive attitudes towards multilingual practices, and even encourage them, the strategy behind the use of multilingual pedagogies appears vague, and even hard to discover in our data. When analyzed according to the holistic model for multilingualism in education carved out by Duarte and Günther-van der Meij (2018), the school mainly positions itself at the symbolic level, where recognition and valorization of the students' first languages are described as the main functions. The more committing levels in this model, the scaffolding function and the epistemological function, do not appear systematic and planned in our context.

This has generated the following questions: what characterizes teachers' attempts to facilitate multilingual learning activities, and what would have enhanced teachers' agency to enact multilingual pedagogies more systematically?

Empirically, we shed light on these questions by analyzing notes from classroom observations in selected sessions, combined with data from interviews with the teachers who led the teaching activities. Theoretically, we relate to current directions and discussions within the translanguaging framework (Cummins, 2021; 2014; MacSwan, 2017). We put specific emphasis on pedagogical translanguaging (e.g. Duarte and Günther-van der Meij, 2018; 2020; Fang, Zhang and Sah, 2022), including the claimed lack of exploration of the pedagogical potential of translanguaging practices (Conteh, 2018) and teachers' claims that the goal of translanguaging is too philosophical and lacks a clear definition in terms of pedagogical tools (Ticheloven et al. 2019).

Conteh, J. (2018). Translanguaging as pedagogy—a critical review. In A. Creese, & A. Blackledge (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Language and Superdiversity* (pp. 473–487). London: Routledge.

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Ticheloven, A., Blom, E., Leseman, P., & McMonagle, S. (2019). Translanguaging challenges in multilingual classrooms: scholar, teacher and student perspectives. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. [doi-org.proxyub.rug.nl/https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2019.1686002](https://doi.org/10.1080/14790718.2019.1686002).

Ukrainian students' affordances for participation viewed through the eyes of their teachers and other school professionals – a perspective of the project Ukrainian Children in Danish Schools.

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Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

This paper examines how teachers, language assistants and other professionals involved in the reception of Ukrainian students in Danish schools experienced the students' affordances for participation in school practices. Teachers' and

other school professionals' perception of the students and their personal, academic, linguistic and cultural resources have a strong impact on the affordances for participation offered to them, which is why we consider this topic worthy of inquiry.

In our study, we draw on prior research on linguistic identity (Norton Peirce, 1995) and multilingualism underscoring the importance of acknowledging students' full linguistic repertoire (Busch, 2012) for their linguistic wellbeing and the importance of investment for second language learning (Ushioda, 2009). Furthermore, we are interested in how the school professionals perceive the transnational (Levitt & Schiller, 2004) positionality (Anthias 2002) of the Ukrainian children

The study draws on the *Ukrainian Children in Danish Schools* data set which includes 11 interviews with representatives from municipalities and school management, teachers and other school professions and students, field notes from classroom observation and art-based research activities in 3 classrooms over a period of 10 months. We zoom in specifically on data extracts where teachers and other school professionals express their views on the students' resources and compare these to our observations of the affordances for participation offered to these students in the classroom and other school settings, combining thematic content analysis and positioning analysis.

The arrival of the Ukrainian immigrants in 2022 was a shock to many Nordic countries, but also brought about some changes of the approach to immigrant reception, requiring Danish municipalities and school professionals to rethink their approach. This extraordinary context is a rich point for examining the reception practices of Nordic schools, casting a light on the broader societal dynamics surrounding immigration policies and how transnational students are affected by this.

Based on our preliminary analyses, we expect to see some correlations between perceptions of students' resources and the affordances offered to them in classrooms and hope to offer some perspectives on how a resource-oriented approach to students with transnational backgrounds might enhance the affordances for participation offered to them.

Anthias, F. (2002). "Where do I belong?: Narrating collective identity and translocational positionality." *Ethnicities* 2(4): 491-514.

Busch, B. (2012). The Linguistic Repertoire Revisited. *Applied Linguistics*, 33(5), 503–523. <https://10.1093/applin/ams056>

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Norton Peirce, B. (1995). Social identity, investment and language learning. *Tesol Quarterly*, 29, 9–31.

Ushioda, E. (2009). A person-in-context relational view of emergent motivation, self and identity. In Z. Dörnyei, & E. Ushioda (Eds.), (). *Multilingual Matters*.

Ukrainian youth building sustainable futures on flee

Minna Suni, Sanna Mustonen
University of Jyväskylä, Finland

Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

The war launched by Russia in Ukraine in 2022 brought many Ukrainian pupils and students to Finland at various levels of education. The time of uncertainty has raised questions regarding social and cultural sustainability: How to strengthen students' hope for the future? How to support their language learning, engagement and belonging while many of them also wish to return home? In this presentation we will focus on the 16+ aged Ukrainian students who are studying in a transitional phase between comprehensive school and secondary education.

The ethnographic data to be focused on has been collected in two educational institutions, and it includes observation fieldnotes from Finnish as a second language lessons and narrative interviews with the students and their teachers. A

nexus analytical approach (Scollon & Scollon 2003) will be applied to bring together the personal life histories, situated discourses and interaction patterns and practices present in the settings where students and teachers touch upon the questions of belonging, learning, inclusion or exclusion, for example. The data comes from the ongoing project Language, engagement and belonging: Ukrainians accessing and transforming rural school and work communities (2023-2027).

Based on our analysis, teachers are reflecting on how to genuinely value their students' diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and how to encounter and support those who have arrived from the conflict area and are in a need of strong socio-emotional support while also facing a very different kind of learning culture in Finland. They also need to consider how to promote social networking and engagement into the local communities. Furthermore, in line with the curricula, studies in Finnish language should also strengthen the transversal competencies such as multiliteracies, learning to learn, critical thinking, participation, active citizenship, building sustainable future, and cultural collaboration. These are the skills that every student will need regardless of whether they leave or stay. These competences will also promote the rebuilding of the Ukrainian school; such aspects of learning have only recently been introduced in the school reform and official policies of the Ukrainian educational system.

Our study illustrates how teachers support students' transversal competencies and actively promote engagement in learning by bringing complex, timely themes into the classroom already at the early stages of second language development. This presupposes conscious investment in creating safe learning environments, and readiness to set high expectations for all. However, rather than offering ready-made answers, we aim to recognize and introduce some relevant dimensions of social and cultural sustainability to be taken into account in language pedagogy in the era of increasing uncertainty.

Scollon, R. & S.W. Scollon (2003). *Discourse in Place: Language in the Material World*:
Routledge. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4324/978020342272>.

Session 6, NW 14

16:05 - 17:20 Thursday, 6th March, 2025

U4075

Network 14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation type Symposium

Nordic languages as second languages: Rethinking policy and practice in the education of multilingual students in the Nordic countries - PART 2

Dropdown

symposium

Chair

Finn Aarsæther

Oslo Metropolitan University, Norway

Line Møller Daugaard

VIA University College, Denmark

Discussant(s)

Clare Mouat

University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Angela De Britos

University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom

Description

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In the presentations, we explore formal educational settings from primary schooling to adult education and teacher education, in addition to non-mainstream learning spaces such as language centers and family settings. The symposium includes the perspectives of students, teachers, parents, and analyses of curricula. Together, the presentations invite investigations into differences and similarities through a cross-Nordic lens. A central aim is to produce new research-based knowledge to improve quality in the education of multilingual learners.

The symposium is organized in two segments. Part 1 contains a brief introduction by the organizers, and five individual paper presentations. Part 2 contains three paper presentations, a reflective presentation by the discussants, and ample time for the audience to engage in dialogue. As a whole, the symposium strives to establish a productive space for rethinking policy and practice in the education of multilingual students across the Nordic countries.

Using music as a tool for learning Swedish as a second language. Experiences of teachers in adult language education

Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

1. Research topic/aim

This presentation aims to contribute knowledge about teachers' experiences of using music activities in supporting second language development among adult students. In Sweden, adult migrants are offered education in *Swedish as second language education for migrant adults* (SFI). Research has shown that music activities are useful tools in teaching second language learners and increases students' well-being (Valtersson, 2019; Crawford, 2020; Lehtinen-Schnabel, 2023). Experiences of music have also been shown to create community and belonging (Gabrielsson, 2011) and by using music as a tool in teaching, opportunities for intercultural meetings can be created between people (Crooke., et.al. 2024).

2. Theoretical framework

Small's (1998) concept of "musicking" forms the basis of the presentation, and points to the active nature of musical engagement and shifts the focus from music as a product to music as a process. Small argues that "musicking" is a more inclusive term that encompasses a wide range of activities related to music. This perspective allows for the recognition that everyone, regardless of their level of musical training can be involved in "musicking" in their own way. It acknowledges that music is a part of everyday life for people across various cultures and backgrounds. "Musicking" also promotes the idea of inclusivity and diversity in music.

3. Methodology/research design

The empirical material is based on observations of training sessions and development group discussions. A group of seven teachers took part in a professional development endeavour in which they worked with expanding their use of music in teaching Swedish as a second language to adult students. The school where the teachers work had some music material aimed especially at adults that they used, but the teachers wanted to develop their methods and become more comfortable in using music in their teaching. A music pedagogue was contracted for the training. There were four sessions with the music pedagogue and in addition three sessions where the teachers reflected together.

4. Expected results/findings

The tentative results from the study show that although the teachers had a positive outlook on using music as teaching methods, using these methods isn't uncomplicated. The obstacles the teachers experienced were, for example, feeling uncertain of their own abilities to use different music activities in teaching and handling potential resistance from the students. Regardless of the level of previous schooling, students sometimes feel infantilized by singing and doing rhymes. The benefits were among other things that the students became more confident in speaking Swedish, and that it made the teaching setting more relaxed.

5. Relevance to Nordic educational research

Music has been found to be a pathway to inclusion, and a useful tool for language learning when teaching younger students and in informal settings. We maintain that rethinking the role of music in teaching Nordic languages as second languages for adults is vital and the results are of relevance to Nordic educational research on language development and inclusion.

Social participation and competence in Icelandic among students in Icelandic language centers in Reykjavík

Renata Emilsson Pesková¹, Hermína Gunnþórsdóttir², Hanna Ragnarsdóttir¹, Susan Rafik Hama¹

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Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

The reception of newly arrived students is a recognized challenge in the Nordic countries (Helakorpi et al., 2023). This research explores the response of the municipality of Reykjavík to the growing need to attend to the vulnerable group of newly-arrived students. The aim of the presented research project is to investigate how four Icelandic language centers (ILC), established recently by the City of Reykjavík, prepare students for learning in compulsory schools, and whether the work of these programs contributes to students' inclusion, learning and participation in school communities and leisure activities. The ICLs are situated in four compulsory schools in Reykjavík, and they are intended for newly-arrived students in 5th-10th grades from all neighborhood schools. Students stay for 3-9 months until they reach competence level 1 in Icelandic as a second language (Ministry of Education and Children, 2024). The project is based on theories of social justice and inclusion (Larsen et al., 2019) and grounded in children's rights as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNICEF, n.d.).

Methodology is qualitative and builds on visits to schools and on semi-structured interviews taken in autumn 2024 with teachers in the ILCs, project managers, school principals in schools that house ILCs, as well as teachers and school principals in students' home schools where the students are registered and attend classes in the afternoons. The data analysis is ongoing, but the results will be discussed with respect to 1) stakeholders' management of the ILCs, 2) students' achievement of competencies in the Icelandic language and 3) how the ILCs affect students' social connections and participation. ILCs seem to provide the necessary space to bring students to the first competence level in Icelandic (Ministry of Education and Children, 2024) yet students' inclusion in their home schools while they study in ILCs, and their continuous development and support in Icelandic learning after they graduate from ILCs seem to need a more systematic approach.

The implementation of Icelandic language teaching and support for this student group varies across municipalities and schools, making it important to research which solutions yield the best results so that the students have equitable opportunities in a democratic society. As an example of a developing good practice, ILCs that adequately combine language, study, and social goals for newly-arrived students, reflect the values of social justice anchored in policies of the Nordic countries. Consequently, this research has implications for policy makers on municipality and national level also beyond Iceland.

References:

Helakorpi, J., Dovemark, M., Rasmussen, A. & Holm, G. (2023). Positions of newly arrived students in Nordic education policies and practices. *Nordic Studies in Education*, 43(2), 111–127. <https://doi.org/10.23865/nse.v43.3986>

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The subject Danish as a second language in teacher education: Decolonising multilingualism by bringing Southern epistemologies to Nordic classrooms

Line Møller Daugaard

VIA University College, Denmark

Network

14. Migration, Multilingualism, and Education

Presentation

Abstract to a symposium or roundtable discussion

Abstract

Danish as a second language occupies an unstable position in Danish teacher education. This is reflected in a highly turbulent history in the teacher education curriculum: Introduced as elective subject on a trial basis in 2001, made permanent in 2007 (36 ECTS), abolished as elective subject and replaced by a strongly diminished obligatory short course (10 ECTS) in 2013, and reintroduced as both elective subject (35 ECTS) and a further diminished obligatory short course (5 ECTS) in 2023. The ever-changing development in curricular form has been accompanied by constant negotiation of what counts as appropriate content within the field of Danish as a second language in teacher education (cf. Jagenreuter, 2022; Benediktsson, 2024).

The empirical point of departure for this paper presentation is Danish as a second language as a curricular configuration at a particular time and space; namely the obligatory short course entitled Teaching multilingual students (10 ECTS, 2013 reform). The presentation reports on a small-scale teaching experiment conducted in a specific class of student teachers in a Danish teacher education institution. The teaching experiment is part of a larger research collaboration on multilingual learning materials across the global South and North, and in the teaching experiment, Danish student teachers are introduced to the innovative South African learning material iSayensi Yethu, featuring hybrid combinations of English and IsiXhosa and originally developed for use in science teaching in Grade 4 in primary schools in Cape Town (Guzula & Tyler, forthcoming). The empirical material from the teaching experiment in Danish teacher education involves multimodal and multilingual digital student texts and audio-recordings of classroom conversation.

The presentation is anchored in a critical sociolinguistic approach to multilingualism (Blommaert, 2010), and the analysis of the empirical material from the small-scale teaching experiment is inspired by theories of the decoloniality of language (ibid.). Preliminary analysis shows that knowledge about multilingualism produced in the global South can be positioned as authoritative in a Nordic teacher education context. The presentation thus aims to contribute to the rethinking of Nordic languages as second languages by exploring potentials for decolonising multilingualism by bringing Southern epistemologies to Nordic classrooms within the context of teacher education.

References:

- Benediktsson, A. I. (2024). Teacher educators' endeavours to enhance students' cultural competence: A qualitative study within Danish teacher education. *In Education*, 29(2), 78–97. <https://doi.org/10.37119/ojs2024.v29i2.754>
- Blommaert, J. (2010). *The Sociolinguistics of Globalization*. Cambridge University Press
- Jagenreuter, C. G. (2022). Lærerruddannelsen kan ikke give lærerstuderende de rette undervisningskompetencer til at undervise flersprogede elever i folkeskolen. *Tidsskrift for Uddannelsesvidenskab*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.7146/djes.v1i1.132579>
- Guzula, X. & Tyler, R. (forthcoming). Disrupting Anglonormativity and monoglossia in Southern schooling: a decolonial translingual Science learning materials project. In S. Bagga-Gupta (ed.), *Palgrave Handbook of Decolonizing Educational and Language Sciences*. Palgrave