

**LANGUAGE AND LITERACIES PEDAGOGIES IN A LANGUAGE INTRODUCTION
PROGRAM IN SWEDEN:
LESSONS FROM TEACHERS AND YOUTHS**

by

Michelle B. Smith

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The following individuals certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for acceptance, the thesis entitled:

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submitted by Michelle B. Smith in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
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Examining Committee:

Margaret Early, Associate Professor, Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Supervisor

Maureen Kendrick, Professor, Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Supervisory Committee Member

Meike Wernicke, Assistant Professor, Language and Literacy Education, UBC

Supervisory Committee Member

Abstract

In 2015, 39,000 youths between the ages of 16 to 18 years arrived in Sweden, primarily from Syria, and Afghanistan, but also Iraq, Somalia and Eritrea (Migrationsverket, 2015). The Swedish National Agency for Education (i.e., Skolverket) reported that enrollment in Language Introduction Programs (LIPs) of youth seeking asylum and refuge climbed from 10,200 in 2014 to 23,100 in 2016 (Skolverket, 2014, 2016). Challenges to meet the mandated requirements to exit the Language Introduction Program and successfully graduate before youth age-out of upper secondary school at age 20 are immense, particularly for those students from refugee backgrounds with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). This qualitative study sought to understand what four experienced language teachers in a Language Introduction Program perceived as the needs and challenges (particularly in English) of SLIFE and the most promising pedagogical responses. The study also explored the potential of a translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy in an identity-text project (two units of study) to draw on the everyday literacies, experiences, and interests of the youths (n=7) for identity affirmation and investment in language and literacy learning. The theoretical frameworks draw from Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT) (Cummins, 2021), the Academic Expertise Framework (Cummins, 2001), and conceptions of identity and investment (Darvin & Norton, 2015), plus related translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies (Cummins, 2021; Cummins & Early, 2011). Data were gathered through field notes, focus group interviews with the teachers, student artifacts and texts, recordings of classroom interactions, and exit-interviews with the youths. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). Findings from educators' perceptions of the challenges of working with SLIFE suggest three interrelated themes: educational challenges (predominant), structural (organizational and legal) stresses, and social-emotional

challenges. Upon reanalysis, educators' dilemmas around "what" to teach and "how" to teach SLIFE are also reported. The findings from the study of the identity-text project contributed to better understandings about the potential of translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies with youth from refugee backgrounds to support identity affirmation and investment in language and literacies learning, including the youths' dilemmatic perceptions. Implications for pedagogical practices are discussed, plus limitations of the study, and directions for future research.

Lay Summary

This study explored promising English language and literacies pedagogies for newcomer youth from refugee backgrounds who receive instruction in Sweden in languages other than their mother tongues. Through focus group interviews, teachers identified the literacies needs and challenges of youth with limited or interrupted schooling. Dilemmas emerged that the educators faced when flexible practices were required to meet learner success within fixed curriculum requirements and national language exams. To explore identity affirmation and investment in learning, the youths completed two units of classroom work, choosing their own topics and drawing on their full inventory of languages and communicative abilities to create multimodal identity texts. The youths showed immense pride and confidence in their work, which revealed hitherto unknown details about their backgrounds and merited encouraging feedback. The study generated ideas for language and literacies teaching to youth from refugee backgrounds, particularly collaborative work that combines progressive translanguaging and traditional pedagogies.

Preface

This thesis is the original, unpublished work of the author, Michelle B. Smith. The UBC Behavioural Research Ethics Board approved the fieldwork reported in this study under certificate UBC Ethics ID Number H19-01782.

I was the lead researcher responsible for concept formation, research design, data collection and analysis, as well as manuscript composition. The data analysis in Chapter 4 was collaboratively performed by Drs. Early, Kendrick and me. Chapter 4 is a substantial part of a manuscript submitted for publication co-authored with Drs. Early and Kendrick where I am first author: Smith, M.B., Early, M., and Kendrick, M. (2022). *Teachers' ideological dilemmas: Lessons learned from a Language Introduction Program in Sweden* [Manuscript submitted for publication], Department of Language and Literacy Education, University of British Columbia.

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List of Abbreviations

CTT – Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory

LIP – Language Introduction Program

SLIFE – Students with limited or interrupted formal education

UTT – Unitary Translanguaging Theory

Glossary

The following key terms require clarification for the purposes of this thesis.

Asylum-seeker: The Swedish Migration Board (Migrationsverket) (2022) defines an asylum-seeker as an individual who comes to Sweden and applies for protection, but whose application has not yet been processed. Notably for this research, the definition indicates that an asylum-seeker has not been assigned either temporary or permanent residency in Sweden.

English: English in Sweden is under debate as to whether it is a foreign language or a second language (Hult, 2012), and therefore has neither distinction in this paper. English throughout the discussion unless specified otherwise, refers to English as a core subject taught in the Language Introduction Program.

Identity Text: According to Cummins and Early (2011):

Identity texts describe the products of students' creative work or performances carried out within the pedagogical space orchestrated by the classroom teacher. Students invest their identities in the creation of these texts which can be written, spoken, signed, visual, musical, dramatic, or combinations in multimodal form. The identity text then holds a mirror up to students in which their identities are reflected back in a positive light. When students share identity texts with multiple audiences (peers, teachers, parents, grand-parents, sister classes, the media) they are likely to receive positive feedback and affirmation of self in interaction with these audiences. (p. 3)

Language Introduction Program (LIP) [Språkintröduktion]: The Language Introduction Program in upper secondary school is the most common point of entry into Sweden's education system for newcomer youth who do not speak Swedish, with a focus on Swedish language learning (Skolverket, 2022). The Language Introduction Program includes

youth from refugee backgrounds who have gained residency status, asylum-seeking youth who are awaiting residency decisions, undocumented youth if the individual school administration allows, and youth of immigrant workers. The program is the site of this research and is interchangeably referred to in this document as the LIP. Youth participants in this study are refugee and asylum-seeking only.

Mapping [Kartläggning]: In collaboration with teachers and mother tongue language personnel, upon entry to a Language Introduction Program mapping is the process used to: (a) make an initial assessment of a youth's Swedish and English language competencies including reading, writing, listening, and speaking, (b) monitor their progress according to their individual educational pathways; and (c) act as a record to be sent forward to a new school if required (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). Materials are supplied by the national education agency (Skolverket).

Migrationsverket: Migrationsverket is Sweden's national migration agency.

Multilingual Classroom Assistant [Studiehandledare]: Mandated in Swedish educational legislation, multilingual classroom assistants provide mother tongue language support in school settings with the type of support in and out of classrooms, and the quantity and allocation of number of hours determined by the school's governing municipality. In addition, multilingual classroom assistants typically take on the role of mother tongue teachers and provide mother tongue instruction based on legislated criteria that seeks to acknowledge multilingual diversity.

Refugee: According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the 1951 Refugee Convention is a key legal document and defines a refugee as: "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political

opinion” (p. 14). In the context of this research, the youth who were designated as refugees upon entry in Sweden had received a residency decision.

Skolverket: Skolverket is Sweden’s national agency for education.

Swedish as a second language [Svenska som andraspråk]: Swedish as a Second Language (SSL) refers to learning Swedish through the SSL curriculum designed in parallel to, but distinct from, the Swedish curriculum (Skolverket, 2022).

Translanguaging/Semiotic Pedagogy: This study draws on Cummins’ (2021) conceptions of Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT), which views languages (translanguaging) as having boundaries that are permeable, “conceptually distinct,” and operate actively in the “cognitive and linguistic functioning” of the multilingual in ways that crisscross, intersect, and overlap (p. 264). With respect to the pedagogy related to this theoretical frame, Cummins (2021) uses a number of terms (e.g., multilingual learning, multilingual instructions, translanguaging pedagogy, crosslinguistic pedagogy, plurilingual pedagogy, bilingual instructional strategies and teaching through a multilingual lens) “interchangeably to refer to classroom instruction that acknowledges, engages and promotes the multilingual repertoires of students in linguistically diverse schools” (p. xxxvii). In this thesis, the term translanguaging pedagogy alone is used to refer to this type of classroom instruction. The term translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy adds to this by making explicit, that the pedagogy employed in the identity-text project is also transemiotic. It acknowledges, engages and promotes the multimodal repertoires of students (e.g., written, spoken, signed, visual, musical, dramatic, or combinations in multimodal form). Influenced by the original work in the multiliteracies¹ project

¹ www.multiliteracies.ca

where the term “identity text” (Cummins & Early, 2011, p. 3) was first used, translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies draws on the relationship/intersection between multilingualism and multimodality.

Undocumented: Children or youth who arrive in Sweden with no identifying papers are labeled undocumented. If children and youth remain in Sweden, despite a negative residency decision, they are also considered undocumented (Bunar, 2019).

Youth from refugee backgrounds: All references to “youth” and “youth from refugee backgrounds” in this study refer to youth who arrived in Sweden due to forced migration, were assigned one of four legal statuses upon entry, and were enrolled in the Language Introduction Program. Importantly, these statuses designated various educational rights to the youths (expanded on in Chapter 3). During the time of this study, children and youth were classified as either: undocumented, asylum-seeking, refugee, or children of immigrant workers (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). Children of immigrant workers were excluded from this research. In addition, the legal classifications denoted the status of the youths’ residency in Sweden. Undocumented and asylum-seeking youth were required to act on changing migration criteria, and were waiting for temporary or permanent residency decisions. Undocumented also included youth whose residency application had been denied and who were under a deportation order. Refugee status youth had received permanent residency. It is important to note that this study understands that these statuses are designated for only a short time in the life of the individual and so should not define, narrow, or limit their identity (Hyndman et al., n.d.). The research was predicated on the view that the youths were “individuals with intersecting identities interacting with others in dynamic relationships,” and sought to learn their stories to support and enhance their opportunities for successful integration (Hyndman et al., n.d., para. 4).

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If life is a journey, conducting this study and completing the thesis has been a highlight. I am grateful to all the people who have shared space with me in the process and have graciously introduced me to profoundly new, meaningful and unexpected ways of understanding.

While in Canada, I acknowledge the verdant and spiritual landscape on which I was able to pursue my study that is the x^wməθk^wəj^ʔəm [Musqueam] people's traditional, ancestral, and unceded land.

With utmost respect and admiration, I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, Dr. Margaret Early, who sensed the complexity and importance of my experience in Sweden and was willing to bring the issues to light. Her wisdom, breadth of knowledge, and dedication to both social justice in education and seeing me through the task were unbounded. I know Dr. Early's mentorship will have a long lasting impact on endeavors to come.

I would also like to acknowledge the other members of my committee, Dr. Maureen Kendrick and Dr. Meike Wernicke, whose expert feedback and thoughtful comments shaped the thesis and gave rise to new and exciting possibilities for further exploration.

This study would not have been possible without the blessing of my Swedish colleagues, especially Ronnie Palmqvist and Karin Nyström who brought me into the school. I greatly appreciate the willingness of the teachers and youth who agreed to participate and all they have shared and taught me. My life has been forever enriched by their resilience and commitment to teaching and learning.

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Finally, thank you to Stefan Backman, my partner and the spark that led me to Sweden. His steadfast and unwavering support have been the backdrop for all things Swedish in my life and what a wonderful adventure it has been.

Dedication

To Nora Mae who was born in the midst

Chapter 1: Background

In 2015, 163,000 asylum-seekers were accepted into Sweden, the largest percentage of migrants relative to a nation's overall population in the European Union (EU) (about 1.6% of Sweden's population); and over 12% of the total number of migrants to the EU that year (1.325 million) (Eurostat, 2015; Lundahl & Lindblad, 2018; Pew Research, 2016). Over 70,000 school-aged children and youth were included, many with interrupted education, mostly due to forced migration as a result of persecution, conflict, and contraventions of human rights. Over half of the newcomers were eligible to enter upper secondary school (i.e., 16 to 18 years of age) and their registration, typically in Sweden's transitional Language Introduction Program (LIP), precipitated a sharp increase in enrolment that substantially contributed to 24% of learners coming from foreign backgrounds in upper secondary schools in the 2015-2016 school year (Dávila & Bunar, 2020). Moreover, the newcomer youth came from countries of origin including Syria (17,596 youth), Afghanistan (30,080), Iraq (6,103), Eritrea (2,516) and Somalia (1,894) where their languages, schooling, and cultures were very different from Sweden's (Migrationsverket, 2015). Notably, over 35,000 youth entered alone without families, mostly Afghan-born.

My experiences from 2016 to 2019 in the LIP as a multilingual classroom assistant in English, a class mentor, and subject-area LIP English teacher in Stjärna² Upper Secondary School, were the motivation for this thesis. Working with a significant population of youth from forced migration in the LIP generated numerous insights, issues, and multiple inquiries regarding English language education, and more broadly its entanglement with Swedish as a second

² Pseudonym.

language and mother tongue teaching. In that context, an opportunity was provided to explore the many dilemmas and questions that arose for me and my experienced Swedish colleagues, as we sought to develop better understandings of the challenges and the potential of innovative approaches to teaching youth from refugee backgrounds.

This thesis documents a two-part qualitative study that I conducted in the fall of 2019 with experienced educators in a LIP in Sweden with the intent to gain their perspectives on the needs, challenges, and promising pedagogical practices regarding the language and literacies development of youth from refugee backgrounds. The study also explored LIP subject-area English classroom translanguaging/semiotic activities that may hold promise to support these youths' development of language/s and literacies, and impact their investment in literacy learning and identity affirmation.

The study, following leading scholars in the field of refugee education (e.g., Anderson et al., 2004; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016; Rutter, 2006; Stewart, 2012; Stewart & Martin, 2018), draws on Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bioecological model of human development. This model views four environments that impact the individual's development, ranging from *macro* (the ideologies and cultural values of the society) to *micro* (interactions with those persons closest to the individual), as "a nested arrangement of concentric structures, each contained within the next" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 22, emphasis in original). The Bronfenbrenner (1979) model was subsequently extended by Stewart (2012) and Stewart and Martin (2018) to include the nanosystem, which represents the closest personal relationships as the smallest ecological environment contained within the microsystem. The set of nested environments considered in this study includes: influences from the Swedish migration and education systems, the upper secondary school environment, Language Introduction Programs, English classroom curriculum

(materials and resources), and pedagogical languages and literacies pedagogical practices and interactions implemented broadly in the LIP language classes.

Anderson et al. (2004) applied the Bronfenbrenner (1979) model to the field of refugee education, recognizing that in addition to the usual developmental and ecological transitions experienced by an individual (e.g., during adolescence and school) the development of youth and children from refugee backgrounds is potentially subjected to “atypical” disruptions in the “nature...and presence or absence of systemic influences within the ecologies [that] can occur due to pre-migration, trans-migration and post-migration factors” (p. 8). Pinson and Arnott’s (2007) and Taylor and Sidhu’s (2012) contributions underscore the importance of understanding social environments in host countries resulting from globalized migration that is forced as a result of wars and persecution in comparison to the social impacts of globalized migration due to economic variables (e.g., industrialization and colonization). As a result of atypical disruptions in ecologies due specifically to the process of forced migration, children and youth from refugee backgrounds may be more at risk than host country youth or other types of immigrants due to traumas experienced in their home countries during migration and during the settlement process (Bilgili et al., 2018). For Anderson et al. (2004), education systems in host countries should adapt to ease the transition for the children and youth from refugee backgrounds through the development of “optimally supportive structures” (p. 9). Pinson and Arnot (2007) claim that few studies have been conducted to gain insights into the changing role of education systems due to the impacts of forced globalized movement of individuals and the resulting diversity of populations, although Nilsson and Bunar’s (2016) research in the Swedish context, and drawn on in this study, is a recent notable exception.

While recognizing the importance of pre-migration and trans-migration factors, this thesis (both Parts 1 and 2) is situated within the post-migration ecology of youth from refugee backgrounds as they enter Sweden's educational system. The remainder of this chapter provides a statement of the problem, the research questions, researcher background, the significance of the study, and the organization of the thesis.

Statement of the Problem

The thesis addresses the disparity in academic outcomes between native Swedish youth and youth from refugee backgrounds who receive instruction in Swedish or English, a language different from their mother tongue, and are in the process of resettlement in Sweden. A description of the disparity and reasons for poor academic outcomes is presented in the following section.

Youth from Refugee Backgrounds and Low Academic Performance. New arrivals in Sweden of school age are legislated to begin their education no later than one month after arrival (Lindström & Perdahl, 2014). Youths aged 16 to 18 years are generally registered in the transitional Language Introduction Program in the upper secondary schools (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). Similar to immigrant learners in other Western countries, the youth are often students with limited or interrupted formal education (i.e., SLIFE, Dooley, 2009) and come from school systems that differ greatly from those of the resettlement country (Block et al., 2014). Consequently, the newcomer youth are commonly faced with enormous challenges as they begin their educational pathways in their new home.

However it is important to recognize, as Shapiro and MacDonald (2017) note, that deficit discourses regarding children and youth from refugee backgrounds are all too prevalent in educational research. These deficit discourses though well-intentioned, focus on gaps and

challenges with respect to the learners' previous schooling rather than acknowledging the rich communicative assets, experiences and attributes that children and youth from refugee backgrounds possess. Block et al. (2014) explain:

In addition – while recognition of trauma and the need for support is critical – there appears to be a tendency to adopt a deficit model that treats people from refugee backgrounds as victims rather than recognises their potential and builds on their strengths and resilience. (p. 1340)

This is an important point. Shapiro (2018) also states that while research must take into account the challenges children and youth from refugee backgrounds face, researchers should also explicitly bring to the fore the agency, resilience and “funds of knowledge” (Moll et al. 1992, p. 132) that the students and their families possess. The present two-part study seeks to balance gaining a better understanding of the gaps and challenges that youth experience (particularly SLIFE) during their transitional education in Sweden, while acknowledging and drawing on the many and diverse assets that all youth from refugee backgrounds bring to their schooling.

Even so, research widely recognizes that late-age entry into school in a new country negatively impacts both school performance and dropout rates compared to learners who were born in the country or who migrated at a preschool age (Çelikaksoy & Wadensjö, 2017; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). In a large-scale Canadian study, Gunderson (2007) reported that late-age entry immigrant students experienced lower academic achievement than their peers of the same age, and departed from academic courses at the secondary level at a higher rate (approximately 60% for immigrant students). Moreover, when the data were disaggregated, significant ethno-linguistic differences were revealed, illuminating that youth from refugee backgrounds were the

group most highly at risk for poor academic results. For the broad category of immigrant students, Gunderson et al.'s (2012) findings further revealed, "distinct differences in academic success related to immigrant class, gender, and first language (L1)" (p. 142). These differences deserve further research with respect to youth designated as refugees, asylum-seekers, or undocumented.

According to Cummins (2000), research in Canada, Israel, and the United States acknowledges that English language learners are generally able to acquire basic interpersonal language proficiency in their host country's dominant language within two years through everyday interactions in their school and the wider environment. Cummins (2000) further claims that everyday language proficiency is easier to attain than academic language proficiency in part due to the added context and social prompts characteristic of interpersonal exchanges such as facial expressions, gestures, and the rise and fall of voice. Academic language proficiency, on the other hand, requires on average five years for language learners to catch up to their same-age peers. Not only does academic language demand greater "knowledge of the language itself" in the absence of social cues to complete the task, it is more likely to be written, abstract and cognitively demanding, and learners are faced with a "moving target" as their peers, at the same time, are developing their own abilities to use language in "increasingly academic abstract situations" (Cummins, 2000, pp. 35–36). In addition, as Schleppegrell (2017) points out, while the distinction between everyday and academic language has provoked controversy (see Cummins, 2021, pp. 152–208 for a comprehensive review and discussion), Cummins' (2000) differentiation has importantly identified that the particular ways language is required to be used in school in order to succeed is often not found outside the classroom, especially for language learners.

In Sweden, Lundahl and Lindblad (2018) reported that academic outcomes are based on three criteria: (a) passing national standardized Grade 9 exams in Swedish, English and math to graduate to mainstream academic or vocational programs in upper secondary school; (b) meeting other eligibility requirements for upper secondary school programs, such as number and types of courses; and (c) contributing to mathematics and reading literacy results in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). Consistent with the well documented gap in academic achievement that persists between newly arrived learners and their peers of the same age (Bilgili et al., 2018; Maadad, 2020; Van Viegen, 2020; Volante et al., 2019), overall results from Swedish data indicate a significant difference in academic achievement outcomes between learners born in Sweden and learners with foreign backgrounds who came to Sweden after the age of 7, which is when compulsory school in Sweden begins (Lundahl & Lindblad, 2018; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). PISA results published in a 2016 report indicate a growing gap in Sweden between high and low academic outcomes of learners who were assessed at 15 years of age and between the statuses of socially and economically advantaged and disadvantaged learners (Cummins, 2017; OECD, 2016). Significantly, of the youths from refugee backgrounds who enrolled in Language Introduction Programs, only 36% had moved on to a national academic or national vocational program five years after entering the Language Introduction Program (Skolverket, 2020). Critically, graduating from a national program in upper secondary school is a prerequisite to securing nearly all types of employment in Sweden and so the low transfer rate is a considerable concern (Lundahl & Lindblad, 2018).

Reasons for Poor Academic Outcomes. Cummins (2014) outlines three possible causes for poor academic achievement common to students who are at risk of underachievement, all or some of which may be applicable to the youth from refugee backgrounds in this study. The first

is a “home-school language switch” where the student’s home language is different from the dominant school and societal language that necessitates academic content learning through a second language. The second risk factor is low socio-economic status wherein the potential sources of educational disadvantage may be related to factors such as, “inadequate healthcare and or nutrition; housing segregation; lack of cultural and material resources in the home due to poverty; and inadequate access to print in home and schools” (Cummins et al., 2015, p. 563). Lundahl and Lindblad (2018) point to the low socio-economic status risk factor as a possibility in Sweden, highlighting an increase in the proportion of learners with low socio-economic status due to the migration influx, from 9% of learners in 2008 to 22% in 2015. The new arrivals are from countries outside Europe, such as Afghanistan and Somalia, which are characterized by low living standards when considering life expectancy and income per capita, feature less established school systems, and have experienced lower levels of education and fewer average years of schooling (Lundahl & Lindblad, 2018).

Finally, the third general risk factor cited by Cummins (2014) is “marginalized group status” constituted by the wider society that manifests as discrimination and racism (p. 149). The marginalized status of youth from refugee backgrounds in Sweden could also play a role in academic outcomes, arguably based on a change to Sweden’s migration rules in January 2016 that “went from liberal to radically restrictive” (Ericsson, 2018, p. 96). The country transformed from being welcoming as a nation, to enacting some of the strictest immigration regulations in the European Union with citizens calling for migrants to adhere to “Swedish values,” (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2020, p. 1) and moving toward policy structures that consolidated the migrants within the liminal spaces of society (Dávila & Bunar, 2020; Ericsson, 2018; Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2020; Schierup et al., 2017).

The important influences of risk factors, including low socio-economic status, racism, and marginalization are not explicitly focused on in this thesis. Rather the study concentrates on the home-school language switch with the aim of identifying promising practices. The research first addresses the English language and literacy needs and challenges in a Language Introduction Program from the perspectives of four LIP language teachers. The second focus emerges from the first to explore these needs and challenges and their entanglement with other language learning practices, specifically as they are impacted by education and migration policies in the youths' post-migration ecology (Anderson et al., 2004). The third area of focus is concentrated in the youths' micro and nanosystems (i.e., the English subject-area LIP class and close relationship between teacher and student) within a Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT) framework and pedagogy (Cummins, 2021). Seven youths in the LIP took part in a translanguaging/semiotic project (two classroom units) over a period of six weeks, drawing on their own interests, experiences, full linguistic repertoires, and other multimodal literacies to create identity texts (Cummins, 2004a; Cummins & Early, 2011). The study does not attempt to establish either evident improvement in the youths' English language and literacies competencies or causality between the research findings and successful completion of the English Grade 9 national exam required for entry to mainstream academic and vocational programs. Instead the goal is exploratory in order to understand more fully how translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies in the LIP English language classroom (i.e., the identity texts) could promote the youths' investment in language and literacies learning and enhance their identity affirmation (Cummins, 2000, 2017, 2021; Cummins & Early, 2011).

Research Questions

The three research questions guiding this study are:

Part I

1. What do language teachers in a Language Introduction Program in Sweden, identify as the (English language and literacy) learning needs and challenges of youth from refugee backgrounds?
2. What dilemmas do language teachers in a Language Introduction Program perceive relative to meeting the language needs of youth from refugee backgrounds, as they strive to implement promising practices?

Part II

3. What is the potential of translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies to draw on the everyday literacies and experiences of youth from refugee backgrounds in a Language Introduction Program in Sweden for identity affirmation and investment in language and literacy learning?

In the original design for this study, there were two central research questions (now questions 1 and 3) one for each of the two parts. In an initial analysis of the data addressing question 1, I sensed (together with my supervisory committee members, Dr. Early and Dr. Kendrick) dilemmas arising as the teachers in their efforts to design promising pedagogies grappled with the implementation of official language policies, curricula, and the demands of the assessments and examinations that are based on monoglossic language standards. We were intrigued to investigate further and question 2 was posed. Thus Part I of the study evolved to address the needs and challenges perceived by the teachers in the Language Introduction

Program and then the dilemmas they faced when striving for best practices to respond to the needs and challenges.

Researcher's Background

In September 2015, I moved from Vancouver, Canada to a rural municipality in western Sweden supported by a single upper secondary school. During the 2017–2018 school year when extra staff were needed to support language learning, I was offered employment as a multilingual classroom assistant to act as a resource for English in Stjärna's Language Introduction Program, subject-area English class. The following year, 2018–2019, I took on two roles in the LIP as co-mentor for a class and as an English subject-area teacher. In fall 2019, I left my teaching and mentoring roles and began data collection for this study with language teachers and youths in the same LIP program.

Significance of the Study

The 2015 enrolment of large numbers of youth from refugee backgrounds in upper secondary schools in Sweden allowed for investigation of longstanding and normalized structures, policies, and practices in education as they impact the academic outcomes of foreign born, multilingual learners (Bunar, 2018). The results of this small qualitative study will add to the scholarship on post-migration ecology. Also, the findings have implications for practice regarding teaching youth from refugee backgrounds in Sweden who are seeking to transition to mainstream programs and acquire meaningful employment as part of their successful integration into society. The research addresses three topics of enquiry. Part I addresses a gap in academic studies in the Swedish context that includes the perspectives of teachers in language introduction programs who teach language and literacy to youth from refugee backgrounds (Gynne, 2019) to identify teaching needs and challenges. Their perspectives further highlight the dilemmas they

experience in determining best pedagogical responses when faced with the realities of teaching youth from refugee backgrounds in the context of fixed education policies.

Part II responds to the ongoing call for translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies that allow for transformative and equitable education (Cummins, 1996; 2021; García, 2009; García & Wei, 2014) for marginalized language learners. Both parts of the investigation consider the educational environments of youth from refugee backgrounds in their post-migration ecology inside the classroom and beyond, to identify potential effective programmatic and pedagogical responses to their educational needs with respect to teaching and learning English language and literacy in the transitional Language Introduction Program.

Organization of the Thesis

The thesis falls under the category of a manuscript thesis. Chapters 1 and 6 provide the introduction and conclusion; Chapter 2 situates the study, and Chapters 3 and 5 are composed in preparation for stand-alone submissions. Chapter 4, co-authored with Dr. Early and Dr. Kendrick, is currently under review for a special issue of the Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development (JMMD). More detailed information is provided below.

Chapter 1 describes the large migration of youth from refugee backgrounds to Sweden in 2015, my background and reasons for the study, the three central research questions and the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 is organized in two sections. The first section (Section A) situates the overall study, the second section (Section B) describes the research methodology for the needs, challenges, teachers' dilemmas, and promising practices part of the study. Section A additionally focuses on the structure of Sweden's education system, the role of English language instruction,

the site of the research and the researcher's positionality. Section B focuses on the research itself, including the teacher participants, data generation and data analysis.

Chapter 3 addresses the existing literature and theoretical frameworks relevant to understanding the needs, challenges, and promising practices and findings from research question 1. Chapter 4 will provide an overview of the relevant theory, a review of the literature, research findings and a discussion of the findings for research question 2, which explores the teachers' dilemmas.

The discussion will then turn to Part II in Chapter 5 and address research question 3 (i.e., translanguaging/semiotic, identity texts project). This chapter will present the relevant theory and literature review, methodology, including a description of the youth participants, data generation, data analysis and the findings and discussion related to research question 3.

Finally, Chapter 6 will present conclusions for Parts I and II, addressing research questions 1, 2 and 3, and will include pedagogical implications, limitations of the study and future research.

Chapter 2: Situating the Research

This chapter has two main sections. Section A situates the overall study relative to research questions 1, 2, and 3. It briefly provides background on the structure of the education system in Sweden, the position of English both within the education system and the broader Swedish society. It then goes on to describe the research site and concludes with a statement about my positionality as a researcher. Section B describes the research methodology relevant to research questions 1 and 2, restates the two research questions, describes the Language Introduction Program teacher participants, data generation, the unit of analysis, and data analysis. The theoretical framing, literature review, findings, and discussions relative to research questions 1 and 2 are presented in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4, respectively.

Section A: Situating the Research for Parts I and II

Most children in Sweden begin to experience daily structure at the age of one in daycare, and then attend preschool, kindergarten, and an optional program for 6-year-olds until the age of 7 when compulsory schooling begins (Sylvén, 2019). The Skolverket (the Swedish National Agency for Education) reported 85% enrolment for preschoolers and 96% enrollment for 5-year-olds across all communities in 2020 (Skolverket, 2020). Compulsory schooling continues for 9 years up to 16 years of age, when learners complete Grade 9 national exams in Swedish, English and math. Upper secondary school follows from Grade 10 through Grade 12 and is optional with free tuition. However, 98% of eligible youths choose to attend (Sylvén, 2019).

The Skolverket (2021) establishes the programming for upper secondary schools which provides a range of introductory and national programs. At the time of the study, five introductory programs were available to students who did not meet the mandated requirements to enter a national program in upper secondary school. National programs included academic

options (e.g., sciences, social sciences, and economics) and a range of vocational options (e.g., childcare, truck driving, sport specializations (hockey, skiing), industry, hotel management, handicrafts (knitting, weaving), marine technician, etc.). Not all programs are offered in all schools and, representative of Sweden's market-oriented education system, schools are attractive based on the programs they offer and the reputations they gain (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2020; Lundahl & Lindblad, 2018). Berglund (2017) cites the option to choose as a factor contributing to the segregation of schools in the last 20 years with parents and students avoiding schools with populations of low socio-economic backgrounds and low school results.

Introductory programs, including the Language Introduction Program, are designed to cater to the individual learner and provide an opportunity for students to earn prerequisites in various subject areas in order to continue in national education programs. The introductory programs are unique in that the program of courses is not formally set by the Skolverket, but varies according to the needs of the learner and the courses offered in the school, partly determined based on staff availability. The course schedule for introductory programs, including subject areas and the number of hours per week of instruction allocated to each course, is recommended by the governing municipalities with the principal and teachers responsible for the design and follow up of individual educational pathways (Skolverket, 2021).

The Use of English in Swedish Society and as a School Subject. The use of English is prevalent across Sweden, so much so that consideration is being given to redesignate English as a second rather than a foreign language (Hult, 2012; Hyltenstam & Lindberg, 2004; Josephson, 2004). Some examples of widespread English use include English television programs that typically apply Swedish subtitles rather than dubbing, university courses conducted in English, and use of English in pop culture (e.g., music and advertising) (Sylvén, 2019). Therefore, though

English competency is not critical for success in Swedish society, use of English is valued and widespread and a lack of English is limiting in some educational, professional and social contexts. English competency in urban areas such as Stockholm for example, is often essential when working in retail, tourism, hospitality and professional organizations with international affiliations.

The importance of English is realized in the school system with English designated as a compulsory subject beginning in Grade 3 for children 9 years of age, however children are likely exposed to it from as early as preschool. For example, according to Skolverket (2021), 85% of one- to five-year-olds have been exposed to English. By the end of Grade 9, learners will have received 480 formal hours of English instruction (Skolverket, 2021). In upper secondary school, mandatory English study continues in national programs and is offered as English 5, English 6, and (optional) English 7.

English in the Language Introduction Program. As noted in Chapter 1, national exams are administered in Swedish, English and math at the end of Grade 9 in compulsory schooling. Therefore, though English is not required as a subject-area course in the Language Introduction Program (due to the LIP's flexible nature as an introductory program beyond compulsory school), English instruction with the aim of completing the Grade 9 national exam was an important consideration in scheduling when welcoming the large population of youth from refugee backgrounds into the LIP during 2015. English teaching resources were designed, published, and implemented specifically for the LIP youths, for example, a series of English workbooks and digital supports entitled *English from the Beginning* (Odén, 2014). The series consisted of four workbooks structured according to the "Presentation, Practice, Production (PPP)" framework (Byrne, 1986) progressing through basic English grammar, functional

language, and lexis in order to teach reading, writing, speaking and listening (Anderson, 2017; Liber, 2021). The publisher described the content themes as appealing to youths 13 to 18 years of age, with the first two books developed to meet the requirements for levels A1 and A2 in The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages³ (i.e., Grade 6 equivalent in Swedish compulsory schools), and books 3 and 4 to meet common levels A2 and B1 (i.e., Grade 9 equivalent in Swedish compulsory schools) (Liber, 2021). Each section presents a theme and begins with a reading passage including English vocabulary translated to Swedish in a separate box on the page. Written exercises follow, such as fill in the blank, questions from the text, and exercises emphasizing a grammar rule. Then listening exercises are laid out using the digital sound component, and, finally, each chapter ends with an “About Me” section and a checklist of goals for self evaluation (Liber, 2021). For example the checklist in Book 2, Chapter 1 is:

I can read and write about memories from the past.

I've learnt more adjectives and synonyms.

I can write and talk about how a good friend should be.

I can write explanations in English [using] words I've learnt about things I usually do.

I know some new information about two Americans from the past.

I've written a presentation about a famous person from the past. (Odén, 2014, p. 17)

General Characteristics of the Language Introduction Program. As previously mentioned, the upper secondary school's Language Introduction Program is the most common point of entry into the educational system for youth from refugee backgrounds (Fejes &

³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

Dahlstedt, 2020). The Skolverket reported enrollment in LIPs of youth seeking asylum and refuge steadily climbed from 10,200 in 2014 to 23,100 in 2016—an increase of 126% (Skolverket, 2014, 2016). Between 2017 and 2018 when I was working at Stjärna and as a result of the 2015 migration, youth in the LIP represented the country's fourth largest enrolment in all upper secondary programs with 20,000 youths entering the first year of the LIP (Gynne, 2019). Designed as a transitional program, the LIP focuses primarily on Swedish as a second language instruction in order to enable youth from refugee backgrounds to apply for academic or vocational national programs and other educational options (e.g., adult education), or to enter the labour market (Gynne, 2019).

Fejes and Dahlstedt (2020) describe two unique characteristics of the LIP. First, no knowledge-based prerequisite is necessary to enter the program. Second, each municipality is responsible for designing goals, time frames and content for the LIP in their catchment, although at a minimum learners must reach Grade 9 level Swedish competence and pass the national exam at the end of compulsory school. Tajic and Bunar (2020) state that the learner's individual LIP class placement is decided according to the results of a screening assessment or mapping process (called kartläggning) using materials from the Skolverket, and carried out in Swedish with mother tongue language support provided by a multilingual classroom assistant if required. The assessment includes a profile built on the learner's school background and experiences including length of formal or informal education, competency levels in literacy (Swedish and English) and numeracy, and academic knowledge in various subjects (Tajic & Bunar, 2020). The assessment is recorded on a template and stored in the youth learner's file for reference, and is ideally sent forward if the student changes schools (Bunar, 2018).

Stjärna Upper Secondary School and the Language Introduction Program. The LIP at Stjärna Upper Secondary School was the site of the research study. At the time of the research, Stjärna Upper Secondary offered various national introductory, academic and vocational programs, including an LIP with approximately 73 youths (22% of the school population) attending. The school was led by an experienced principal and cohort of teachers, and supported by a rich inventory of texts and materials for mainstream and LIP instruction.

As was mandated, the LIP program prioritized learning Swedish as a second language and based on Skolverket recommendations at the time of the study, included instruction in mother tongue (i.e., Arabic and Dari), English, math, social sciences (religion, geography, and social studies), natural sciences (biology, chemistry, physics), and a variety of electives such as textiles and art. The teachers used national mapping materials in collaboration with Arabic and Dari multilingual classroom assistants to assess levels of language competencies in Swedish and English and to place the youths in LIP classes. Swedish as a second language was scheduled for four or five 50-minute classes weekly, with teachers adhering to Swedish as a second language curriculum guidelines according to grading criteria and content. English instruction was allotted four 50-minute blocks per week and taught according to mainstream English curriculum guidelines and assessment. Finally, mother tongue instruction (i.e., Arabic and Dari) was held weekly for one 50-minute class, with multilingual classroom assistants as the teachers and determining the learning environments and skill levels to meet the syllabus guidelines.

During the time of this research, approximately 25% of the youths were Syrian-born, almost all the remainder were Afghan-born (but had generally lived in Iran), and nearly 90% of the students were male due to the proportionately large number of males who migrated as unaccompanied minors. Almost all the youths had experienced forced migration, were legally

assigned as refugee, asylum-seeker, or undocumented,⁴ and many were living in Sweden without any family members.

Researcher Positioning. My life experiences are different compared to the youth and educator participants born outside Sweden. However, they are similar in some ways to the life experiences of the Swedish-born educator participants. I am a white, middle-aged, English-speaking, educated female born in Canada. My professional background includes teacher, colleague, researcher, and a mother to adult children (important because many students were in Sweden without family). Each of these characteristics represents symbolic capital that is considered valuable in different ways to my Swedish colleagues and to the LIP youths.

I was also a Swedish language learner the same as the students, though with far less at stake. In conversation with the teacher participants, I spoke Swedish or usually English. With the youth participants, communication, other than during the English classes, was mostly in Swedish with a small amount of English. There was more focus on English language and literacy use while in the LIP English classroom than when the youths and I communicated informally outside the classroom context. The youths' everyday Swedish was typically better than mine and I promoted their Swedish competence whenever possible.

My role as researcher in this study was therefore complicated by several subjectivities that I maintained in the eyes of both the educator and youth participants (Merriam, 1995). Some put me in a position of power such as being a white, Canadian-born English speaker, teacher and mother, while others such as being an emergent Swedish speaker, put me in a position of less

⁴ The Glossary provides more information about these terms.

power. Undoubtedly the effects of my various subjectivities in combination affected the study outcomes in subtle ways.

In generating the data to understand teacher perceptions and language and literacy practices with the youths from refugee backgrounds in the LIP, I brought my own experiences, biases, and assumptions (Merriam, 2002). For example, my objectivity was likely influenced by previous conversations with the LIP educator participants, regarding teaching the youth participants and using limited multimodal approaches in the classroom. From conversations with my colleagues and my own experience, I had felt the impacts of frustration on the wellbeing of teachers and youths in the LIP regarding the youths' language development, and strongly wanted promising or better understandings from the study to support the youths' language and literacy learning. As Talmy (2011) compellingly argues, the research interview is a "social practice" and a "collaborative achievement," rather than a totally objective "instrument" for collecting and selecting information (p. 25). I was well acquainted with the youth participants from various identity positions for two years prior to the research, including in the classroom as their English language resource and teacher, as a co-Swedish language learner, and as one with parental experience able to provide support in that aspect if required. My familiarity with them deepened my aspirations that they would succeed in school. In the post-project exit interviews with the youths therefore, at times I may have inclined my questioning toward eliciting positive responses. However, the youths were agentive in their responses and were supported with an interpreter to mediate (if necessary or preferred) over the course of the short interviews, and they were clear and forthcoming in what they viewed as the problems related to the project's two units of study, as well as the possibilities of the translanguaging/semiotic approach.

As Merriam (2002) cautions, my life experiences, biases, and assumptions necessarily shaped my analysis and responses to the study results as well. The co-analysis of Chapter 4 by members of my supervisory committee and iterative, ongoing dialogue with them throughout the study also strengthened the robustness of the findings, and mitigated my personal bias.

Section B: Methodology for Part I

Section B describes the methodology common to research questions 1 and 2, including details about the teacher participants, data generation and data analysis.

The Study and Teacher Participants. As presented in Chapter 1, the central questions for Part I (research questions 1 and 2) of the study were:

1. What do language teachers in a Language Introduction Program in Sweden identify as the (English language and literacy) learning needs and challenges of youth from refugee backgrounds?
2. What dilemmas do language teachers in Language Introduction Program perceive relative to the language needs of youth from refugee backgrounds, as they strive to implement promising practices?

Research question two emerged from the thematic analysis of research question one.

The qualitative research method of focus group interviews was used to gain rich insights into what four language teachers in the LIP thought about the language needs of their students in relation to their perceptions of promising pedagogical responses. The overall purpose of using focus groups was to facilitate a comfortable environment for sharing ideas, experiences, and attitudes about a defined topic (Krueger & Casey, 2000). By design, participants both influence and are influenced by the perspectives of others.

The LIP teacher participants were selected strategically using purposive sampling, “according to the role they play in dynamic processes” (Palys, 2008, p. 697) within the LIP. They included two language teachers—one Swedish and one English—and two multilingual classroom assistants who also served as mother tongue teachers of Dari and Arabic. Table 2.1 provides an overview of the educator participants.

Table 2.1 List of Language Introduction Program Teacher Participants⁵

Name	Languages	Role at time of study	Background at Stjärna Upper Secondary
Pia	Swedish, English	Lead teacher for the LIP taught mainstream SWE, SSL, English taught LIP SSL	Expert teacher for 12 years, including 7 years in the LIP
Svetlana	Russian, Swedish, English, German	taught LIP English	4 years in the LIP, expert teacher certificate received during year 2
Mahdi	Dari, Swedish, English	Multilingual classroom assistant taught mother tongue Dari	5 years in the LIP
Rama	Arabic, Kurdish, Swedish	Multilingual classroom assistant taught mother tongue Arabic	5 years in the LIP

⁵ The names of all teacher participants are pseudonyms.

Teacher participants were recruited with a letter of invitation and an attached consent form in English. The teachers were asked to participate in two 45-minute focus groups organized in a school classroom after regular hours and conducted by me.

Data Generation. The questions used in the focus groups were presented in a manner to encourage open dialogue. For the teachers, the process included continuous clarification in Swedish when necessary with interview questions adapted from questions used in a similar, large Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada-funded study led by Dr. Maureen Kendrick (see Appendix A for sample questions). The questions addressed three topics: (a) teachers' beliefs, (b) assessment and instructional strategies with respect to English language and literacy education for youth from refugee backgrounds; and (c) ways to encourage investment with youth from refugee backgrounds in the classroom. The group discussions were audio-recorded using the Voice Memos app on an Apple iPhone.

Data Analysis. When addressing both research question 1 and research question 2 in Part I, Braun and Clarke's (2012) six-phase process for thematic data analysis was employed: (a) familiarize with the data, (b) generate initial codes, (c) search for themes, (d) review potential themes, (e) define and name themes, and (f) produce the report. In addition, the analysis used a combination of inductive (bottom-up) and deductive (top-down) approaches "not uncommon in a single thematic analysis" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 57). In other words, codes and themes were induced from within the data, and also deduced according to preconceived notions that were brought to the research. For research question 1, these preconceived notions included previous schooling, social-emotional, and trauma. For research question 2, they included fixity and fluidity and translanguaging pedagogies. This abductive analysis allowed for "surprises to come

up, [to be] taken seriously, and . . . [to be] explained using concepts not anticipated when the [study] started” (Agar, 2006, para. 66).

For research question 1, the unit of analysis was the teachers’ principles, beliefs and practices. For research question 2, two members of my supervisory committee, Dr. Early and Dr. Kendrick, and I collaboratively analyzed and aligned the ideological dilemmas that initially emerged in and across the conversations with educators, employing Agar’s (1996) concept of “rich points,” which he defines as “moments of incomprehension and unmet expectations” (p. 4). Taking these rich points as our unit of analysis, we focused on dilemmas that the educators articulated in relation to language policies and pedagogies in the Language Introduction Program. The notion of dilemma draws from the conceptions of ideological dilemmas (Billig et al., 1988). They articulate the particular characteristics of ideological dilemmas:

We stress the *ideological* nature of thought...and the *thoughtful* nature of ideology
...Ideology is not seen as a complete, unified system of beliefs which tells the individual how to react, feel and think. Instead ideology, and indeed common sense, are seen to comprise contrary themes. Without contrary themes, individuals could neither puzzle over their social worlds nor experience dilemmas. And without this, so much thought would be impossible. (p. 2, emphasis in original)

Concerning both research questions, after the data were generated, I used f5⁶ software to transcribe the focus group interviews. I listened to and read the transcriptions several times, using Atlas.ti to organize the data and generate initial codes, and then moved to Microsoft Word to collate the codes and search for themes. I reviewed the potential themes, first independently

⁶ <https://macdownload.informer.com/f5-transcription-free/>

and then collaboratively to confirm that the themes related closely to the data. For research question 1, the themes were labelled and three interrelated themes noted: (a) concerning educational challenges, (b) challenges related to structural (legal and organizational) stresses, and (c) social-emotional challenges (reported in Chapter 3). For research question 2, we labeled the themes and noted that two main themes emerged concerning the dilemmas of “what” to teach (including two sub-themes), and “how” best to teach literacies in the Language Introduction Program (reported in Chapter 4).

The thematic analyses were iterative and recursive, with recursiveness the typical merit of this approach (Braun & Clark, 2012). During the recursive process we discussed and agreed upon emerging themes and continued through ongoing dialogue to clarify, fine-tune, and modify the thematic categories, with the themes looping back to the research questions.

The following chapter addresses research question 1 to understand the youths’ post migration ecology as they entered the Swedish educational system according to the needs and challenges from the perspectives of experienced LIP language and literacies teachers.

Chapter 3: Part I—Needs and Challenges

This chapter presents relevant theory, related literature, findings and discussion in response to research question 1: What do language teachers in a Language Introduction Program in Sweden identify as the learning (English language and literacy) needs and challenges of youth from refugee backgrounds? The context and methodology for this study were described in Chapters 1 and 2.

Theory and Literature Review

For Shapiro (2018), the study of language and literacy development of children and youth from refugee backgrounds in their post-migration ecology necessarily involves an understanding of how language and literacies practices are influenced by the host country’s “institutional, social and cultural contexts” (p. 6). Dahl et al. (2018) and Warriner (2007) similarly posit that ideologies in the host country may conspire to provide language and literacy education that either facilitates inclusion and a sense of belonging for the learners from refugee backgrounds, or perpetuates their exclusion from attaining educational goals and gaining meaningful access to society.

In order to gain a better understanding of youth from refugee backgrounds’ language and literacies development in the Swedish context, I used Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) bioecological model of human development to inform my exploration (mentioned in Chapter 1), specifically in its adaptation by migration scholars in the field of refugee education. Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) bioecological model situated the individual at the centre of four systems: micro, meso, exo and macro. The microsystem is the innermost structure, and includes people with the closest relationships to the individual, such as family, peers, and teammates. The mesosystem is made of connections among the various microsystems, (e.g., teachers and classmates; classmates and

extracurricular peer groups). The exosystem includes relationships between more distant systems, ones in which the individual is not always involved (e.g., employment centres, social agencies, and community members). The outermost structure is the macrosystem, encompassing the ideologies and the cultural values, customs, and laws of the society in which the other systems are nested.

For children and youth from refugee backgrounds, Anderson et al. (2004) illuminate the “atypical conditions” (p. 8) that may influence a child’s or youth’s development before, during, and after their migration journey (e.g., Anderson et al., 2004; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016; Rutter, 2006; Stewart, 2012; Stewart & Martin, 2018). Stewart (2012) and Stewart and Martin (2018) additionally include the nanosystem as an important structure within the microsystem with unique characteristics. They explain that, “[w]hereas the microsystem was observed to be more contextual, the nanosystem was more relational” (p. 5). The nanosystem is constituted by various close one-on-one relationships within the microsystem between the children and youth from refugee backgrounds, and the individuals (i.e., educators and administrators) who nurture and support the children and youth’s development. Critically, these relationships range in closeness so that while all children and youth from refugee backgrounds will experience the post migration ecology of the microsystem, “only some will connect to the nanosystem” (Stewart & Martin, 2018, p. 185).

Sweden’s Educational Responses to Youth from Refugee Backgrounds. This section primarily draws on Nilsson and Bunar’s (2016) very comprehensive review and systematic analyses of the literature regarding the Swedish response to the diverse needs of newly arrived children and youth, with some reference to other Swedish scholars’ more recent, relevant contributions. As Nilsson and Bunar (2016) note, their review represents an under-researched

area in Sweden “which means that there is a limited amount of research material or other assessments to consult” (p. 402).

In keeping with migration scholars, and informed by the Bronfenbrenner (1979) model, Nilsson and Bunar (2016) highlight the ever-dynamic and changing nature of the individual which develops in ongoing interaction with the environment. Unlike other migration scholars (e.g., Anderson et al., 2004; Stewart, 2012; Stewart & Martin, 2018), however, the focus of Nilsson and Bunar’s (2016) use of an adapted ecological model does not focus on development. Rather, they use the model as an organizing principle or “mapping device” (p. 401) to better understand how the structure and influence of post-migration ecology are likely to define, deal with, and impact newcomer children and youth. In undertaking their analysis, Nilsson and Bunar (2016) reviewed “a set of policies, strategies, categorizations, practices, and narratives” (p. 400) with respect to legal, organizational and pedagogical responses.

Critically in the Swedish context, the Nilsson and Bunar (2016) discussion highlights two normative features in the post-migration ecology that act as obstacles in the educational life of the immigrant learners: (a) the focus on Swedish language learning as primarily important, and (b) the application of generalized (homogeneous) versus individualized (heterogeneous) pedagogical practices that do not sufficiently engage learners’ pre-existing linguistic capacities, or everyday literacies and experiential knowledge. In other words, practices that take a deficit perspective. Nilsson and Bunar (2016) consolidate their analysis of the immigrant learners’ post-migration ecology and present these normative features as underlying three categories of responses: legal, organizational, and pedagogical that together constitute the educational environment and shape the educational opportunities for newly arrived children and youth. These responses are discussed below in the next sections.

Legal Responses. According to Nilsson and Bunar (2016), the legal responses are the residency statuses assigned to the immigrant learners when they arrive in Sweden which establish their “formal positioning” in the educational system and dictate affordances according to school legislation (p. 403). These statuses include undocumented, asylum-seeking, refugee, and children of immigrant workers. The children with refugee status and children of immigrant workers are entitled to the same educational funding, rights, and obligations as children born in Sweden. Undocumented children and youth have the right to education, though they are not required to attend compulsory school, and municipalities can apply for state funding for their education. Nilsson and Bunar (2016) note that in this way, the presence of undocumented children and youth in Sweden has been “semi-legalised” (p. 403).

Asylum-seeking children (accompanied or unaccompanied by family) may be subject to a limited allowance of attendance hours (10% to 50% less than for native-born), depending on the municipality. According to the municipalities, the allocated state funding per asylum-seeking student may be less than the total cost of their actual education depending on the learner’s needs and exceptionalities. Practically speaking, in the case of asylum-seeking children, according to Nilsson and Bunar (2016), the responsibility is ultimately transferred to the local officials and the parents. In 2015, slightly more than 50% of asylum-seeking children (35,369 children) came to Sweden as unaccompanied minors, defined by the national migration agency (Migrationsverket) under Asylum regulations (2022-03-01) as “a person under the age of 18 who has come to Sweden without his or her parents or other legal custodial parent”. Of the 35,369 unaccompanied minors who entered in 2015, 32,806 were males 13 to 17 years old, and 23,480 of them were Afghan-born (Migrationsverket, 2015).

In sum, although newcomer children and youth may be allotted different allowances in education (time and funding) depending on assigned legal status and with responsibility for funding and access held at different levels (i.e., state, local, and parental), importantly, all newcomer children and youth have a right to education. Thus, Nilsson and Bunar (2016) conclude that asylum-seekers, in particular, unaccompanied minors, some of whom have gone into hiding following rejection of asylum status and have become undocumented students, are the most vulnerable.

Organizational Responses. Organizational responses describe the placement of the newly arrived children and youth upon entry into the educational system and how their education is carried out, including class allotment and how long they may stay in a program. Generally, the newcomers are placed following two organizational models with two sub-variations (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). These models include transitional classes, the most common option for newly arrived youth (e.g., the Language Introduction Program as in this study), and direct immersion classes, which involve placing newcomer learners in mainstream classes with or without mother tongue or Swedish as a second language support. The two sub-variations are based on the concept that newly arrived students require an adjustment period before entering the mainstream school system. The first of these sub-variations is labeled landing, wherein learners spend time (weeks to months) off site from the school to become accustomed to their new country; and the second sub-variation establishes schools exclusively for newcomers. Referencing Hagström (2018), Wedin (2021) addresses organizational responses in the Swedish context and notes that “organizational, spatial, and social borders limit students’ mobility through the education system” (p. 70). Wedin (2021) also references Sharif (2017) who showed that the Language

Introduction Program is often isolated from mainstream classes, and noted that the newly arrived students in the program have difficulty integrating with Swedish students.

Pedagogical Responses. Pedagogical responses are understood as efforts to develop effective practices for language and literacy learning for the newcomer learners (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). Two major pedagogical responses have emerged in Sweden for educating newly arrived learners and are implemented in various ways as the learners transition to mainstream academic schooling. These responses are (a) the Swedish as a second language curriculum which is designed to support the primary goal of Swedish language learning, and (b) the use of mother tongue which plays a more marginal role in the newcomers' transitional education. The responses are described below and notably, both underscore the dominance of "Swedish as the language of value" (Wedin, 2021, p. 75) in their design.

The first priority for newcomer children and youth entering the educational system is to learn the Swedish language, academic Swedish in particular (Svenska Riksdagen, 2010). In response, a separate Swedish as a second language curriculum was developed and introduced as a core subject in 1995 for Grades 1 to 12. Although Swedish as a second language was designed in parallel with the core subject of Swedish for mainstream Swedish language learners with the same skill levels and outcomes, Hedman and Magnusson (2020) note some differences. Both Swedish as a second language and Swedish make up the most instructional hours across the grades (Skolverket, 2021), however, Swedish as a second language has "a lower demand for correctness" (Hedman & Magnusson, 2020, p. 536). In addition, in upper secondary school, Swedish concentrates more on historical perspectives of literature and language with greater literary analysis; and Swedish as a second language orients more toward also developing learners' multilingual (mother tongue) capacities to support Swedish language learning. For

Swedish as a second language teachers, course outlines are unrestricted in terms of teaching method and content subject matter, giving Swedish as a second language teachers freedom to design their lesson units on one hand, but resulting in variation of Swedish as a second language instruction and content across schools and classrooms on the other.

Regardless of the teaching method, subject content, or type of learning facility, Nilsson and Bunar (2016) explain that learning Swedish is accepted as paramount for newly arrived students with educators questioning how to best achieve the required Swedish as a second language outcomes for this group of learners. Nilsson and Bunar (2016) lay out the general questions for debate: Should Swedish as a second language instruction occur separately or be integrated with mainstream subject-area classes? What are the consequences for social and academic development of the learners? Nilsson and Bunar (2016) further point out that arguments range from learners not being able to access critical context required to promote language learning and social development if Swedish as a second language is apart from the mainstream curriculum, as is typically the case with landing and transitional classes or separate schools; to learners not being able to understand fully the academic language of subjects if Swedish as a second language is integrated with mainstream classes, as in the direct immersion option.

Sweden's transitional Language Introduction Program focuses primarily on Swedish as a second language and math, with some schools providing English or mother tongue instruction and various courses in natural and social sciences. However, in the LIP sciences, for example, are often taught by qualified Swedish as a second language teachers and not by mainstream subject-area teachers, and often at an elementary level that does not dovetail with the mainstream curriculum of the learners' same-age peers. Consequently, critical content learning stops in the

process of prioritizing Swedish as a second language and the youth learners lose time as they strive to meet academic requirements before age restrictions make them ineligible to apply for further educational options (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016).

The second pedagogical response, use of mother tongue, again places the newcomer as a Swedish language learner above all else. However, this response characterizes the newly arrived language learners as beings who possess linguistic and subject knowledge, and leverages the learner's mother tongue to access the learner's capital to scaffold learning in two ways: (a) using the mother tongue to support Swedish language and content learning, and (b) through direct instruction in mother tongue language classes (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016).

The notion of scaffolding (e.g., Bruner, 1996; Cummins, 2000; Gibbons, 2015) using mother tongue languages has been in place since the 1970s in response to increasing linguistic diversity in Swedish schools that in 2018 reached 26% of all students starting in Grade 1 speaking a language at home different than Swedish (Hermansson et al., 2021). Multilingual classroom assistants are legislated for elementary and upper secondary schools to “support the learning of newly arrived children who lack proficiency (oracy or literacy) in the Swedish language, by acting as a bridge between children's first language and the subject area content” (Dávila & Bunar, 2020, p. 3). The number of weekly multilingual classroom assistant hours assigned for in-class assistance, the duration of support, and the means by which support is implemented is negotiated between the municipality, administrators, various content and language teachers, and the multilingual classroom assistants (Dávila & Bunar, 2020).

Multilingual classroom assistants are useful in several ways, such as by supporting the ongoing assessment of learners' literacies and backgrounds with the mapping materials, connecting both everyday and academic language understanding with teachers and learners across transitional

and mainstream classrooms in all subject areas, and “serving as cultural links between students’ previous educational experiences and new learning in Swedish classrooms, as well as between schools and parents” (Dávila & Bunar, 2020, p. 5).

Another scaffolding measure is mother tongue instruction, which is offered as an optional subject from grades 1 to 12 if certain criteria are met (e.g., there are at least five students in the municipality who want to participate, and an appropriate language teacher is available (Ganuza & Hedman, 2015)). Although mother tongue instruction is recognized as valuable for official documents and being able to offer various mother tongue options, Nilsson and Bunar (2016), referencing Bunar (2010), argue that when it comes to instruction, “mother-tongue tuition has suffered from a lack of organizational priority, isolation from mainstream tuition, difficulties in finding qualified teachers, and skepticism from parents regarding mother-tongue tuition” (p. 409).

In concluding their comprehensive review, Nilsson and Bunar (2016) argue that newly arrived students in Sweden are situated in a context where their pre- and trans-migration experiences are viewed from a deficit perspective, rather than considered as rich linguistic, cultural and experiential assets. This perspective is realized as newly arrived students experience “different statuses and entitlements, the physical separation from the mainstream and its normalisation, collective and standardised solutions, obscure rules for entering the mainstream” (p. 411). Moreover, they argue that there is the emergence of parallel, rather than inclusive, educational systems for the newly arrived children and youth. From this Nilsson and Bunar (2016) determine that it is not surprising that pedagogical responses that draw on the students’ full meaning-making repertoires and value their diversity as individual and societal assets, do not succeed in practice. They suggest that the responses will continue to be unsuccessful unless the

practices that are accompanied by substantial changes at all levels in the newcomer learners' post-migration ecology across legal, organizational, and pedagogical domains.

Literature from English-Speaking Contexts. In a literature review spanning 25 years of research that considers both the needs, obstacles, and successful interventions for youth from refugee backgrounds in the United States, McBrien (2005) noted that the settlement experience brings many adjustment challenges for children and youth from refugee backgrounds and their families. The students' challenges are related to psychosocial adjustment and language acquisition which are impacted by their levels of trauma, and the degree of parental support they receive. Experiences of exclusion, rejection, discrimination, stereotyping and prejudice were also revealed as major obstacles to children and youth from refugee backgrounds' success in school. Block et al. (2014), writing in the Australian context, reported that youth from refugee backgrounds, in addition to learning a new language and new social and educational systems and practices, are frequently students with limited or interrupted formal education (SLIFE). They point out that these children, youth and their families may not be literate in the languages of their country of origin and are commonly struggling with the impacts of trauma.

McBrien et al. (2017), in their introduction to a special issue of *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, explained that across five of the nine studies reported in the volume that address educational challenges, common concerns included: systemic structural issues, limited access to mainstream peers and language, socio-emotional issues and lack of guidance with respect to future aspirations and options. The authors also reported that, collectively, the studies indicate that failure to differentiate between youth from refugee backgrounds and non-refugee background peers contributes to disparity in their educational environment. They note the

“maldistribution of time and economic resources for adequate schooling and age appropriate learning” for youth from refugee backgrounds (p. 106).

Birman and Tran’s (2017) study focused on elementary-aged Somali Bantu children and their teachers in a Chicago school. The findings of this ethnographic study revealed that SLIFE faced new, unfamiliar cultural and structural expectations within the US educational system. The study reported incidents of the children’s disruptive behaviour, academic refusal, distress, hoarding, complaints of fatigue, and disengagement such as leaving class or being late, as teachers variously adopted what the authors classified as “assimilationist” or “multicultural” perspectives in response (p. 138).

With respect to interrupted schooling in secondary school settings, Dooley (2009) and DeCapua and Marshall (2011) highlight that in particular, SLIFE from refugee backgrounds are apt to face many formidable challenges, and are particularly at a disadvantage. Dooley (2009) illuminated that SLIFE from refugee backgrounds are faced with having to learn not only new academic concepts and school language, including new forms and functions of written language, but new or different learning strategies. The SLIFE from refugee backgrounds also experience challenges to overcome the gaps in subject-area background knowledge across disciplines. So, alongside challenges with language and literacy, the differences with respect to curriculum content, teaching approaches, and concepts of school and schooling across their pre-, trans-, and post-migration ecologies may compound obstacles to youth from refugee backgrounds’ learning. More recently, Hos (2020) argued that SLIFE adolescents, due to factors related to previous schooling such as those noted above exacerbated at times by their placement in traditionally low-performing urban high schools in addition to individual difficulties, are the most at risk youths for dropping out of school. Consequently, Hos (2020) argues that SLIFE must simultaneously

adjust to resettlement, learn a new language and culture, and make important decisions that impact their future options in the job market.

Stewart (2012) reported challenges in four broad areas: consequences of interrupted and/or limited schooling; financial burdens and need to work outside of school; unwelcoming school environments; and unsupportive systemic, organizational and policy issues. Moreover, drawing from a more recent study conducted with Syrian-born children and youth in the Canadian cities of Calgary, Winnipeg, and St. John's, Stewart et al. (2019) reported that many refugees experience triple trauma (in their country of origin, in transition, and in resettlement). Hos (2020) similarly identified challenges related to learning a new language and culture, interrupted schooling, schools and educators who lacked the resources and background for sound support, and racism and discrimination experienced in resettlement.

While the studies reported here are from Australia, the US, and Canada—countries with uniquely diverse populations and contexts—there is some commonality across the studies on children and youth from refugee backgrounds' needs and challenges in different aspects of their lives (e.g., educational, including language development, content area background knowledge, school know-how; and different cultural perspectives of school and schooling). As a helpful classification, Stewart (2012) and Stewart and Martin (2018) categorize these many challenges and label them as educational challenges, environmental challenges, economic challenges and social emotional challenges. Facing isolation, stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination is too commonly a recurring theme across all areas of challenges (Dooley, 2009; Bunar, 2019).

In the next section, I review literature that considers some promising pedagogical responses in the US, Canadian, and Australian contexts.

Anderson et al. (2004), in the introduction to Hamilton and Moore's (2004) book entitled, *Educational Interventions for Refugee Children*, draw on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model and significantly point out that:

any refugee educational intervention needs to focus not only on the individual child's adaptation as evidenced by changes in child behaviour, learning, peer relations and health, but also on the school's adaptation as evidenced by changes in school policies, procedures, practices and teacher development. (p. 10)

Anderson et al. (2004) emphasize building on learners' existing literacy skills and coping strategies, the need for whole school, safe and supportive environments, parental involvement, school and teacher adaptation to culturally responsive practices, and strong school leadership that coordinates educational efforts with other services available to support refugee families' successful resettlement and integration within the school community.

Similarly, based on a US literature review, McBrien (2005) concluded that it is important that educational leaders and the whole school community play a fundamental role in addressing the needs of youth from refugee backgrounds and their families, especially "recognizing and respecting cultural differences [as] important to refugee students' academic success" (p. 354). In that regard, teaching English should be viewed as additive to, rather than subtractive from children and youth's languages and cultures. Taylor and Sidhu (2012), in a case study investigating successful supporting practices in refugee education, highlight several promising approaches that emerged in their research. These approaches include providing targeted policies and system support; explicit commitment to social justice; comprehensive and holistic support systems for educational and wellness needs of children and youth from refugee backgrounds and their families. Additional suggestions include strong leadership that guides, supports and

advocates; support for learners' language needs, their content area learning needs through in class and whole school collaborative approaches; and working holistically with other agencies to meet the students' needs. The Taylor and Sidhu (2012) study draws on previous research, for example, Arnot and Pinson (2005) who promoted an ethos of inclusion for programs and practices, and reports many similar features but also adds that the two most significant successful practices were strong leadership and whole-school approaches.

Bajaj and Bartlett (2017) investigate the approaches to adopted curriculum based on qualitative studies they each conducted over a decade in three US high schools that had received newcomer youth from refugee backgrounds. They aimed to define a "critical transnational curriculum" and provide concrete examples of the schools' practices (p. 25). The authors put forward four tenets of a critical transnational curriculum including: "(1) using diversity as a learning opportunity; (2) engaging translanguaging; (3) promoting civic engagement; and (4) cultivating multidirectional aspirations" (Bajaj & Bartlett, 2017, p. 25). The authors concluded that an effective curriculum for youth from refugee backgrounds needs to have cultural and socio-political relevance, and also needs to acknowledge youth from refugee backgrounds' transnational lives and future aspirations.

Bajaj and Suresh (2018) examined the approaches taken by a high school for newcomer youth, Oakland International High School (OIHS) in California that resulted in support for the needs (socio-emotional, academic and material) of youth from refugee backgrounds. These approaches afforded school and home reciprocity, community engagement, including with community agencies and organizations in "holistic wrap-around services" (p. 91) and trauma-informed practices. With respect to the curricula approach used in this "warm embrace" (p. 91)

newcomer school, the authors reported the use of “a critical transnational curricular approach” (Bajaj & Suresh, p. 95), as articulated in Bajaj and Bartlett (2017) above.

Finally, Stewart (2019), using data collected in the Canadian province of Manitoba as part of a large scale, multi-year research project similarly reported that with respect to best practices for refugee education the critical importance of schools adopting a “holistic wrap-around” (Bajaj & Suresh, 2018, p. 91) approach to engagement with the youths and their families. Other factors included the class size and expectations for children and youth from refugee backgrounds, the need for transitional centres to support student learning and the need for professional development for school educators and staff. After-school clubs, program and community engagement opportunities, as well as mentoring and internship opportunities, are also productive ways to support youth from refugee backgrounds’ resettlement and successful integration. These strategies help youth from refugee backgrounds build relationships, social networks and establish close, trusting connections within their nano systems between the individual youths and their teachers (Stewart & Martin, 2018).

Findings

The findings and discussion reported in this chapter address research question 1: What do language teachers in a Language Introduction program (LIP) in Sweden identify as the learning needs and challenges (English language and literacy) of youth from refugee backgrounds?

Three interrelated themes with various related sub-themes emerged from the thematic analysis generated from the focus group interviews with the LIP teacher participants. The theme of educational challenges was the predominant one, understandably so given the expertise of the educators and the nature of the interview questions (see Appendix A). However, themes related

to the categories of structural (legal and organizational) stresses (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016) and social-emotional challenges, as similarly categorized by Stewart (2012) and Stewart and Martin (2018), also emerged in the data. Each theme will be described, predicated by the earlier statement that the themes are interrelated or interwoven. All quotes are extracted from the focus group interviews conducted with me and the LIP teacher participants.

Theme 1: Significant Disparities Between the Youths' Countries-of-Origin Educational Backgrounds and Experiences, and their Schooling in the LIP in Sweden. This section begins by presenting the LIP teachers' perceptions regarding educational challenges faced by youth from refugee backgrounds in the Language Introduction Program. The participants commented frequently about difficulties with language and literacies learning based on the youths' backgrounds of little or interrupted formal schooling (SLIFE) due to forced migration or to time lost for education during their migration journeys. These perceptions support the findings of previous research that recognizes factors such as gaps in knowledge, lack of experience in schooling practices, and cultural differences as presenting some of the most difficult challenges when educating youth from refugee backgrounds (Block et al, 2014; Bunar, 2019; DeCapua & Marshall, 2011; Dooley, 2009; Shapiro & MacDonald, 2017; Stewart, 2012). Specifically, the LIP teachers identified four interrelated sub-themes within this first theme pertaining to: (a) academic content background knowledge, (b) learning skills know-how, (c) language development difficulties, and (d) differences in schooling cultures (pedagogical and assessment practices).

Gaps and Disparities in Academic Content Background Knowledge. Teachers noted often and unanimously agreed that the lack of academic content background knowledge possessed by the LIP youths relative to the Swedish curriculum was a significant detriment to

their learning. During the focus group interview, Pia commented as Mahdi and Rama nodded, “Ya, lack of basic knowledge, and they don’t have it when [because] many of our students [i.e., from refugee backgrounds] haven’t been to school before. Svetlana agreed and qualified further:

the problem is that they are in gymnasium [now] [i.e., upper secondary school] but so they don’t have this level so we have to fill in all the time and I guess if the person is available to receive this knowledge, and that means he has background, school background . . . so he will, or she will succeed. Otherwise (pause) nope.

Notably, SLIFE-related educational challenges are intensified for youth due to their older age and late entry to school and advanced grades (DeCapua & Marshall, 2011; Dooley, 2009; McBrien et al., 2017). Pia explains how the lack of academic content background knowledge, and the related academic language in their mother tongue, lead to challenges with not only developing subject-area knowledge, but also impacted learning English and Swedish for academic purposes, necessary in mainstream, national programs. According to Pia:

Lack of background knowledge affects understanding in different contexts where academic language is required. For example, in the Industry program, technical language is required. They [LIP youths] don’t know the word for some terms in their mother tongue, orally or written, so they can’t look it up to translate. . . . if they don’t have the background knowledge, they can’t learn new words.”

Svetlana concurred with Pia, adding that if the learners “haven’t been to school or they don’t even have the knowledge and they don’t have the vocabulary, so if they don’t have the knowledge it’s difficult to learn new words.”

The educators also reported challenges for the youths in building background knowledge and language through mother tongue instruction aimed to scaffold content and language learning

in English and Swedish. For example, Rama, whose country of origin like some youths in the LIP is Iraq, explained:

for me it's a little hard because most of my students are from Syria so. . . for example if I choose material from Iraq, it's a little different and for example when we use literary background from Iraq, it will have its own things, so I must mix with those well known [texts] that we all know between both cultures [Iraq and Syria]. They [textbooks and resources] use literature with famous people when one studies, especially with the gymnasium [i.e., upper secondary school] groups that is all from Iraq my culture (laughs) and my school system.

Madhi similarly acknowledged that it was challenging for Afghan-born youth to work with materials from Iran, even when they had lived in Iran, as their background knowledge remained predominantly from Afghan, not Iranian, culture. Mother tongue instruction (legislated in statewide educational policy) speaks to the need to recognize that youth from refugee backgrounds are diverse and heterogeneous, not only as individuals but across cultural groups who share a named language (e.g., Syrian and Iraqi Arabic; Iranian and Afghan Persian, also called Dari in Afghanistan). The accompanying curriculum and supplementary teaching materials tending towards a particular cultural or national group, were required to be sourced by the teachers to be inclusive of the different cultural groups using the named language variations. So while the use of multilingual classroom assistants and mother tongue instruction was of some help in building background knowledge, it was limited according to the inventory of teachers available for hire from different cultural groups and language variations. Multilingual classroom assistance was also restricted by hours budgeted for support and with its own challenges in

selection of materials and resources (e.g., availability and relevance) for the different cultural groups and language variations.

Limited or Different Know-How for Learning and Doing School. Teacher participants also all agreed and made several comments that the many youths in the LIP with interrupted schooling were not well equipped with skills and strategies to manage and self-direct their learning. Pia stated clearly, “If they [LIP learners] have had earlier school experience, they have strategies and study techniques and they will succeed, [otherwise learning] is very challenging.” She gave an example, “Sometimes they don’t do the instructions and they don’t do the assignments properly. For example you can’t just say write an essay, [the youths] have to know what type [genre of essay] and how that [genre of essay] reads.” During my informal conversations with the teacher participants, we discussed how the youths generally did not review, study, or progress with learning at home. Homework and extra reading appeared elusive to them, possibly because these activities were absent during their migration journeys, or that there were no negative consequences from their teachers in Sweden for incomplete homework assignments so that study outside the classroom did not seem important. The teacher participants and I noted that the youths overall said that before or after dinner, they usually went to the gym and played video games in the evenings. The educators’ perception was also that the youths felt they were giving their very best efforts to their education by regularly attending classes. Some of these issues are entangled with differences in school cultures discussed below.

Difficulties in Developing English and Swedish Language Proficiency to Exit the LIP and Meet National Exam Requirements. In addition to lack of background knowledge and know-how, the teachers described difficulties with language learning for SLIFE as a very significant challenge. Though Svetlana noted that “almost all [the LIP students] know everyday

oral Swedish on some level,” as Dooley (2009) highlighted, the youth from refugee backgrounds were faced with daunting language learning tasks beyond everyday speaking skills. For example, they were learning a new written language, including new skills such as pen-holding, writing from left to right, and the new language’s spelling, forms and functions. Pia made this point also, as she noted, “you know it’s a new language but it’s also new letters as an [alphabet] and so on, it takes time for them to read.” These challenges were in addition to the difficulties previously mentioned related to learning the language of new and unfamiliar abstract concepts in both academic and vocational classes relevant to various disciplines.

While recognizing the language demands across the curriculum, Pia, Svetlana, Mahdi, and Rama were perplexed with the lack of language learning progress with many of the youths, and questioned whether some of their LIP youth learners may have had an undiagnosed learning disability. However, there was difficulty in assessing the youths to determine if progress was deterred by lack of background knowledge and language understanding only, or if a learning disability was complicating their learning progress, as Mahdi commented:

We can’t tell if it’s a problem with language or if it’s a learning disability, such as dyslexia. But this is hard to diagnose, and just asking them questions about whether they have problems with reading, writing, or memorizing doesn’t help.

So, one of the LIP youths’ needs, and also an issue for teachers, was to have a better understanding of the source of the youths’ difficulties. In addition, the effects of trauma were a confounding factor for teachers, as Pia pointed out and Svetlana nodded in agreement, “and I think perhaps some of them are not traumatized while others are traumatized.” Later in the focus group discussion Pia added, “I think many of them are more traumatized than we think they are.”

So it was extremely difficult for the teachers to disentangle the factors contributing to what they perceived to be the slower progress towards developing English and Swedish language and literacies by many of the youths from refugee backgrounds, relative to other newly arrived students who had arrived as children or youth of immigrant workers.

Differences in Schooling Culture. The mother tongue teachers in particular, took time to explain how the differences between school cultures in Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Iran and Sweden's school culture influenced the youths' learning process and presented significant obstacles for graduating from the LIP. Similar to Birman and Tran (2017) who highlighted the different expectations of Somali Bantu students and teachers in a US context, the LIP teachers discussed differences in teaching methods and assessment between the youths' past schooling and their schooling experience in Sweden.

In Sweden, learners are expected to receive instruction from the teachers, proceed to work independently in class and at home to complete assignments, and to study independently in preparation for exams. This style of learning was pointed out by all the teachers. For example, Mahdi referred to the need for the students to "self-think" in Sweden, and Pia said, "They don't do the repetition." I observed that the teachers were referred to informally addressed by students on a first-name basis, invoking a collaborative-type relationship. The consequences for the learner for incomplete assignments or lack of studying were reflected in grade levels awarded throughout the year without any direct effects or punishments on a daily basis.

Mahdi and Rama described formal student-teacher relationships in Afghanistan, Syria, Iraq, and Iran where respect was shown to the teachers through compliant behavior. Mahdi stated that Afghan teaching methods promoted memorization of the school material rather than understanding the content. For example, students in English classes in Afghanistan learned and

memorized 15 new words per day. Mahdi explained the difficulty for Afghan-born youth from refugee backgrounds:

In Afghanistan, the teachers are just in front of the class and from the first to the end, just explain all of the things. But here the teacher just give the paper to the students and the students just work with themselves. So it is very hard [for the LIP learners] to come in this system [in Sweden]. All the time when I am talking to the students in Dari, they think, ok, does the teacher just give the paper and we have to self think? And if we have any questions we have to ask the teacher? Students expect the teacher will probably lead as much as possible and say exactly, “Do like this and this” and explain everything, but [here in Sweden] we expect that [students] will be more independent and work on their own. So we have some [cultural] misunderstanding.

According to Mahdi, “the grade system differs so much here from their home school system that it’s hard to understand.” As a result, the youths from refugee backgrounds feel there are no consequences in Sweden for lack of time or effort put into learning in or out of school. As Svetlana stated the learners “don’t repeat at home.” Given that the Afghan-born, mostly male, youths who had come as unaccompanied minors were usually living together in groups with no parental supervision, Mahdi suggested that “here [in Sweden] they are doing what they want— watching videos [at home] up to 10pm, waking up at 6am and coming back to school with no consequences for having done no homework.” Mahdi and Rama explained the response to incomplete homework in Afghanistan or Syria was met with punishments. Mahdi commented, “in Afghanistan they have to pay some money” and Rama described corporal punishment or “standing on one leg in front of the class where the class can see [the student] is weak,” as one example. Despite the LIP teachers’ best efforts to explain the importance of homework and

independent study, especially with the support of the multilingual classroom assistants, the youths had difficulties resocializing to the more progressive Swedish teaching approach.

As noted in Chapter 2, a series of English workbooks entitled *English from the Beginning* (Odén, 2014) was designed and published as an English teaching resource for youths in the LIP. The series consisted of four workbooks and progressed through basic English grammar and concepts to advance reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Newly arrived youth in the LIP at Stjärna Upper Secondary School generally received the first book in the series upon enrollment.

Mahdi noted that in the Afghan school system, students would complete exercises and be assessed on the material. In Sweden however, a different relationship existed between textbooks, assignments and the examinations. Whereas the youths were likely accustomed to memorizing concepts and completing exams with closed questions, such as completing workbook material in *English from the Beginning* and being tested on that material, the English Grade 9 national exam was predicated on intermediate to advanced English comprehension using various open-ended formats. Mahdi commented:

In English, sometimes the students ask me which book [which level of the *English from the Beginning* series] they should finish to be ready for the national test. They think ya, I finish this book and then the test comes just from this book, and it's not like this.

So an important additional challenge was the disjuncture between course material in the LIP English classes and the English Grade 9 national exam, exemplified by Mahdi's comments above regarding the *English from the Beginning* material. Svetlana echoed Mahdi's comments, indicating the youths' expectations were that they would complete the *English from the Beginning* material and be prepared for the English Grade 9 national exam. Svetlana commented,

“Sometimes the students ask me, ‘which book should I finish to be ready?’” Rama also identified the disconnect between assigned course work and the Grade 9 national exam in her mathematics class, “The material from the book isn’t included on the national test, and that is a catastrophe for them. They have thought all along that the questions on the monthly tests will be on the national test.” The other teacher participants agreed with Mahdi and Svetlana’s comments stated above about English, where students are disappointed to learn that completion of the *English from the Beginning* series is not sufficient preparation for the English Grade 9 national exam.

The skills required to succeed on the English Grade 9 national exam were partly reflected by the hours of English instruction received by the mainstream Swedish students (i.e., 7 years of instruction from 9 to 15 years of age). That is, the skills were significantly more advanced (my observation) than the content of the *English from the Beginning* workbooks, despite the aim of the workbook content to reach Grade 9 level English competency. Youth from refugee backgrounds likely received 3 to 5 years less English instruction than their mainstream peers before they wrote the exam. I understood from Mahdi and Svetlana’s comments about completion of the *English from the Beginning* workbooks that they perceived the level of English competency on the national Grade 9 exam was difficult to attain during regular LIP English classes.

My observations during the periods when the English Grade 9 national exam was administered gave a broader understanding of the LIP teachers’ comments. In effect, the English exam arguably represented a confluence of the lack of background knowledge and know-how experienced by SLIFE compared to the mainstream learners. For example, background knowledge required for the exam was typically about an English-speaking context (e.g., the United States, Canada or Great Britain) often in the fields of natural or social sciences, including

proper names (some Indigenous) and cultural topics that had most likely not been studied in the classroom or were as yet unfamiliar to the LIP youths. Teachers were unable to teach the exam content prior to exam administration because the topics were not made public prior to the day of distribution. In addition, the exam was timed for each of 4 sections and was extensive in length, so know-how and strategies of how to complete each section was essential. Also, English language competencies were significant across all receptive and productive skills, and included commonly taught familiar formats for essay writing, short answers, and one-word fill in the blank. Language ability necessitated an understanding of the genre of instructions including symbols, otherwise making the test instructions unclear and confusing. For example, “Read questions 1–14.” In this instance, the en dash (–) is not usually understood to mean “read questions 1 to 14” but rather, “read questions 1 and 14.” Finally, the prescriptive teaching method and memorization technique used for many of the youth from refugee backgrounds’ school experiences was not useful for success on the exam. Overall, the English Grade 9 exam required a collection of prior knowledge of English-speaking contexts in various subject areas, repeated past use with English forms of language, and a broad and nuanced understanding of vocabulary that could arguably take at least 5 years to learn (Cummins, 2000). Many of the youths who enrolled in the LIP at age 16 or older did not have 5 years to learn before the age-out of the system. As Pia said, “the time is not enough. There’s a time limit.” “Time” is one of the interweaving needs and challenges for youth and their teachers that is addressed in the next section.

Theme 2: Legal and Educational Policies and Guidelines as Stressors for LIP Youth.

Teachers’ comments about environmental influences on youth from refugee backgrounds’ education in the LIP touched on consequential factors from the legal and organizational

responses, influences which lie within the macro and meso systems of the youths' post-migration ecology (Anderson et al., 2004; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). Relevant influences identified in the present study were largely from the migration agency (Migrationsverket) and the national school agency (Skolverket), two governing agencies that established and implemented nationwide policies. In addition, the concept of time was perceived to play an important role in both the organizational and legal contexts.

The teachers' perceptions of significant factors from the Migrationsverket (legal) and the Skolverket (organizational) are outlined briefly below.

Legal. As stated earlier, this study did not focus on legal responses in the LIP youths' post-migration ecology. The questions posed in the focus group interviews addressed teachers' beliefs, assessment practices and instructional strategies with respect to English language and literacy education for youth from refugee backgrounds and ways to encourage their investment in language and literacy learning in the classroom (see Appendix A). However, the teachers' perception was that legal influences had a significant impact on the youths' ability to learn. The main influence on their education discussed by teacher participants centered on whether the individual youth was awaiting a residency decision, either temporary (usually for two years) or permanent. During the time of this study, both the teachers and I were aware that several LIP asylum-seeking youth who had arrived in Sweden as unaccompanied minors, less than 18 years of age without parent or legal guardian, were awaiting residency decisions under threat of deportation if they did not meet migration agency criteria. The waiting period, as noted by teacher participants, resulted in the youths feeling uncertain about their futures, lack of concentration and sleeping problems. Svetlana commented:

So I think that it's important if the student has a residency permit, if it's a safe situation, if he feels safe about the future, if she or he is close to the goal, has lots of marks, so they feel inspired, so they work harder.

Without a residency permit, as Pia noted, "They can't focus, they are worried about their future." As I summarized the LIP teachers' comments regarding legal influences on the youths' learning during the focus group as "stress about the residency permit, stress about their families, stress about their futures," Pia responded, "Ya, they don't sleep very well so, sleeping problems," and Svetlana agreed, "They don't sleep, they can't concentrate, they feel tired and restless, they can't just sit and concentrate." It was evident that uncertainty regarding residency status was identified as one of the challenges to learning for the youths that needed to be addressed.

In addition, the Migrationsverket required that the youths without residency permits submit ongoing documentation—in official Swedish—to support their claims, according to sets of rules that were ever-changing during the youths' time in the LIP. The effect of submitting regular documentation compromised the LIP youths' attendance in school which encroached upon their window of age eligibility to continue their education. Pia and Mahdi explained:

They have to [comply with the demands of the legal system] and go to the migration agency, the welfare office, and banks often so they miss a lot of school. And then time goes by [and the youths are too old to continue their education in upper secondary school].

The stresses on teachers and the youths were very high in this regard. As Pia explained concerning supporting the students with the ongoing paperwork required for residency, "that was the fear in the beginning, what if we don't fill in the right form in the right way and they might

have to be sent home and that was quite terrifying actually.” The school principal understood the high-stakes stress experienced by the LIP youths awaiting residency decisions and was deeply compassionate in their support for the youths’ education and integration, a factor recognized as important by Anderson et al. (2004) and Taylor and Sidhu (2012). Part of their commitment included hiring an additional support person who was dedicated to understanding and communicating to LIP teachers and youth the ongoing updates and other information necessary for students to meet residency requirements and to navigate Swedish society. For example, aspects of migration and education criteria were continually modified and required explanation, and the specifics of Sweden’s financial, social, and health systems were important for the youths to understand. Support from this additional hire was much appreciated by the LIP youths and teachers. As Pia explained, “Ya, so she can . . . tell them the facts which is quite safe for them [the youths].”

Organizational. Educational obstacles facing the youths, such as the challenges discussed above (e.g., background knowledge and know-how, unfamiliar school culture, etc.), were complicated by the policies of the national education agency (Skolverket). Teacher participants touched on some of the Skolverket policies, for example curriculum and Grade 9 national exam requirements. In addition, Pia commented on the impact of Skolverket recommendations on the schedules of the youths as they entered the LIP program. She stated:

We have so many subjects going on, but instead some of the students I think would have benefited if we had only had more Swedish and math, and perhaps not [taught] English at the beginning [of their enrollment], but you know, we threw them right into SO (social studies) so they could learn all these words in SO and in NO (biology) and so on, but at the same time I just wonder if more Swedish would have been better. But Skolverket

recommended that they were supposed to do all the subjects at the same time so they could get a chance to apply for upper secondary [i.e., a national or vocational program].

Further, the national school law states that students are not permitted to continue in upper secondary school past the spring term of their 20th birthday (or in some cases, 21st birthday) (Riksdagen, 2010, Chapter 15, para. 5). Pia commented:

The newly arrived youth need both background knowledge and school experience to help them meet the time limit to be eligible to apply for a national program or adult education. As Pia also pointed out, and they haven't been to school or they don't even have the knowledge and they don't have the vocabulary so if they don't have the knowledge it's difficult to learn new words . . . they need both [content knowledge and academic language], it's very important, but the time is not enough. There's a time limit.

This section has highlighted some important challenges facing the youths in the LIP according to teacher participant perceptions relative to legal and organizational factors. The third and final theme with respect to needs and challenges in the LIP reports on the influences related to the social and emotional needs of the youth from refugee backgrounds.

Theme 3: Complex Social and Emotional Needs and Challenges for LIP Youth.

Social emotional concerns interweave with the needs and challenges in the educational, legal, and organizational environments discussed above. Although this study focuses on the post-migration ecology of youth, significant social emotional challenges may have developed in the youths' pre- and trans-migration ecologies that have carried into their post-migration environment, including their educational context. Pia noted that many of the LIP youths "are more traumatized than we think they are. They can't focus, they are worried about their future and their families." Research in the Canadian context by Stewart et al. (2019) similarly involved

youth from refugee backgrounds who may have experienced “triple” trauma in each of their migration ecologies (p. 55), coupled with the obstacles of SLIFE and additional needs as they settled in their new environment. Stewart et al. (2019) highlight the lack of preparedness felt by the teachers to manage the youth from refugee backgrounds’ complex situations. Pia, similarly noted that despite extensive professional development and considerable investment by the committed and supportive school leadership and educators in the LIP, “I think that we have had so many . . . there have been so many students with severe problems along the way, we’re not, I don’t think we have helped all of them.”

The current study does not focus on the effects of and responses to trauma, but neither does the research seek to minimize the possible effects of trauma on youth from refugee backgrounds. However, in addition to trauma-related considerations, according to the teacher participants in this study, social emotional challenges for the youths resulted largely from lack of security to stay in Sweden and for many newcomer youth, no family living in Sweden. As noted earlier with respect to legal stresses, Mahdi perceived that the youths’ lack of security created a significant need and was a challenge to their learning “and their living situation” stating that “for example, most of them have bad living situations, so don’t have any residency permit and they’re thinking about just this week, nothing else, when they are coming to school.” Pia added, “ya cause if they don’t know that they have a safe home and environment to live in, school doesn’t matter, they can’t function in school if the basics aren’t there.” In general, the LIP youth, specifically those who were unaccompanied minors and undocumented, were housed under various arrangements. Some were still living in the former hotel that had been set up as a type of refugee camp until it closed, sending several of the youths to locations outside of Stjärna’s catchment area. Others lived in small row housing units on the outskirts of town, or together in

houses. There was an ongoing shortage of housing so that at one point, some youths were sleeping on church floors or staying in church outbuildings. Without a residency permit, a youth could be required to move to another location outside of the school's catchment as the government worked to redistribute resources.

Pia commented on the number of LIP youth learners in the school with no family living in Sweden. As highlighted in Chapters 1 and 2, in 2015 Sweden received over 35,000 unaccompanied minors less than 18 years of age (Migrationsverket, 2015) who came to Sweden seeking asylum without families or legal guardians, several of whom attended Stjärna's LIP. The LIP teachers engaged with the few parents available by facilitating an orientation at the beginning of the school year, organizing a parent-teacher meeting per term, and contacting parents if necessary throughout the school year, always with mother tongue language support. Typically, however, Pia noted that "for the parent-teacher meetings, [the youth] usually come alone. We have a lot of students who came [to Sweden] alone. Sometimes [the youth students] come [to the parent-teacher meeting] with their guardian." Also, according to informal conversations with the teachers, the youth in the LIP at Stjärna Upper Secondary School did not interact with mainstream students, nor generally with many other Swedes in the community, similar to the LIP conditions reported by Swedish scholars in refugee education (Bunar, 2019; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016; Nilsson Folke, 2016; Wedin, 2021). Pia summed up the situation for those LIP youth without family in Sweden with a note of optimism, "I guess they have each other, they're not alone." But regardless, as reported above, there was concern amongst the teachers that many of the youth had difficulties sleeping and were not able to focus or concentrate.

The teachers' observations and perceptions relative to social emotional challenges are presented below as sub-themes as factors impacting motivation and identity that are deeply entangled with other themes and sub-themes.

Factors Impacting Motivation. Teacher participants' perceptions about the LIP youths' motivation related in part to the youths' understandings of the purpose and significance of education in Sweden, including the role of education in determining their success in the future. These perceptions emerged from comments made by all the teachers, some quoted previously, about other concerns. For example, Svetlana remarked, "motivation is given by having study techniques [past school experience], a residency permit [safety], [and] if they are close to [the amount of prerequisite courses necessary for their pathway] with lots of marks, they feel inspired to work harder." Svetlana perceived successful learners as those youth who are outwardly "active and enthusiastic." Rama highlighted the role of families and community in supporting the LIP youths' investment in learning. She stated, "motivation comes from understanding the importance of education and studying in Sweden. This comes from family values, so the community contributes, life contributes." Rama identified another variable as an individual's predisposition, she explained, "It [learning] depends on people's building [make-up], in the same family, some make an effort but some [inaudible] don't want to." Notably, Pia added, "it's not just family support [that impacts motivation and investment], but a family that is financially secure [may convey that] . . . you don't have to work hard [in school] because you know you will make it in society." Implicit in this quote was that some newly arrived students (e.g., generally those arriving from Syria with family) were financially secure. Although the economic environments of the students did not emerge as a significant theme, there was acknowledged heterogeneity in the population in this regard which is a factor to consider in future studies.

Relatedly, Mahdi highlighted that the motivation or lack of motivation of the LIP youth may also be driven by monies the youth students received from the government. Mahdi explained:

I'm just now, I'm just seeing that my students, that they are taking money from CSN⁷ all the time they are coming to my class because they are just thinking that if I didn't go to this class I will lose some money, so they are just coming for the money.

Identity. Participant teachers discussed that several youth, particularly those from Syria who had permanent residency and arrived with their families, had aspirations to be doctors, surgeons, lawyers, and architects. This finding concurs with research that identifies many youth from refugee backgrounds as having resilience, being committed to learning, and seeing themselves as intelligent students capable of success (Bunar, 2019; Hek, 2005; Jahanmahan & Bunar, 2018; Stewart, 2012). During informal conversations between the teachers and me, the teachers said they did not want to dampen the enthusiasm of the youth learners, and similar to Bunar (2019), did not want to diminish the identities of the youth as “skillful learners with valuable knowledge” (p. 10). However, in many cases the teachers’ comments about the youths’ identities implied that given the legislated time limits, the youth learners should adjust their career expectations and set reasonable educational goals for their time in upper secondary school. Commenting on the students’ desires to become doctors, surgeons or architects, Svetlana observed that the, “students have plans for the future that are unrealistic or for many, are unable

⁷ The Swedish Board of Student Finance (Centrala studiestödsnämnden (CSN)) grants youth from refugee background learners aged 16 to 20 who attend upper secondary school full time, and who possess a temporary or permanent residency permit, monthly financial supplements. These supplements are granted in three forms: (a) as stipends to supplement living expenses, (b) as loans to buy furniture and other household necessities; and (c) as a loan to complete driving lessons and acquire a driving license (CSN, 2021).

to make significant strides in those directions within their time in the LIP. Further to Svetlana's comment, if a youth was living with parents, sometimes the parents dictated their future goals. Parental involvement resulted at times in the youths feeling pressure to succeed not only within the school, but equally (if not more in some cases) to meet the expectations of their parents (personal observation). Not meeting the expectations in the short-term had the potential to impact the youths' identities, and they and their families may have needed wrap around support in identity repositioning regarding the time necessary and pathways to their imagined futures.

Discussion

This chapter addressed the language and literacies needs and challenges of youth from refugee backgrounds in a Language Introduction Program in Stjärna Upper Secondary School as perceived by their language teachers. In keeping with migration scholars (Anderson et al., 2004; Rutter, 2006; Stewart, 2012; Stewart & Martin, 2018) and Nilsson and Bunar (2016), adaptations of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) bioecological model proved useful in an abductive (Agar, 1996), thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012) of the teacher focus group data. Two interweaving themes, each with sub-themes, emerged relative to factors in the macro- and meso-levels of the post-migration ecological system related to pedagogical and legal influences in the environments of the youth from refugee backgrounds. A third theme, regarding the youths' social and emotional well-being needs, emerged as presenting challenges to youth from refugee backgrounds' learning, in which factors identified in theme one (disparities in schooling) and theme two (legal and educational stressors) played a significant influential role.

As previously noted, the most prominent theme was about the needs and challenges the LIP youths faced relative to the significant disparities and gaps between their previous educational backgrounds and experiences, and their schooling in Sweden. The teacher

participants reported that the majority of youth in the LIP at the time of the study were students with limited and interrupted schooling. Their perceptions of the needs and challenges these youth encountered supported previous findings (e.g., Block et al., 2014; Bunar, 2019; DeCapua & Marshall, 2011; Dooley, 2009; McBrien et al., 2017; Shapiro & MacDonald, 2017; Stewart, 2012) with regard to this group of learners.

Thus, the sub-themes that emerged were the issues related to gaps in academic content background knowledge and learning skills know-how (strategies and techniques) relative to Swedish school curriculum demands. Similar to Dooley's (2009) findings, teachers perceived that youth were faced with learning substantial, unfamiliar subject area knowledge alongside challenges with learning the related academic language, especially when neither the concept nor the language to express it was known to them in their mother tongue. The teachers' perception was that the youth lacked school-based reading, writing and studying skills and strategies due to limited schooling experiences. This was intensified by amongst other factors, differences in the named languages' written language systems.

Moreover, the schooling cultures were different between their diverse countries of origin and Sweden. Different teaching approaches and literacy pedagogies in addition to foreign curriculum content and new or different learning strategies further compounded the matter. In Sweden, including the LIP, the teaching approach to language learning and in general was more progressive with students expected to be active and to some extent, autonomous learners. Meanwhile, the youth who had attended school pre-or trans-migration had typically experienced traditional didactic approaches. Thus, there were differences that impacted learning regarding concepts of learning, teachers' roles, and learners and teachers' responsibilities, as well as forms of discipline, including responses to homework completion and test results. Even with mother

tongue support and the multilingual classroom assistants' efforts to bridge the gaps and disparities (Dávila & Bunar, 2020) the differences in knowledge, know-how, and cultures of schooling were formidable.

Also a sub-theme related to theme one (disparities in schooling), the teachers' perspectives spoke specifically to challenges experienced in general by many learners with regard to successful second and foreign languages and literacies learning. Concerns were expressed that some of the students may have special or exceptional learning needs and challenges, such as reading disabilities or dyslexia, that were challenging to identify and were entangled with other factors related to social and emotional well-being. The teachers had implemented numerous approaches in their committed efforts to design the most promising pedagogies to meet the needs of the youth but several dilemmas emerged in this regard as the data were analyzed. These dilemmas are reported in Chapter 4.

Another main theme that arose from the data was that influences from legal and educational policies and guidelines acted as stressors for the youths. These influences were largely from the migration agency (Migrationsverket) and the national school agency (Skolverket), the two governing agencies that set and implemented national policies. Across both of these organizational and legal contexts, the concept of time was perceived to play an important role. While this theme was not as dominant in the focus group discussions, arguably legal and educational systems had a significant impact on the LIP youths' learning context, particularly for those who had not received residency decisions.

While all newly arrived youth have a right to schooling, instability within the Swedish legal system regarding some youths' residency statuses played an influential role in the learning challenges they faced. However, the youth from refugee backgrounds in the site of this study,

including asylum-seekers who might have received limited attendance hours (i.e., 10% to 50% less) and funding; and undocumented youth who were entitled to education with no allotted attendance hours or funding, all received full 100% attendance hours and funding at Stjärna's LIP in addition to dedicated school support. Connected to the long-term uncertain legal status, the youth had a set of shorter term legal processes that required form-filling and reporting to various institutions that presented high-stakes demands and challenges. The school leadership provided critical help through the retention of a counselor dedicated solely to understanding and communicating legal and other rules and policies, but residency issues in particular remained a source of stress. The teachers also perceived that the youths needed more time and focus on learning Swedish as a second language and wondered if the educational structure might be best suited away from the current recommendation of integrated language and content learning across the curriculum to a more "sheltered" approach for SLIFE, at least initially. This sense was in keeping with Nilsson and Bunar's (2016) conclusion that there was too much homogeneity in the educational policies and structural options relative to the heterogeneity of the newly arrived students.

The notion of time was a challenge for the LIP youth and teachers, concerning the youths' need for more time in the upper secondary school before they aged-out, and how to ensure that the time in the LIP was best spent to meet the youths' multiple needs with regard to communication, thinking, personal and social. McBrien et al. (2017) also noted systemic structural issues that limit youth from refugee backgrounds' access, as well as socio-emotional issues and lack of guidance with respect to future aspirations and options.

A final main theme that emerged concerned the complex personal, social and emotional needs and challenges of the LIP youths. Within this theme there was, again, a recognition that

considerable heterogeneity characterized the population. As previously reported, Rama noted, “it depends on people’s building, in the same family, some make an effort but some . . . they don’t want to.” However, it may be beyond some youth to make an effort with their education. As McBrien (2005) explained, many of the youth from refugee backgrounds’ challenges are related to their psychosocial adjustment which has been impacted by the levels of trauma they experienced and the parental support they received. The teachers’ perceptions supported this idea and noted the influences ascribed to the fact that many of the youth in the LIP were young, unaccompanied, male, minors who lacked parental guidance and to some extent, were reliant on each other and the support provided at the school. One example was the daily lunch buffet as a guaranteed source of nutrition provided free of charge to all students in the school.

Of considerable concern to the teachers was their inability to discern the degree to which the youth were traumatized, and their acknowledgement that to diagnose and provide help for deeply distressed students’ emotional well-being was beyond their professional ken (Stewart & Martin, 2018). Their perceptions were that these psychosocial issues complicated their assessments of the students’ language and learning competencies, and attitudes toward and investment in learning. Stewart et al. (2019) reported that many refugees experience triple trauma—not only trauma in their country of origin and during their migration journey, but also in the resettlement process. If settlement is fraught with uncertainty and stresses, as the teachers perceived regarding the LIP youths in this study, then it would be no surprise that trauma impacted their learning capacities. The teachers perceived that all of the youths experienced stress relative to concerns for the safety and well-being of those family members who remained in worn-torn countries of origin. In addition, the youths who did have residency statuses and were with their families in Sweden were perceived to have stress regarding aspirations that they

and their families had vis-à-vis their futures as high achieving professionals. The teachers with mother tongue support, laid out the significant educational requirements and timelines for these high achieving choices for the youth and parents in an attempt to mitigate expectations, emphasising that it may take longer to achieve these aims and that the pathways may not be straightforward. This speaks to the importance of a “wrap around” approach (Bajaj & Suresh, 2018, p. 91) for these students and their families that includes connections with community agencies, holistic services and trauma-informed practices.

Nilsson and Bunar (2016), in their concluding comments from their detailed and comprehensive analysis of the structure and influences of the post-migration ecology on newly arrived students, recognized the interconnectedness of the various systems at different levels within the ecology. Nilsson and Bunar (2016) state:

Upon considering these practices as a whole, we can begin to understand why those aspects of the pedagogical responses that theoretically recognise prior experiences and knowledge (i.e., mother-tongue tuition [instruction], bilingual scaffolding, and mapping of previous knowledge) work poorly in practice. (p. 411)

The findings from this small basic qualitative study in Stjärna’s LIP support their conclusions with the research articulating the main themes and sub-themes in the findings as impacting learners in entangled ways.

As the data generated from the focus group interviews was analyzed and discussed, it was noted that the lack of alignment between classroom practices and local and national education regulations brought about dilemmas for the teachers as they worked diligently to design effective and promising pedagogies and programs for the youth. The next chapter reports and discusses our investigation into the teachers’ dilemmatic thinking.

Chapter 4: Part I—The Teachers’ Dilemmas

This chapter presents relevant theory, literature review, and discussion and findings for research question 2: What dilemmas do language teachers in a Language Introduction Program perceive relative to meeting the language needs of youth from refugee backgrounds as they strive to implement promising practices?

As reported in Chapter 1, there were originally two central research questions both situated within the Language Introduction Program, now research question 1 (i.e., teachers’ perceptions of needs and challenges, and promising practices; and research question 3 (i.e., the potential of translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies for identity affirmation and investment in learning). In an initial analysis of the data addressing research question 1, my supervisors, Dr. Early and Dr. Kendrick, and I sensed and were intrigued to investigate further, the dilemmas arising as the teachers determined most promising practices that will enable the youth to exit the LIP before the age-out limitation (i.e., age 20). Against the backdrop of their perceived needs and challenges identified in research question 1, the teachers grappled with the curricula, the demands of the assessments and exams (e.g., particularly the Grade 9 national language exams) and the implementation of Sweden’s official language policies, all of which are based on monoglossic language standards. As reported earlier, the initial data analysis sparked research question 2, and thus Part I of the study evolved to address two related research questions: research question 1 (needs, challenges and promising practices), and research question 2 (teacher dilemmas).

Theory and Literature Review

In the sections that follow, I present previous research on the linguistic landscape of the Swedish education policy, briefly consider the literature with respect to translanguaging theories

and pedagogies, and relatedly fixity and fluidity (i.e., the simultaneity of bounded, named languages; and the need to transcend language boundaries). Then I report on the findings from thematic analysis and conclude with some lessons learned from teachers' dilemmatic thinking to possibly inform future considerations for language teaching for youth from refugee backgrounds.

The Linguistic Landscape of the Swedish Education Policy. Swedish educational policy currently provides instruction in Swedish, Swedish as a second language, English, modern languages, mother tongue languages (for both official minority language such as Finnish and Sami, and other minority languages), and languages for the hearing impaired (Skolverket, 2022). Rosén's (2017) analysis of the linguistic landscape of Swedish Education policy and curriculum from 1962 to 2011, revealed that Swedish followed by English are the dominant languages, both as compulsory subjects with similar skill levels required to meet national exam standards and necessary prerequisites for advanced education. A number of scholars (e.g., Gynne, 2019; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016; Nilsson Folke, 2018; Wedin, 2021) note the importance of Swedishness in the school curriculum. English has a special status with ongoing debates about whether it is a second or foreign language (Hult, 2012). Thus, in the LIP, which as an introductory program aligned with the needs of individual learners (Wedin & Aho, 2019), English is recommended to enable more educational choices but is optional.

Languages most relevant to the LIP include Swedish, English, and mother tongue (other than official minority languages such as Finnish and Sami). Swedish is taught in the LIP using the mainstream Swedish as a second language curriculum, and comprises the most instructional hours (Fejes & Dahlstedt, 2020). Swedish as a second language is organized in parallel to Swedish for Grades 1 to 12 with the same outcomes and grading criteria (Skolverket, 2022). In upper secondary school, Swedish as a second language orients more toward learners'

multilingual capacities (Hedman & Magnusson, 2020), as articulated in the Swedish as a second language curriculum which states that, “students should develop skills in and knowledge of the Swedish language. Students should also be given the opportunity to reflect on their own multilingualism Multilingualism is an asset for both the individual and society” (Skolverket, 2022). While the importance of learning Swedish as a named national language is clearly stated, so is the importance of diversity as a resource and multilingualism as individual and societal assets.

Two initiatives in educational legislation officially reinforce the notions of multilingualism and diversity, mother tongue instruction and multilingual classroom assistants (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016). However, mother tongue instruction, offered as an optional subject for Grades 1 to 12, has met with ongoing implementation problems such as a low inventory of qualified teachers and lack of resources, contributing to “struggles for legitimacy” (Ganuza & Hedman, 2015, p. 128) See also Nilsson & Axelsson (2013); Nilsson & Bunar (2016); Salö et al. (2018); Wedin & Aho (2019). Moreover with multilingual classroom assistants, their main task is to bridge the languages of newcomer students with Swedish subject-area content (Avery, 2015; Dávila & Bunar, 2020; Warren 2017) among other language support roles, such as with mapping [kartläggning]. How best to implement MCA support remains confusing however, resulting in their roles, hours of support, and translanguaging stance and practices being variable (Dávila & Bunar, 2020). Rosén (2017) usefully describes the relationship between policy and practice:

On the one hand, language is still framed as countable units with names such as Swedish and English, as well as “first language” and “second language.” On the other hand, language is also framed in terms of an individual’s repertoire, as the “primary tool human

beings use for thinking, communicating and learning” and through which identities are expressed. (p. 51)

Her analysis elucidates that language and languaging are represented in complex and potentially ambivalent ways in the official discourses. Jaspers (2019) informs that ambivalence is not unique to the linguistic landscape in Sweden arguing that “many nation-state language policies value linguistic uniformity (within the nation) and diversity (between nations) reflect[ing] a concern with both values” (p. 222).

It is in this context then, that this paper seeks to explore the potential ideological dilemmas arising in a LIP in a Swedish upper secondary school as the language teachers and youths navigate both fluidity and fixity. For example, the implementation of translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies against the “fixed regulations of institutional identity” (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010, p. 247), including the high-stakes national exams.

Translanguaging: Fixity and Fluidity. Polylingualism (Jørgensen 2008), translanguaging (García, 2009; García & Wei, 2014), and metrolingualism (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010) are recent terms similarly used to describe the the fluid and flexible practices of language users’ linguistic resources across named languages. While these terms have distinct meanings, they share the idea of using languages that are fixed, separate, and named as a linguistic ideology. Makoni and Pennycook (2005) discuss language as construction or “invention” of the nation-state (p. 138). Otsuji and Pennycook (2010) distinguish metrolingualism by explaining:

In their search for more dynamic terms than global and local, . . . Connell and Gibson (2003, p. 17) propose *fixity and fluidity* which ‘reflect more dynamic ways of describing and understanding processes that move across, while becoming embedded in, the materiality of localities and social relations’. From this point of view, it is important not

to construe fixity and fluidity as dichotomous, or even as opposite ends of a spectrum, but rather to view them as symbiotically (re)constituting each other. (p. 244)

This is an important point as the notion of fluidity has gained much currency in contemporary theory and practice, with “fixity often relegated to antagonist status” (Jaspers & Madsen, 2019, p. 12).

By far the most influential of the theories in the recent movement challenging ideas of language framed as separate, countable units is *translanguaging*. Originating in Welsh/English bilingual education (Williams, 1996), and following García’s (2009) hugely influential publication, translanguaging theory and pedagogy have gained global significance. In subsequent prolific publications, García and colleagues have expanded and developed both theoretical and pedagogical aspects (e.g., García et al., 2021; García & Kleyn, 2016; García & Lin, 2017; García & Wei, 2014). García and Wei (2018) explain, “today, translanguaging refers to the use of language as a dynamic repertoire and not as a system with socially and politically defined boundaries. With the focus on actual language use, translanguaging necessarily goes beyond the named languages” (p. 1).

Additionally they state that, as well as “transcending” language boundaries, translanguaging “transforms” language structures, social relations and structures, and “individuals’ cognition” to change “the way language professionals see, use, and teach language,” working in a way that is “genuinely transdisciplinary” (Garcia & Wei, 2018, p. 5). As has been stated, “we are dealing with a multifaceted and multilayer[ed] polysemic term” (Leung & Valdés, 2019, p. 359); this can result in ambiguity. As Poza (2017) illustrates, in its rapid increase there are many different, some contested, perspectives for the term. Citing Cameron (1995), Jaspers (2018) notes that popular new concepts such as translanguaging can run the risk

of “discursive drift” wherein their appeal and extensive uptake have “inflated their meaning, to the point that they are now often elusive” (p. 1).

Cummins (2021) takes issue with the concept as it has evolved, as in his view the term carries “*extraneous conceptual baggage*” and has the potential to diminish its credibility (p. 271, emphasis in original). He distinguishes between two versions of translanguaging theory; the one posited by García and colleagues he labels Unitary Translanguaging Theory (UTT), and the other he labels Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT). According to Cummins (forthcoming), “The core theoretical division between CTT and UTT is that CTT proposes fluid and porous boundaries between languages in the multilingual’s linguistic system, whereas UTT proposes no boundaries and no languages”. Although our interest in this article is translanguaging pedagogies, we recognize that theory and practice are implicated, and that educators implementing such approaches are likely to be navigating both ambiguous and contentious spaces.

Paradoxically, there are many different terms for translanguaging pedagogies and what appear to be relatively similar approaches informed by distinct and in some cases, contested conceptual foundations (e.g., a translanguaging pedagogy, García & Kleyn, 2016; bilingual pedagogy, Creese & Blackledge, 2010; teaching through a multilingual lens, Cummins & Persad, 2014.). However, as Cummins (forthcoming) points out, the inspirational UTT materials, resources and guides produced by for example, Celic and Seltzer (2013), García and Kleyn (2016), and García and colleagues at City University New York and New York State Initiatives On Emergent Bilinguals⁸ are compatible with CTT conceptions that hold with fluid and porous,

⁸ <https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/>

rather than no boundaries (e.g., Cummins, 2007, 2021; Cummins et al., 2015). Cummins (2021) states that translanguaging pedagogies, both UTT- and CTT- influenced, promote eight shared instructional strategies for actively engaging emerging bilingual students in the learning process, productively harnessing their full communicative repertoires and supporting their academic success (see Cummins, 2021, p. 205). He details a large number of translanguaging pedagogy projects that were teacher initiatives or influenced by CCT or UTT that share some or all of the common instructional strategies.

However, despite the commonality there remain potential dilemmas for teachers who seek to employ translanguaging pedagogies, arguably from a UTT position. Though García and colleagues (e.g., García & Otheguy, 2020) strongly advocate for privileging speaker's own communicative practices, they “recognize that learners need access to and must gain control over named languages” (Cummins, forthcoming). To do this, García and Wei (2018) suggest that “translanguaging pedagogy insists in keeping both senses of language visible—the external one, the named language(s) that is the medium of instruction, and the internal one, the language repertoire of students” (p. 4). They explain that translanguaging pedagogy “does so by combining spaces/times where/when the named language is privileged, and spaces/times where/when students are given freedom to express themselves using their entire language repertoire” (p. 4). Importantly, questions arise beyond interpretations of privilege concerning how teachers implement translanguaging pedagogies in each of these differently privileged spaces (e.g., language needs, objectives, syllabus, materials, methods, literacy pedagogy, and assessment) and whether or how the two might correspond.

Findings

From our data analysis, three interweaving themes emerged in relation to dilemmatic thinking by the teachers in relation to: (a) named, standard languages and translanguaging, and (b) effective syllabus, lessons and materials. These first two themes can be broadly categorized as “what” to teach in the LIP classes. The third theme (c) relates to dilemmatic thinking about “how” to teach, specifically in relation to literacy pedagogies. Across the three themes, we also considered wherever possible “why” the teachers held the understandings and beliefs that they expressed.

Theme 1: Dilemmatic Thinking about Named, Standard Languages and Translanguaging. It was evident in our focus groups that the teachers held the idea of separate, named national languages. This was shown in Rama’s response to a question about the youths’ language needs:

All official authorities and all communities here speak and write and communicate with this [Swedish] language, even if we don’t speak it everyday.... Everyone speaks the official language and academic language so we must be able to speak both languages.

Moreover, the belief was expressed that within a named language (e.g., Swedish), the youth needed to develop control over different registers. Rama further declared that “the first priority is to learn Swedish.” Though, the educators reported that even when a youth in the LIP succeeded in learning “perfect, perfect Swedish”, many youth were still ultimately denied residency. Yet despite these setbacks, developing a high level of standard Swedish to pass national exams and successfully resettle in Sweden was one of the teachers’ key aspirations for their students. This is not surprising given as reported earlier, the number of scholars (e.g., Gynne, 2019; Nilsson & Bunar, 2016; Nilsson Folke, 2018; Wedin, 2021) who noted the

importance of Swedishness in the school curriculum. The teachers regularly used the mapping [kartläggning] activities to assess student progress through the language standard levels. As Pia explained, “kartläggning is very good and we have those tools from Skolverket, at least in English and Swedish,” that the teachers used to design individual instructional supports according to standardized levels (similar to The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages⁹).

Regarding English, the teachers explained that it was more difficult to learn the named language English than suggested in Sweden’s policy discourse, wherein English is claimed to be widely used as a second or foreign language (Hult, 2012) because as Pia elucidated, “I think English is difficult here [rural community] in Sweden because...they don’t hear English enough, they don’t watch films.” This arguably suggests that the educators viewed English as a bounded language and a school subject to be accessed through autonomous learning outside of school. Contrary to Unitary Translanguaging Theory (UTT) arguments (Cummins, 2021), English was not viewed as something that youth would naturally use in keeping with their “translanguaging instinct” (García & Wei, 2014, p. 32). Mother tongue languages (i.e., Dari and Arabic) were also discussed as separate languages. Further distinctions were made between Dari (Afghanistan) and Persian/Farsi (Iran), and also, Syrian Arabic and Iraqi Arabic, demonstrating teachers’ held notions of language as tied to nation-state.

In keeping with Rosen’s (2017) report on Sweden’s linguistic landscape, the teachers held hierarchical views about named language use. As previously reported, for Rama, “the first priority is to learn Swedish.” Moreover, official assessment practices were biased towards

⁹ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

Swedish as Pia explained, “they [LIP students] get it [extra time] in Swedish [for the national exam], why not English? It’s crazy....and in Swedish they are allowed to use a dictionary, and they have spelling and grammar help but not in English.” Materials in Swedish and English were bountiful, however not so in mother tongue, as Mahdi described, “For us as mother language teachers...we don’t have so much so we use a lot from our homelands’ websites and what the school board [in Afghanistan] has” These perceived language hierarchies seemingly influenced the idea of named languages as not only separate but also as differentially privileged and prioritized assets and practices.

On the other hand, unlike findings in Jaspers (2019) and Slembrouck and Rosier (2018), the teachers in our study did not hold any negative attitudes towards translanguaging as a spontaneous or pedagogical practice. There were no punitive consequences for translanguaging, and it was practiced by the teachers inside and outside of class. Specifically in subject-area classrooms, the teachers used translanguaging to engage students’ multilingual repertoires and scaffold meaning making, as Mahdi discussed, “for students with refugee backgrounds who have translation of the word [in mother tongue] especially in math and science subjects... they learn the word [in other languages] with the help of translating and guidance” As Svetlana reported, they also scheduled “läxhjälp [study help].” These were classes organized by subject-area and scheduled once a week led by one subject-area teacher for each subject and including the multilingual classroom assistants where needed most, to provide extra help using translanguaging pedagogies.

Translanguaging was also employed to build and activate background knowledge, as Mahdi described:

If a teacher talks about WWII...I find material about this that they can study first in Dari or Persian so they can have a little knowledge and then when the teacher talks about WWII so it's very easy for them...if they have an earlier [schooling in mother tongue when they learn the same thing] then they can connect the two things.

Additionally, Pia explained how using translanguaging to build relationships and build on what students know affirms identities:

[you must demonstrate that]... you are interested and curious in their lives, and then connect that to the material...when I work with sagas in Swedish, there are sagas in Dari and so on, so what have they learned earlier, but also their identity or their culture has meaning, it matters, I think it's very important.

Relatedly, translanguaging was employed in using multilingual dual language materials, to maximize literacy investment and learning. As Svetlana explained, "and then we have inläsningstjänst [rich online multilingual resources] as well, so they can listen if they have some problems with reading or need to train extra." In addition, there was extensive use of translanguaging for crosslinguistic and metalinguistic awareness, exemplified by Pia:

I usually compare Swedish with Dari and you know where do you put the verb in your sentences and this is typical for... students learning Swedish. They put the verb in the wrong spot. So we talk about the language and compare it.

Svetlana added:

if we speak about English lessons, so there are students who can speak Swedish on some level and I can sometimes compare and say that it's the same like in Swedish because it's something we both can use all languages which the person has, so when you [Mahdi and Rama] are there so you use mother tongue.

From our analysis of the data, it emerged that the educators held contrary themes of fixed and fluid concepts of language and (trans)languaging. With this in mind, we now turn to the second theme also entangled in dilemmas of “what” to teach.

Theme 2: Dilemmatic Thinking about Effective Syllabus, Lessons and Materials. A complicating factor in matching needs to syllabus, lesson design and materials (i.e., the “what”) was that the LIP was intended to align with the needs of individual learners while simultaneously meeting the national Grade 9 exam standards in Swedish and English. Although there was a plethora of materials in monoglossic named languages and dual languages, the needs of the individual learners were wide-ranging and the educators queried if, and to what extent, the materials selected should be for individual work or for the benefits that could be accrued from cooperative group work. As Pia stated:

Sometimes one can cater to each level but one must [teach] the whole class, because it’s also that one learns together...for example when one watches a film and goes through the words together for some it is easy and for some it’s very hard, but together that they do the same thing.

Finding the balance between individual (e.g., privileging named language tasks) and group work (e.g., privileging translanguaging practices) significantly influenced the lessons and materials used. For example, the teachers used grammar books with students working independently on specific language features as a way to address needs related to fixed language forms. Also, both Svetlana and Pia agreed that they used these grammar books and exercise sheets in part because, “They [youth] like their grammar books.” They also provided multiple links to grammar materials online (e.g., British Council) for the students to use in and out of class for independent learning.

However, Mahdi cautioned:

You [need to] have a lot of video film and also some strategy ... so they will be very interested, and you see a lot of improvement in their working because if it's boring [referring to grammar books]... if they are just working with themselves and with this strategy [grammar books] I don't think... we can see any progress.

Textbooks published for the Skolverket organized around language skills (i.e. oral, reading, and writing) were also well used. However, the teachers were very aware that contrary to the expectations of the learners, the materials covered in the textbooks did not easily correspond to the national Grade 9 exams. Svetlana explained, "sometimes the students ask me which book should I finish to be ready for [mapping activities and] the [national] test?" Mahdi concurred that "they're thinking like this that ya I finish this book and then the test will come just from this book and it's not like this." Although the teachers explained this to the youth, they had a dilemma about deciding to organize the syllabus, lessons and materials around grammar and textbooks, or other rich multilingual and multimodal materials.

Given this dilemma, the teachers drew eclectically from multiple sources and as Pia explained:

we're struggling with it (laughing) but it never works, I haven't found one thing that will fit everyone. Instead... it's like trying to do different things, saying it in different ways and using studiehjälpare [multilingual classroom assistants].

Next we turn to the third theme regarding "how" to teach, specifically in relation to literacy pedagogies.

Theme 3: Dilemmatic Thinking about Literacy Pedagogies. The third theme reports on how the teachers held contradictory understandings and beliefs about the most effective

literacy pedagogies to implement relative to their selected language objectives, lesson design, and materials. To provide context, one of the compounding factors in teachers' dilemmas regarding literacy pedagogies was their concern regarding cultural differences between the role of teachers and methods of instruction (types of pedagogy) used in Sweden and in the youths' countries of origin. As Mahdi explained:

Students expect the teacher will probably lead as much as possible and say exactly, "Do like this and this" and explain everything, but we expect that [the youth] will be more independent and work on their own. So we have some [cultural] misunderstanding.

The literacy pedagogy that the teachers characterized most in the data was towards a sociocultural theory of learning (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978). This could be seen in Pia's account of how she moved through the teaching learning cycle (Gibbons, 2015), starting with the whole class to scaffold learners to independently write an essay in a particular genre:

you know we start with the essays, what should it contain, the kinds of topics, argumentative, discussion, and then first you read one together, then we write one together, and then they finally do one and that's very typical for Language Introduction.

As exemplified earlier in the first theme, the teachers most commonly used translanguaging literacies pedagogies from a sociocultural perspective on learning. They used these pedagogies to activate and build background knowledge, draw on students' multilingual resources, and work in a student-centered way to position the learner as an active participant in the learning process. The focus was on language and content learning more broadly, rather than fixed formalities, rules and conventions, as Mahdi's example illustrated of teaching about WWII, translanguaging in Dari and Swedish. The relationship that was created between teacher and

learner was less authoritarian and more democratic and in our study, infused with a caring approach.

However, the teachers also simultaneously held to more didactic transmission teaching that favored direct instruction. This was evident in giving teacher-fronted, mini-language lessons, as in Svetlana's explanations of task instructions, "one of the most serious problems is that sometimes they don't read the instructions and they don't do the assignment correctly." Svetlana worked with the students using direct-instruction (transmission) to ensure they understood the vocabulary and procedural language before beginning a task. Both Pia and Rama echoed the importance of direct teaching vis-a-vis language of procedures. Rama also explained language support in the LIP math class and in the Arabic mother tongue class:

When I come, they've learned that every exercise I must go to the whiteboard and explain three times for them, because I know their culture, they've grown up with that kind of thing...so that is how it goes for me in math and in Arabic it's the same thing...if I sometimes use Swedish method... there is a question ...so I must go through it and explain, explain, explain like the old days.

More didactic, teacher-fronted, transmission pedagogies were employed for teaching the rules of grammar. As Svetlana explained, "sometimes I find some grammar exercises... if some student needs it because...there are gaps in knowledge so I can find something very fast and tell the student." The educators also saw value in direct instruction of vocabulary through repetition and memorization. As Pia stated, "We challenge the students with vocabulary all the time...if we have a text we explain the words so that is constant." Svetlana added "We ask and discuss new words and explain but now they must do their own sentence with the word, and for Mahdi, "and always with vocabulary so when they read a text they find for example 10 words that they learn

so there is vocabulary they will learn.” However, Pia commented, “but they don’t write down and they don’t memorize it, they don’t do the repetition,” which suggests a more didactic literacy pedagogy. So while the teachers appeared to privilege progressive literacy pedagogies with a sociocultural and emotional view of learning that was more democratic, they also used more traditional, transmission literacies pedagogies. Pia summed up the dilemma, in part, when rhetorically asking: “Maybe we serve them too much, we’re too nice?”

Discussion

Our focus in this study has been the entwined dilemmas facing a group of dedicated teachers, as they interpreted language policies and enacted literacy pedagogies in an LIP against the backdrop of critical factors such as standardized language tests, age-out time limits, and high stakes criteria for residency approval for youth from refugee backgrounds. Taking inspiration from Ball (1997) who reminds us, “policies pose problems for their subjects, problems that must be solved in context” (p. 270), we reflect on the three interweaving themes that emerged from our thematic analysis of the teachers’ focus group interviews. We summarize each in turn to point out the teachers’ dilemmatic thinking, and discuss lessons learned and future considerations for educators as they seek to reconcile seemingly alternative positions in their local context.

The first and second themes (i.e., “what” to teach and relatedly using “what” resource materials) were dilemmas that were clearly entangled. Possessing contrary values and beliefs about standardized, separate languages and translanguaging in relation to effective syllabus, lessons, and materials, it was evident the educators held both fixed and fluid perceptions of language in setting language objectives and selecting materials. First, as noted earlier, as the notion of fluidity has gained much currency in contemporary sociolinguistic and language

pedagogy theory and practice, “fixity [is] often relegated to antagonist status” (Jaspers & Madsen, 2019, p. 12). Indeed, one reason that Jaspers and Madsen (2019) critically reviewed the recent interest in fluid language, “is that it contributes to abnormalising an investment in its opposite, despite the reasonable epistemic and ideological grounds for doing so, and to downplaying the dilemmas that arise from living in a considerably “languagised” world” (p. 11). Scholars can and do take up various positions either along the spectrum or on either side of the fluidity/fixity dichotomy. Teachers however, have to resolve or make compromises to navigate from theories to their everyday practice. One lesson learned from our study is to clarify for teachers, that in keeping with their own grounded theories and some influential scholars, rather than construing “fixity and fluidity as dichotomous,” to view them as symbiotically (re)constituting each other (Otsuji & Pennycook, 2010, p. 244). And to keep in mind, in a broader context regarding dilemmatic thinking, that this educational ideological dilemma is a variation of a more general ideology, such as “that many nation-state language policies value linguistic uniformity (within the nation) and diversity (between nations) reflect[ing] a concern with both values” (Jaspers, 2019, p. 222) as they work towards compromise.

Second, “what” to teach was complicated by individual needs related to how named-language proficiency levels were assessed, and recommendations to harness and promote multilingualism as an identity affirming pedagogy. This dilemma was further complicated by decisions about what materials to use, with the educators’ perceiving that available materials were not as effective as they would want them to be in helping students progress through the individual mapping activities and meeting the demands of the national exams. The lesson learned from this theme is the challenges presented for experienced and invested language teachers when they are required to design and implement individualized pathways simultaneously for large

numbers of newly arrived students, many of whom have interrupted or limited formal schooling along with a wide range of competencies and life experiences, and limited time before they age-out of a program. Interestingly, an abundance of materials were available but did not suffice in resolving ongoing dilemmas related to syllabus, and project and lesson design towards multiple language and content learning objectives. All of these materials were ultimately directed towards passing the high-stakes gatekeeper national exams.

Third, we were struck by the commitment and investment the LIP teachers demonstrated in “how” they taught, as they grappled with the complex dilemmas they faced in real time while teaching language and literacy to youth from refugee backgrounds. One of the primary dilemmas, as Pia’s comment above references, was the tension between the principles of democracy and those of authority. This was realized in dilemmas the educators faced in establishing a balance between transmission and progressive pedagogies as they saw value in both, for imparting knowledge and in drawing out youths’ background knowledge and lived experiences in order to link the known and the new. Related was the dilemma of teaching to individual linguistic needs through independent work and whole-class instruction, or teaching to sociolinguistic, communicative needs through small group collaborative activities. The lesson learned from the “how” theme is that while teachers may have a preferred pedagogy, they are likely to experience challenges and barriers to remaining faithful to one pedagogy. They will likely need to reflect on redressing the balance at times depending on the language objectives they aim for, as well as the youths’ beliefs and values relative to pedagogical practices.

The lessons learned from research question 1, the LIP teachers’ perceptions of needs and challenges, and research question 2, investigation of LIP teachers’ ideological dilemmas, led to the identification of six points for future considerations for educators as they navigate and

attempt to reconcile seemingly disparate perspectives on language teaching and learning in their local contexts.

1. Ideally, the national Grade 9 exams in Swedish and English could be broadened to include multilingual assessment in keeping with the goals of Swedish education policy to promote linguistic diversity. This could include allocation of more instructional hours for mother tongue instruction with skill levels and assessments developed similarly to the modern language (e.g., French, German, etc.) syllabi.
2. Time could be allocated for language teachers to work collaboratively to design interdisciplinary content-based units to be taught simultaneously in each of the language classes (i.e., Swedish, English, mother tongue), with multilingual classroom assistant support. This would afford reinforcement, allow for repetition, and also provide critical cross-linguistic transfer and meta-awareness while serving as adjunct courses for content classes across the curriculum.
3. Action-research could be conducted, exploring spaces/times where/when named languages are privileged, and different spaces/times where/when students are free to use their entire language repertoire. As one example, based on mapping activities, some youth may be initially placed in sheltered classes where Swedish is privileged for most of the day with the focus on important content to support resettlement in the Swedish school system and society.
4. Inläsningstjänst¹⁰ materials (i.e., multilingual, online materials across grade levels) could be used by students in class with teacher guidance rather than outside of class as support

¹⁰<https://www.inlasningstjanst.se/>

material. Using inläsningstjänst would allow teachers to privilege their language of instruction (i.e., Swedish, English, mother tongue), have control over teaching lessons to the class as a whole, while individual students could, at the same time, take advantage of the translanguaging features. In-class use would require repetition of how to enter and navigate the site so that each youth understands, is comfortable with, and has the ability to work with the materials. Similar to collaboratively designed interdisciplinary content-based units, effective use of inläsningstjänst would allow cross-linguistic transfer and meta-awareness, and serve as adjunct support across the curriculum.

5. Teachers could organize lessons so that the first lessons of the week or month use teacher-directed, transmission practices, focusing on grammar and vocabulary, privileging the language of instruction. The second set of weekly or monthly lessons could be implemented using translanguaging pedagogies, including progressive, collaborative lessons and topics with the aim of applying concepts and vocabulary learned earlier in the week or month in context.
6. The Swedish as a second language curriculum incorporates the importance of diversity as a resource and multilingualism as individual and societal assets, echoed by Pia as she emphasized the importance of nurturing relationships with the LIP youth, building on what they know to affirm their identities. Using multilingual classroom assistant support and translanguaging, content in language classes could be regularly scheduled (e.g. once weekly) to include lessons that focus on an aspect or aspects of the youths' backgrounds, with output compiled as detailed profiles of the individual learners. Topics for these lessons could include for example, work skills, family histories, school experiences, hobbies, and dreams for the future. Extracting from the profiles, language teachers could

design lessons, taught in the privileging language and based on the profile contents familiar to the youth.

Chapter 5: Part II—Translanguaging/Semiotic Pedagogy and Identity Texts

In the earlier chapters (particularly Chapter 2), I described the context and setting of the research in the Language Introduction Program English class in Stjärna Upper Secondary School, a rural school in Sweden. Part I (Chapters 3 and 4) focused on the perspectives of the LIP language teachers, underscoring the youth from refugee backgrounds' needs and challenges while recognizing their assets, and addressed the ideological dilemmas the teachers faced as they aspired to have their students progress through the systems' pathways and pass the Grade 9 national language exams.

This chapter focuses on promising pedagogical responses and addresses research question 3: What is the potential of translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies to draw on the everyday literacies and experiences of youth from refugee backgrounds in a Language Introduction Program in a Swedish upper secondary school for identity affirmation and investment in language and literacy learning?

The study explored translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies and activities in a LIP, subject-area English class that might potentially support the youths' development of language and literacies (traditional and new), affirm their identities and impact their investment in language and literacies learning. Specifically, within Cummins (2021) framework of Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT) and identity text (translanguaging and multimodality) pedagogy, seven LIP youth participants took part in a project consisting of two small identity-text units (see Appendix B) that were designed and taught by me over a period of six weeks. These units drew on the youths' interests, experiences, full linguistic repertoires and other multimodal (in particular, visual and musical) literacies to create identity texts (Cummins, 2004a; Cummins & Early, 2011).

As mentioned in Chapter 1, it was not the aim of the study to determine evident improvement in the youths' levels of language and literacy proficiencies towards success in the national Grade 9 English exam. Rather, the intent was exploratory in order to better understand how translanguaging/ semiotic pedagogies in the LIP English classroom might enhance the identity affirmation of youth from refugee backgrounds and promote their investment in language and literacies learning (Cummins, 2001, 2017, 2021; Cummins & Early, 2011).

Cummins (2021) notes that over the past 25 years there have been a growing number of publications reporting innovative and inspiring approaches to teaching multilingual learners. This study draws from and seeks to contribute to the international literature in this area reported in Cummins' (2021) comprehensive review.

Theory and Literature Review

The following section provides relevant theory and literature addressing identity, investment in language learning, and translanguaging.

Identity and Investment in Language Learning. The notions of identity and investment in learning are connected and arguably, impact the attainment of language proficiency and academic achievement of second or additional language learners (Cummins et al., 2015; Darwin & Norton, 2015). Norton (2013) defines identity as “how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how that relationship is structured across time and space, and how the person understands possibilities for the future” (p. 45).

Investment in learning, more than being motivated to learn a language, highlights the sociological aspect of motivation, focusing in language learning contexts on the relationship between structures of power and longstanding social constructs, such as race, ethnicity, and gender that create the conditions for learning a target language (Darwin & Norton, 2015).

Investment is also understood to include the learners having a stake in the language and literacy practices of the classroom (Darvin & Norton, 2015) and, as explained by Kramsch (2013), Norton's notion of investment "accentuates the role of human agency and identity in engaging with the task at hand, in accumulating economic and symbolic capital, in having stakes in the endeavor and in persevering in that endeavor" (p. 195). Youth from refugee backgrounds in particular may receive signals from within their learning environments that preclude them from sharing important talents and background knowledge to reveal their identities, so that they feel less compelled to participate or make an effort (i.e., low investment) in their learning process resulting in low learning outcomes.

Importantly however, Norton Peirce (1995) and Weeden (1987) explain that identity is also characterized by the dynamic, multidimensional nature of the individual that allows for repositioning and the possibility to speak up to accept or reject ideas in social conditions where power relations are sufficiently balanced. In the language learning classroom, social conditions that impact the learner's identity also impact the learner's investment (i.e., feeling of having stakes in the learning process, and commitment to learning) (Darvin & Norton, 2019). More specifically, Darvin and Norton (2015) designed a "Model of Investment" (p. 42) to articulate the interplay between identity (i.e., the learner's subjective positioning), ideology (i.e., the structures of power that regulate the learner's agency), and capital (i.e., economic, cultural, and social gains) that offer possibilities of "social reproduction and transformation" as factors that conspire to impact investment in learning (p. 42). Darvin and Norton (2015) explain:

As identity is fluid, multiple, and a site of struggle, how learners are able to invest in a target language is contingent on the dynamic negotiation of power in different fields, and thus investment is complex, contradictory, and in a state of flux. (p. 37)

Negotiating Identities. Relatedly, a long-standing concern of Cummins (1986, 2001, 2021) has been challenging societal power relations as they impact the interpersonal spaces in which learning occurs, and wherein teachers and learners negotiate their identities. The framework Cummins (2001) proposed posits that poor academic achievement, too common to students who are at risk because of factors such as poverty, marginalization and non-dominant language use, is influenced by societal power relations which in turn influence the structures of schooling (curriculum, funding, assessment, and so on), and then impact the interactions of teachers with learners. Consequently, marginalized at-risk students are only likely to achieve academic success if collaborative relations of power are established (constructed) in the interactions between teachers and students, at work to challenge the disabling coercive relations of power within the larger systems of both schooling and society. In this vein, Cummins (2014) argues “significant components of the background experiences of [at-risk students] are transformed into actual educational disadvantages only when the school fails to respond appropriately to these background experiences” (pp. 147-148). One recent pedagogical response that has gained significant prominence in the education of multilingual learners to transform their background experiences into assets is drawn from the translanguaging theories discussed next.

Translanguaging. Chapter 4 reviewed the literature on the origin of the term and theories of translanguaging. To recap and restate here, as frequently reported the construct translanguaging (*trawsieith* in Welsh) originated in Welsh-English bilingual secondary education (Williams, 1994, 1996), a program aimed at Welsh language revitalization. It was later brought to international notice by Baker (2001) who reported Williams’ (1994) use of the term to describe the practices he observed when teachers would provide input in Welsh (e.g., students listening to or reading a text in Welsh) with the students expressing output largely in English. Or

conversely, sometimes the language(s) of input and output would be reversed. Lewis, Jones and Baker (2012) expanded this to note that translanguaging represents “a distinct pedagogical theory and practice that seeks to consciously vary the language of input and output but with dual-language processing ... because deeper learning may occur when both languages are activated” (p. 667). Thus, in the original conceptualization of translanguaging there was a case made for heteroglossic, integrated “linguaging” that promoted dual language use and teaching for cross-linguistic transfer. This was in opposition to a view held commonly in bi/multilingual and immersion programs, whereby named languages should be kept strictly bounded and separate, based on what Cummins (2007) termed the “two solitudes assumption” (p. 221).

More recently, of the terms that have emerged to capture users’ fluid and flexible use of their linguistic resources across named languages, translanguaging, as articulated by García (2009), has generated the most impact. Following García’s (2009) influential publication that drew from Williams’ (1994, 1996) work, the construct of translanguaging has gained importance worldwide. Since the 2009 publication, García and colleagues have broadened both theoretical and pedagogical aspects (e.g., García et al., 2021; García & Kleyn, 2016; García & Lin, 2017; García & Wei, 2014). García and Wei (2018) explain that translanguaging has evolved to signify language use not as a system “with socially and politically defined boundaries” but rather as a “dynamic repertoire” that implies more than named languages (p. 1).

Additionally, García and Wei (2018) state that translanguaging changes language and social structures, social relations and individuals’ understanding in addition to going beyond language boundaries so that professionals understand language differently, working in “genuinely transdisciplinary” ways (p. 5). The aspect of translanguaging as a political act (Flores, 2014) that seeks to challenge and dismantle nation-state imposed notions of named

languages and monoglossic hierarchies using critical pedagogies, is a crucial feature of García and Wei's (2018) theory and practice.

Leung and Valdés (2019) note that the term translanguaging has many facets, layers and related meanings which can lead to ambiguity and confusion in its understanding and use. Poza (2017) points out that there are several interpretations of the term, some of which are challenged, including in García et al. (2021). Cummins (2021), in turn, challenges the construct as developed by Garcia et al (2021). In his view, the term now carries ideas that have drifted too far from the original conceptualization, possibly diminishing its credibility. Cummins (2021) discusses two versions of translanguaging theory that highlight “different orientations . . . [about] the legitimacy [of] the construct of language” (p. 264). He describes Unitary Translanguaging Theory (UTT) as that which adheres to García's (2017) notion that multilinguals have a “*unitary linguistic repertoire*” (Vogel & García, 2017, p. 1), and Otheguy et al.'s (2019) understanding that the multilingual possesses one cognitive landscape that does not intersect or interact as a repertoire of multiple languages. The second version, Cummins (2021) labels Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT) in which he posits that languages “*do* intersect and interact in dynamic ways in the cognitive and linguistic functioning of the individual” (p. 264, emphasis in original). Recently, Cummins (2021) has employed a visual metaphor, first used by Tamati (2016), of the intertwined roots of kahikatea trees to represent the notion of the simultaneous existence of languages and “an underlying [dynamic] network of interconnections” (p. 234).

As previously stated, García et al. (2021) consider it regrettable that the term translanguaging is being adopted outside of their unitary stance and contest such use. They state:

Since the emergence of translanguaging scholarship, some have taken up the term in ways that we regard as unfortunate, since they hold on to the classificatory distinction

between named languages that reproduces abyssal thinking. This is the case, for example, of MacSwan's (2017) call for multilingual translanguaging.... This is also the case of Cummins' [2021] cross-linguistic translanguaging theory (CTT) which distinguishes his position from the way he refers to ours as unitary translanguaging theory (UTT). (p. 215)

García et al. (2021) draw on the notion of "abyssal thinking" from the decolonial philosopher Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2007). They explain, "this hegemonic thinking creates a line establishing that which is considered 'civil society,' and declares as nonexistent those colonized knowledges and lifeways positioned on the other side of the line, thus relegating them to an existential abyss" (pp. 203-204). Therefore, regardless of Cummins' (2017, 2021) arguments to the contrary (i.e., (a) that the notions of additive bilingualism and cross linguistic transfer as represented by deeply rooted, dynamic intersections and interactions are not locked into a monoglossic paradigm, and (b) that academic language is a legitimate construct as a powerful register of a named language) and that (c) his frameworks seek to disrupt coercive power relations, proponents of the UTT theory continue to argue that CTT holds a monoglossic ideology and remains implicated in raciolinguistic perspectives.¹¹

In sum, however, according to Cummins (forthcoming), "the core theoretical division between CTT and UTT is that CTT proposes fluid and porous boundaries between languages in the multilingual's linguistic system, whereas UTT proposes no boundaries and no languages." While recognizing the value of the many contributions García and colleagues make, in particular with respect to raising important issues regarding raciolinguistic perspectives (Rosa & Flores, 2017), and to translanguaging pedagogies, this study draws from Cummins' (2021) notions of

¹¹ For a comprehensive comparative analysis of these two influential theories, see Cummins, 2021 (especially in Chapter 10).

cross-linguistic translanguaging theory (CTT) and trans-semiotic/identity texts (Cummins, 2004a; Cummins & Early, 2011). Significantly, though, the focus of this study is translanguaging pedagogies and the students' production of identity texts (Cummins, 2004a; Cummins & Early, 2011) and, as Cummins (2021) notes in this regard, there is very little to distinguish the classroom practices that are derived from the two (UTT and CTT) theories.

The Academic Expertise Framework and Links to Identity Text. Further to Cummins' (2001) framework regarding disrupting coercive, societal power and negotiating teacher-learner identities, discussed above under Negotiating Identities, Cummins (2001) proposed an "Academic Expertise Framework" (p. 125). This framework articulates the process of how teachers' orientation to language may contribute to successful critical literacy outcomes. Cummins (2001) posits that learners' academic development will be most fully enhanced when interactions between teacher and students draw on and value the learner's cultural and linguistic assets, affirming their identities so that they will both invest their identity and be cognitively engaged in learning. Moreover, the Academic Expertise Framework proposes three areas of focus for effective language instruction. The focus on language meaning promotes support through phases that progressively develop the learners' background knowledge and experiences from comprehensible input through to critical literacy. The focus on language itself teaches students critical language awareness and how to use language strategically to navigate and achieve goals in social situations. Finally, the focus on language use for which Cummins (2001) argues that students need to have opportunities to generate new knowledge, engage in artistic endeavors, and be active in speaking to real world issues. According to Cummins (2004; 2021), the construct of identity text, discussed next, was an additional elaboration of the initial

empowerment framework that brings together the “focus on use” (p. 125) component and identity investment.

Identity Text. Cummins and Early (2011) outlined characteristics of the identity text construct in their useful compilation, *Identity texts: The collaborative creation of power in multilingual schools*. Following Cummins (2004), an identity text is an artifact created by the learner being taught in a language other than their own, that views the learner’s everyday linguistic and semiotic practices as assets, useful to reveal aspects of their identity that would be otherwise hidden or difficult to express using traditional teaching practices. Under collaborative conditions set up by the teacher, learners are encouraged to use their full range of written or oral languages, but also other modes such as image, music, and drama to create multimodal texts that connect to learners’ lives, real world issues and/or interests, sometimes using digital tools as helpful scaffolds to enhance their voices. When presented to teachers or other audiences, identity texts provide an opportunity for learners to receive feedback and recognition that typically shines a “positive light” (Cummins & Early, 2011, p. 3) on their identities. Importantly, Cummins and Early (2011) explain:

Identity text creation is one component of a broader pedagogical approach that articulates a ‘counter-discourse’ to the implicit devaluation of students’ abilities, languages, cultures, and identities that occurs in classrooms where students’ preferred ways of meaning making and home languages are ignored or treated with ‘benign neglect’. Thus, the significance of identity texts within the broader context of pedagogy for marginalised students derives from their role as tools of empowerment, which we define as the collaborative creation of power. (p. 4)

Translanguaging and Identity Text Pedagogies. A comprehensive review of research literature regarding translanguaging pedagogies is beyond the scope of this chapter.¹² This section presents some additional relevant research literature, specifically initiatives using translanguaging instructional approaches and identity texts, to explore their potential with children and youth from refugee backgrounds for identity affirmation and language and literacies investment.

While not specific solely to populations of children and youth from refugee backgrounds, *Identity Texts: The collaborative creation of power in multilingual schools* (Cummins & Early, 2011) is a seminal text in this area. It is a collection of one longer case and eighteen short cases situated in various global educational contexts (i.e., North, Central, and South America, Burkina Faso, Uganda, and in Greece, Italy and Ireland) that document the possibilities for language and literacy learning using identity texts. According to Cummins & Early (2011), common to each of the studies is the teacher as a powerful change agent in the classroom, enabling links with cognitive engagement, identity investment and affirmation while scaffolding learning of both language and content knowledge. In addition, the case studies reported underscored the benefits of using multiple modes to enhance meaning-making and communication and in some cases, demonstrated the advantages of digital tools as mediators to enhance learning and to amplify students' voices.

¹² Cummins (2021) provides a comprehensive review of research literature on translanguaging pedagogies (pp. 313–356) in addition to a detailed sampling of crosslinguistic/translanguaging instructional initiatives and identity texts that have been implemented in Canadian and international contexts for the decades from 2000 to 2020 (pp. 357–367). He also provides a review of the crosslinguistic pedagogy prior to the emergence of translanguaging (pp. 322–336) and a review of work that resulted from translanguaging theory as an expansion of crosslinguistic pedagogy (pp. 336–344).

Ntelioglou et al. (2014) conducted a collaborative exploratory study with two Grade 3 teachers in an inner-city school with a highly linguistically and culturally diverse group of learners from many parts of the globe. The class included a number of Roma students from Hungary whose families were refugee claimants. The university and school collaborators conducted a number of projects and reported the implementation of one descriptive writing project that connected with the students' lives and drew on their home languages. The learners' writings were supported by digital technologies and drama pedagogies. The authors reported that the findings of their study revealed that the use of multilingual/multimodal pedagogies made a positive difference with respect to learner autonomy, increased literacy engagement, investment in learning, and identity affirmation. They advocated for educators opening up pedagogical spaces in which students' home languages and communities were viewed as valuable assets to enhance their learning.

Johnson and Kendrick (2017) in the Canadian context, conducted a case study with youth from refugee backgrounds using media technologies to design digital stories, a popular form of identity text. The digital story is a creative process that allows for the learners to choose interpretations of their own interests using multiple modes as a means to affirm and possibly reshape their identities (Darvin & Norton, 2019). The multimodal texts produced in Johnson and Kendrick's (2016) study enabled the youth participants to reveal difficult parts of their experiences outside of traditional linguistic forms, gain self-confidence, and reposition their identities. One participant transformed his new-found knowledge from the classroom into the larger school context stating confidently that his goal was to graduate. Johnson and Kendrick (2017) similarly used digital stories as identity texts to highlight the importance of multiple modes for youth learners who may have experienced limited or interrupted formal education,

showing how one student was able to communicate details about his challenging journey from Iraq to Canada. Another Johnson and Kendrick (2021) study further reported on digital storytelling to demonstrate how one student was able to successfully use multiple modes to create texts that proudly revealed his personal accomplishments and meaningfully presented his hopes for the future.

Kendrick et al. (2022) in an ethnographic qualitative study involving nine youth from refugee backgrounds, investigated the potential of a digital storytelling project regarding social and emotional learning, and language and literacies learning. The study was designed collaboratively by the university researchers and the teacher (one of the co-authors) to enable more autonomous learning and identity affirmation. The authors used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and multimodal visual analysis (Rose, 2011) with two telling cases to illuminate the digital stories and identity texts produced, and to identify four interweaving themes. The first related to the affordances of multimodality to support the youths to communicate complex ideas, the second related to the development the youths' competencies with respect to digital literacies, the third concerned issues regarding communicating in digital spaces, and the fourth pertained to the investment in learning and identity affirmation that the youths experienced.

Kennedy et al. (2019) used identity texts in the form of "self-found poetry" (p. 62) pulled from their own writing to reveal and affirm the identities of Burmese-born children from refugee backgrounds in an American elementary school. The study framed multimodality as codemeshing using different languages in the design of their poems. While not explicitly labeled as identity texts, the artifacts produced showed that at least two participants were able to articulate important features of their own experiences as bicultural and emergent multilinguals and gain insights about their multicultural and multilingual backgrounds as valuable resources.

The literature review has presented case study literature using identity texts as the means to put into action the concepts discussed in the theory section. The next section outlines the methodology for research question 3 (translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy).

Methodology

Chapter 2 described the site of this part of the study as the subject-area English class in the Language Introduction Program in Stjärna Upper Secondary School in Sweden. To recap, the LIP prioritizes Swedish language learning using the Swedish as a second language curriculum guidelines and assessment, to enable newcomer youth aged 16 to 20 to pursue further academic or vocational options in mainstream programs. In addition to Swedish, the LIP at Stjärna included instruction in English, mother tongue, natural and social sciences, and various electives. Multilingual classroom assistants in Dari and Arabic provided language support in and out of the class contexts.

This section presents additional information regarding the site of the research, details about the seven LIP youths from refugee backgrounds, the research process, methods of data generation, and data analysis.

At the time of the study, approximately 73 youths from refugee backgrounds were enrolled in Stjärna's LIP. One quarter of the LIP youths were born in Syria and almost all the remainder were born in Afghanistan but had generally lived in Iran. Nearly 90% were male, many of whom had come as unaccompanied minors. All but approximately three youth had experienced forced migration and limited or interrupted formal education, and many were living in Sweden without any family members.

Initially, the translanguaging/semiotic project (teaching and research) was facilitated in an available mainstream classroom in the main school building. However, in the main building

Stjärna students had access to Wi-Fi through their assigned computers only and were required to use phone data to access the internet. Consequently, we changed classrooms after the first session and moved across the street to a room in the adult education building where Wi-Fi was accessible both on their computers and phones. I did not want the students to incur costs by using their own phone data for this study but also wanted to give them the option to use their phone rather than a computer for their projects if they preferred.

The room was small, framed on one side by a large windowed wall and included three small tables and a white board. The classroom was typically used to administer exams to adult learners over 20 years of age and was located across the hall from the administration office for adult education. The students sat at one of three tables of their choice and tended to sit in the same chair for each session. There was no special accommodation for a teacher in the room, so when teaching the classes I stood or sat beside the student when they asked a question. This was the same for Mahdi, the multilingual classroom assistant, when he joined us in the room to provide Dari or Swedish language support.

Youth Participants. The LIP youth participants represented a purposive sample (Palys, 2008) selected based on their enrolment in the LIP's English course. All of the youth were from refugee backgrounds and had experience in the program and the English course for at least one year. Five of the youth were born in Syria and two were born in Afghanistan.

Notably, although there was a significantly greater proportion of males to females enrolled in the LIP, the sample of youth participants for this study included proportionately more females. This was because many of the male, unaccompanied minors had aged out of the program but had not passed the national Swedish 9 exam or math exam. In an effort to allow the youths (all male and unaccompanied minors) extra time and instruction to succeed with the

exams so they could proceed with adult education and employment, the school principal received approval to retain the youths for an additional year in Stjärna’s LIP program. Instruction included Swedish language learning and math only, organized around key activities for successful integration, such as opening a bank account and drafting a resume. None of these male youths were therefore enrolled in the LIP English class at the time of this study, reducing the large proportion of eligible male learners and accounting for the greater proportion of youth participant females in this study.

Table 5.1 provides an overview of the LIP youth from refugee background participants.

Table 5.1 Youth from Refugee Background Participants

Name	Age	Sex (M/F)	Country of Birth	Years Enrolled in LIP	Languages used in addition to learning English
Ali	18	M	Syria	2nd	Arabic and emergent Swedish
Ella	18	F	Syria	3rd	Arabic and Swedish
Ertugrul	16	M	Syria	2nd	Arabic, Turkish, emergent Swedish
Nai	18	F	Syria	3rd	Arabic and Swedish
Narges	18	F	Afghanistan	3rd	Dari and Swedish
Neda	18	F	Afghanistan	3rd	Dari and Swedish
Yazan	18	M	Syria	3rd	Arabic and Swedish

All 10 youth in the LIP English course were invited to participate with an invitation letter and attached consent form in English or Arabic, including a parent consent form for the one youth under 18 years of age. The letter and consent form were discussed in class as a group, with oral Swedish, Arabic and Dari language speakers available in the classroom to provide clarification. The youth were asked to participate in one of two groups, twice a week, in 50-

minute sessions, for six weeks. All ten students agreed to participate, however, two siblings withdrew early on due to direction from their parents, and one newly arrived youth was not from a refugee background and therefore not included in this reporting, leaving seven LIP youth who fully completed the project.

Research regarding the translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy began on November 12, 2019 upon approval from the Behavioral Research Ethics Board at UBC and continued for six weeks until December 19, 2019. It was determined that many of the youths from the LIP English class would not be available to participate in a before or after school study due to bus schedules, and many students could not disrupt their outside-of-school routines. The teaching project (research) therefore took place during the same time periods as the regular LIP English classes for 50 minutes on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. In order that no student would miss regular learning material over the six-week period, the teacher and I organized two groups of youth participants (three youth in one group; four youth in the other) who would alternate between Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday classes. Each participant was given a notebook with a schedule taped on the back, highlighted in yellow (for Ella, Nai, and Ali) or green (for Ertugrul, Yazon, Narges, and Neda), and each group participated in a total of 12 classes.

While one group of participants was working with me participating in translanguaging/semiotic, identity text work, the LIP English teacher instructed the other group of participants in the regular English class. In the regular LIP English class the teacher reviewed materials, provided individual support, and organized the time to assess the students' individual English reading skills using the mapping [kartläggning] materials (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016) described in the glossary earlier in this thesis.

Data Generation. The study is a qualitative case study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Creswell (2013) offers a useful definition:

Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a *case*) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in depth data collection involving *multiple sources of information* (e.g., observations, interviews, audio-visual materials, and documents and reports), and reports a case *description* and *case* themes. The unit of analysis in the case study might be multiple cases (a multisite study) or a single case (a within-site study). (p. 97, emphasis in original)

This study employed multiple sources of information to generate data: the translanguaging/semiotic activities, student artifacts, journal entries and texts, some recordings of classroom interactions, and individual exit-interviews with the youths. The translanguaging/semiotic project engaged the youth participants' everyday multilingual practices and full semiotic repertoires. The unit of analysis is the single translanguaging/semiotic project completed in two identity text units. Appendix B provides an outline of the instructions for the translanguaging/semiotic project for both Units 1 and 2, and Table 5.2 provides a timeline of the steps and activities in the process.

Table 5.2 Translanguaging/Semiotic Project—Timeline and Rollout

Date	General Activities
Week 1: Nov 12, 13, 14, 2019	Distribute and explain about journals. Choose pseudonym and image representing future career goal (i.e., imagined identities). Discuss and explore social media accounts for language supports.
Week 2: Nov 19, 20, 21, 2019	Compile helpful websites and set up accounts for use with units. Explain activities in Unit 1. Set up a chat group through Teams with the list of websites, accounts, and instructions for Unit 1. Choose topics for and begin Unit 1.
Week 3: Nov 26, 27, 28, 2019	Continue working on lessons and activities in Unit 1. Introduce Unit 2 to those who have completed the first unit.
Week 4: Dec 3, 4, 5, 2019	Continue to explore ideas for Unit 2 and work on lessons and activities.
Week 5: Dec 10, 11, 12, 2019	Work on lessons and activities for Unit 2.
Week 6 Dec 17, 18, 19, 2019	Completion of Unit 2 and exit interviews.

For both units, a sociocultural literacies approach was used, led by a collaborative orientation with the youths who were allowed to choose their own topics according to the instructional guidelines, and encouraged to discuss ideas between teacher-youth and among peers. The youth participants were encouraged and supported to use websites, apps and other digital tools to draw on and enhance their digital literacies and to explore digital resources that might be useful for autonomous language learning. I had intended to collect and review their work after each identity text unit, however, for both units the students wanted to sit with me, one-on-one, to discuss what they had composed as they finished.

Briefly, Unit 1 of the project asked the youth to choose a composition that they liked (e.g., song, video, image, film clip, or a text) or they could create their own song, image, video or text. The participants understood that English was the focal language for the project (and research) but also that their work (i.e., song, video, or text) could freely be completed in their own language(s) and in English. Using any available language allowed them the opportunity to make use of all the languages in their linguistic repertoires to communicate their intended meanings, which in turn, supported their multiple languages and literacies development. After deciding on their topic, the youth were asked to write a text describing and explaining their chosen composition, and why that choice interested them or why they liked or were connected to the topic.

Unit 2 of the project was designed in parallel to a visual project completed by the mainstream photography class where the students took four photographs each and displayed them in the school foyer. For this unit of the translanguaging/semiotic project, the youth were asked to take photos around one idea describing “Who am I?” or “What is something special about me?” with each of four photographs representing a place, the youth in the place, something happening in the place, and a feeling evoked by the place. My original idea was to follow the mainstream example and display the youth participants’ photographs in the foyer before the end of the school term. However, because of time restrictions (the BREB approval process took longer than anticipated), the project was implemented right up until the end of the academic term.

Additionally, all of the participants (with one exception) either stayed past the end of each translanguaging/identity text classroom session at the end of the school day and before their bus arrived to continue working on their texts and/or continued to work on their identity texts at

home. The participants elected to do this voluntarily without me asking. The one exception was Neda who had mainstream subject-area classes that were her priority for homework.

The exit interviews conducted during week 6 of the research, occurred in a one-on-one manner in a separate room with mother tongue language translation available if the youth preferred, or using a mix of Swedish and English with just me and the individual youth participant. The questions were presented to encourage open and honest dialogue (Kruger & Casey, 2000) and focused on the youths' perceptions of language learning relative to translanguaging/semiotic literacies pedagogies. All exit interviews and oral presentations as part of the project were audio-recorded using the Voice Memos app on the Apple iPhone. Appendix B provides a list of the semi-structured, exit interview questions.

Data Analysis. Similar to addressing research questions 1 and 2 in Part I of the study, Braun and Clarke's (2012) six-phase, thematic process was used to analyze the data for research question 3, including: (a) familiarize with the data, (b) generate initial codes, (c) search for themes, (d) review potential themes, (e) define and name themes, and (f) produce the report. The approaches to analyses that were employed included inductive (e.g., outside-of-school lives and literacies, dilemmatic responses), deductive (e.g., translanguaging, identity, and investment); and abductive that allowed for "surprises to come up" (Agar, 2006, para. 66).

After data generation, I used f5 software to transcribe the recordings of the exit interviews and oral presentations. I then scanned the participants' journals and gathered visual and written work that had been sent to me through Teams or email. I loaded all the transcriptions, images, and written texts for each youth participant into ATLAS.ti. After repeatedly reading, viewing, and listening to the transcriptions, I further organized the data and began to generate initial codes. Then I collated the codes, searched for themes and eventually

labelled the themes in Microsoft Word. The analysis was iterative and recursive, with independent review of the possible themes and then deliberation and dialogue back and forth with my supervisory committee to ensure the themes related closely to the data.

Findings

Four interrelated themes emerged from the youth participant data regarding their identity affirmation and investment in learning. The first two themes related to identity affirmation and illuminated: (a) the ways in which the youth, using their full linguistic and semiotic repertoires, were able to richly reveal and make visible aspects of their lives, interests, and experiences; and (b) the openness with which the youth shared their outside lives inside the classroom. These themes enabled me to respond, engage in dialogue, and in doing so, affirm their identities. The third theme, emergent from the first two, was (c) the ways in which the youths were invested in the identity text activities and in creating the texts. The fourth theme also pertained to investment in, and positive perspectives on, translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies more broadly, however, it also revealed the youths' dilemmatic perspectives about this progressive approach.

A summary of choices (topics and modes) the youth participants made for each of the teaching/research activities are summarized below in Table 5.3, including the first session (choosing a pseudonym and future career), Unit 1 and Unit 2. Following the table is a presentation of the findings related to each theme.

Table 5.3 Summary of Research Choices: Topics and Modes

Youth Name	First Session		Unit 1			Unit 2		
	Meaning of Pseudonym (if given)	Imagined Identity (Image)	Topic	Mode		Topic	Mode	
				Languages	Other Modes		Languages	Other Modes
Ali	-	Architect	Why he wants to be an architect	Written Swedish, Written Arabic	Images	His community basketball experience	Written Swedish, Written Arabic, Written English	Images
Ella	-	Care Aid	Western pop song by Bebe Rexha, <i>I'm a Mess</i>	Written English	Video	Her (current) school experience in Sweden	Written English	Images
Ertugrul	In Turkish, <i>Er</i> means <i>man, soldier, hero</i> . <i>Tugrul</i> means <i>bird of punishment</i> or <i>bird of prey</i>	IT Professional	Favorite song (Turkish)	Turkish, Swedish, English Oral Arabic	Video, online text editor	Meaning (to him) of his birthday	Written English	Images

Youth Name	First Session		Unit 1			Unit 2		
	Meaning of Pseudonym (if given)	Imagined Identity (Image)	Topic	Mode		Topic	Mode	
				Languages	Other Modes		Languages	Other Modes
Nai	-	Social Worker	Swedish song about Palestinian resistance	Written Swedish, Written English	Image	Her (current) school experience in Sweden	Written English	
Narges	<i>Narges</i> som jag har valt och det betyder blomma (<i>Narges</i> that I have chosen, it means flower)[in Dari].	Daycare or Childcare Worker	Interpretation of a meme	Written English	Image	Visit with her special friend	Written English	Images
Neda	-	-	Favorite movie	Written English	In workbook	Dream for the future when she was a little girl in Iran	Written English	-
Yazan	<i>Yazan</i> is the name of his best friend, he wrote "love" in	Care Aid	Texts and discussion about his best friend	Written Swedish, Written English, Spoken	In workbook, online discussion	Smoking a hookah	Written Swedish	Images

Youth Name	First Session		Unit 1			Unit 2		
	Meaning of Pseudonym (if given)	Imagined Identity (Image)	Topic	Mode		Topic	Mode	
				Languages	Other Modes		Languages	Other Modes
	French under the pseudonym			Swedish (and Arabic)				

Theme 1: The Affordances of Drawing on Learners' Translanguaging/Semiotic Practices for Identity Affirmation. As mentioned previously, the participants understood that English was the focal language for the two units of the project. However, the youths were encouraged to complete their identity texts using their full communicative repertoires such as their preferred languages and other usual modes of meaning-making to encourage rich communication that was unconstrained by the correctness of using English only. Swedish, English, Dari, and Arabic were used freely throughout the project, representing a network of socially equitable and fluid oral and written exchanges, similar to Tamati's (2016) visual metaphor of kahikatea tree entanglement.

Translanguaging/ Semiotic Practices and Texts: Translanguaging. During the translanguaging project activities in class, I typically spoke Swedish (and very little English) with the students to give them instructions and provide support and also to complete the exit interviews. However, they spoke to each other in Dari or Arabic to discuss ideas. Mahdi, the multilingual classroom assistant whose Swedish competence was better than mine, provided clarification in Swedish and Dari as required when he was present. Yazan, the most proficient Swedish-Arabic youth in class, gave Arabic language support to Ertugrul and Ali who were the newest, emergent Swedish learners. For the exit interviews an Arabic interpreter was used for Ali, Ertugrul, Ella, and Nai. The youths' written communication in their workbooks and for their identity texts was presented in either one, two or three separate named languages including a mix of Swedish and English; Swedish only; English only, Arabic and Swedish; or Turkish (for Ertugrul), Arabic and English.

Ella, Nai, and Narges for both Unit 1 (favorite song, video, film), and Unit 2 (four images of a place) used Google Translate for their composing processes to produce English only texts.

However, Narges (first session in her workbook) wrote a full Swedish text describing her excitement about participating in the study and the meaning of her pseudonym. Ertugrul (Unit 1) used an online text editor to translate a song with Turkish lyrics into Arabic and then English, and for Unit 2, he used Google Translate to write in English only.

Ali (Unit 1) wrote first in Arabic and then Swedish to explain his interest in becoming an architect. Notably, although he understood that the course (and the study) was centered on English learning, Ali said he always translated to Swedish first “because Swedish is most important.” In that light, I needed to encourage Ali to write the text in English to complete his identity text. Ali’s identity text for Unit 1 therefore proceeded as follows.

Ali wrote first in Arabic:

تدور هذه الصورة حول مهندس ينظر إلى المبنى بعد اكتماله
يتكون المبنى من خمسة عشر طابقاً. بنيت من الخشب والألوان على اللون الخشبي.
لديه زجاج في الداخل ودرج وإضاءة. يرتدي المهندس المعماري سترة صفراء وسوداء وخط أبيض أعلى

And, then he wrote the translation in Swedish:

Denna bild kretsar kring en ingenjör som tittar på byggnaden efter att den är klar.

Byggnaden består av femton våningar. Byggt av trä och färger på träfärg.

Den har ett glas inuti och en trappa och belysning. Arkitekten bär en gul och svart jacka och en vit topplinje.

Jag gillade bilden eftersom byggnaden är gjord av trä och långa femton våningar och det finns många lampor inuti och det finns en vit cyklist eller utanför finns ett glas som täcker byggnaden.

I added the English translation for the above text of Ali's Unit 1 so he could see that I wanted him to put his thoughts in English also, reinforcing that English is our goal language for this research and English course. My translation was as follows:

This image revolves around an engineer looking at the building after it is completed. The building consists of fifteen floors. Built of wood and colors on wooden color. It has a glass inside and a staircase and lighting. The architect wears a yellow and black jacket and a white top line.

For the remainder of his identity text (Unit 1), Ali wrote first in Arabic, followed by his English translation:

عجبتني الصورة لأن المبنى مصنوع من الخشب والطوابق الخمسة عشر الطويلة وهناك العديد من المصابيح في الداخل
وهناك دراجة بيضاء أو بالخارج يوجد زجاج يغطي المبنى

I like the picture because the building is made of wood and the fifteen floors tall and there are many lamps inside and there is a white bike or outside there is glass covering the building.

Yazan (Unit 1) wrote a text in his workbook first in Swedish because as he explained, he felt more competent than in English, could write faster, and was excited to share information about his friend. He then continued to write another text with new information in English. Figure 5.1 shows the first written part of Yazan's identity text (Unit 1).

Figure 5.1 Yazan Unit 1 Translanguaging—Swedish and English

Vi är kompisar för länge sen
 när vi var barn vi var alltid med varandra
 och han är min bästa vän.
 När vi var med varandra vi hade
 roligt tid och jag liker på honom.
 När vi åkte från syrien vi var jätte
 ledsen för att vi lämnar familjen
 i syria sen vi åkte till turkiet
 vi bor tillsammans men jag gillar
 inte turkiet och jag vill att komma till
 sverige och han vill inte så jag
 har kommit till sverige och han
 stannat i turkiet och efter 9 år
 jag kom till turkiet för jag saknar
 honom och jag vill träffa honom
 och jag har gått till turkiet och
 vi har träffat och det var jätte
 bra känslor vi blir glada så mycket.
 jag har varit i turkiet hos honom
 i veckor sen jag kommit tillbaka
 till sverige så nu vi kontaktar
 på mobil och jag hoppas att
 vi kommer och träffa igen.

Family
 His family lives in syria idlib and
 them my branches when we were
 in idlib we were always playing with
 each other now he lives in turkey
 and works at city. sen jag vill
 resa tillbaka till turkiet för träffa honom
 och det ska vara roligt

Below is the English translation of the Swedish portion of Yazan's identity text (seen at left):

We are friends for a long time when we were children we were always with each other and he was my best friend. When we were with each other, we had fun time and I trust him. When we went from Syria we were very sad because we left our families in Syria. Then we went to Turkey and we lived together but I didn't like Turkey and I wanted to come to Sweden, and he didn't want to so I came to Sweden and he stayed in Turkey. And after one year I travelled to Turkey because I missed him and I went to Turkey and we met and that was very good feelings. We became so happy. I have been to Turkey to his house for three weeks and then I came back to Sweden. So now we contact by mobile and I hope that we will meet again.

Neda (notes in her workbook) attempted to write in English only without using Google Translate or other language support, which resulted in the text being a mix of Swedish and English words as follows:

Today was very Good. we kommer på många [figured out many] app[s] för [for] English learning. we discation abut appar [discussed about apps].

Translanguaging/Semiotic Practices and Texts: Multimodal. In addition, the participants chose a range of modes other than the linguistic mode to complete the units. All youth except Neda used images or videos to support their written texts for either or both Units 1

and 2 (as was instructed for Unit 2). The use of images and videos enabled the youths to first visually express their interests and then to add linguistic descriptions to elaborate, helping to create identity texts that would otherwise have been too difficult to accomplish with just written or oral English or Swedish language.

Ali (Unit 1) showed images of an architect (or engineer) to support his text, telling why he wanted to become an architect. Ali had had difficulty explaining verbally why he made this choice for his future but he was able to focus his discussion around the image of the building itself. Yazan (Unit 1) showed two videos to give more details about his friend. One was a silly food challenge, mixing and tasting unpaired foods that he and his friend made together to post on his friend's YouTube channel. The other video was produced and directed by his friend with actors such as his friend's brother to simulate life during war in Syria. Using the videos along with written and oral language details, Yazan was able to demonstrate the close bond between him and his friend, express his pride in his friend's talents, and highlight the number of likes and subscribers on his friend's YouTube channel.

Ertugrul (Unit 1) chose his favorite music video in Turkish, sung with longing by a popular young male about surviving unrequited love. The song was called *Unuturum Elbet [Of Course I Forget]* (Al Shabaan, 2019). He used an online text editor to translate to Arabic and then to English (at my request). This was the first meaningful communication with Ertugrul in the more than one year since I had met him, as he rarely spoke in the regular LIP class contexts due to a significant stutter. Using the music video, Ertugrul was able to show that he was both competent in Turkish (a surprise to me) and proudly demonstrated his skills with online technology. Arguably he also connected with the feelings of the young singer.

Ella's music video (Unit 1) was in English by a well-known female, Western pop music artist. The song was called *I'm a Mess* (Rexha, 2018), and expressed complex emotions also about unrequited love, possibly suggesting that Ella could relate to the mood of the song. She then wrote a text in English using Google Translate to explain why this song was her favorite, written below:

Words is that she loves someone and he does not like har, She is unimportant. She loves herself more first i don't want to hear it but from some days. I heard it and loved it and called it my favorite song.

Nai (Unit 1) chose a digital image of the Palestinian flag, and a music video with lyrics in Swedish and filmed in Sweden but performed by a group of Palestinian-born singers. The lyrics were about Palestinian resistance. The song was entitled *Leve Palestina [Long Live Palestine]* (Kofia, 2015) composed by Swedish-Arab musicians based in Göteborg in the 1970's and 1980's. Nai used this video to support her text written in English using Google Translate. The lyrics along with the forceful music and the Palestinian flag contributed an additional dimension to Nai's identity and revealed her value position, along with her message that her ancestors originated from Palestine. Nai wrote:

Fria Palestina [Free Palestine]

I like this song because that song sings to my country that is Palestine. now this song is famous for the Palestinian people living in Sweden

My grandparents were born in Palestine. They lived there during their youth and married there before the Zionist occupation began. Then they moved to Jordan. then they moved to Syrin. Until now they live in Syria. Only those who have moved to Syria while their brothers now live in Palestine.

Narges (Unit 1) chose a sophisticated meme and wrote an interpretive text in English that demonstrated her critical thinking ability. The meme communicated a message for people to make good use of time because it goes quickly and doesn't last (my interpretation). The visual was on a grandfather walking with a cane and holding the hand of his grandson, each with an hour glass on their backs. The grandfather's sand was almost out of the top of the hour glass, and the grandson's was the opposite. After thoughtful reflection, Narges wrote:

Time is very important for all off people we must use our time because the time left doesn't come anymore.

I think it's time for gold.

It is very important for me spend time with parents for example if they die, I would have had some good moments.

The picture shows old man with a little baby that old man had many years.

We need to figure out how to use time

The picture shows hourglass sand falls down the old man doesn't have much time.

But the little kid has a lot of time for his life.

life that is still passing.

We should not do bad to anyone. I always love to listen to my parent's words.

Potential for Identity affirmation. Each student provided sufficient rich meanings using the various named languages and modes. Using the full range of their communicative repertoires for each of their identity texts, I was able to respond orally, except for Neda who asked for written corrections, in a significant meaningful way, provide affirmations, ask more questions, and react positively—often joyfully—to their creations. For instance, I had known prior to the research that Ali (Unit 2) played basketball in the community but when I saw the gym where he

played and his action shot, and read his text (illustrated and reported in detail in the second theme below), I understood that Ali saw himself as more than a recreational basketball player which widened my view and respect for his interest and future aspirations. With Ertugrul and Nai (both Unit 1), I was reminded not to make assumptions regarding country and culture. Knowing they were both born in Syria, I and my colleagues attached them to our vague notions of being Syrian and Syrian culture. However, I was surprised from the research to learn that Ertugrul most likely identified more as Turkish, possibly due to his young age on arrival and length of time spent in Turkey during his migration journey; and Nai, in addition to identifying as Syrian, identified as Palestinian due to her ancestors' heritage. Their identity texts allowed me to respond with understanding and positivity about these additional linguistic and cultural assets. For example, I said to Nai, "I had no idea your family came from Palestine, that's so interesting." She nodded and smiled proudly, possibly indicating that she felt she had successfully repositioned herself as being Palestinian in addition to coming from Syria.

When I initially observed Narges in class the year before the research when she was in her second or third year in the LIP, she sat quietly and attentively as the only female in the class of approximately 20 males, and struggled tenaciously to understand what was expected of her. Narges had had no formal schooling in Afghanistan or Iran but by the time the study took place, she had passed the national Swedish 9 exam and was working toward completion of English 9. As previously discussed, during this study Narges (Unit 1) chose to write about a meme. She asked several questions to me about the meme such as, "What is this?" pointing to the hour glass and asking further questions to understand that the hour glass showed the grandfather's time in life was almost up with little sand at the top, while the little boy had a lot of sand at the top of his hour glass and therefore more life to live. Then she proceeded to reveal a value position that for

her while acknowledging the passage of time, it was most important to spend time with her parents. Narges not only continued to display her commitment and skill at learning, but also that she was a critical thinker and able to communicate complex ideas.

These examples demonstrated that multiple modes of meaning-making allowed the youth participants to create rich identity texts, giving me more information about their backgrounds and experiences than I knew prior to the activities of the project so that as an educator, I could respond with understanding and enhanced respect reflecting this back in ways that could be identity affirming. The youths demonstrated identity affirmation in different ways, such as through smiles and excited facial expressions (e.g., Ertugrul and Ali, both emergent Swedish speakers), and by enthusiastically wanting to provide more details orally about their identity texts. For example, Yazan organized a Facetime conversation with his friend; and Narges and Neda stayed after one session to give lengthy details about one of their chosen, confidential topics.

Theme 2: Openness and Willingness to Share Outside Lives in the Classroom in Ways That are Identity Affirming. The second theme is further related to identity affirmation and addresses the participants' willingness to bring their outside lives and stories into the classroom, some deeply personal, using their translanguaging/semiotic practices identified in the first theme. Using various modes, every youth for one or both of the units included in their identity text something about their family, friend, or an after school activity that expanded their identity and as noted in the first theme, provided me with previously unknown details. This theme highlights the importance for educators to know about the rich hitherto unknown identities of youth language learners to inform and where appropriate, individualize their instruction design and practices. Ella (Unit 1) revealed that she listened to Western pop music, and shared a

music video of her favorite song that represented teen angst, unrequited love, and that everything was going to be okay. The song revealed Ella as a young woman, keen to engage with cultures in addition to her own, who was optimistic and resilient. Nai (Unit 1), shared through a music video about Palestinian resistance, filmed in Sweden and with Swedish lyrics, that her ancestral heritage was Palestinian and not Syrian (though she was born in Syria and seen as Syrian in school). The video was a powerful activist call to action and provided a glimpse of Nai as politically engaged, proud of her heritage, and wanting to let me and my colleagues know that Palestine is an important part of her background. Narges (Unit 2) shared details about a visit from a special friend with images of them and her taken at her favorite location in the town where Stjärna Upper Secondary School is located. After one of the research sessions, Narges and Neda sat with me for approximately 20 minutes to discuss this friend. Narges had been very private about her friendship and the text represented the identity of a more independent, mature, and adventurous youth than I had understood, and also of a young woman who was thinking carefully about her future and her imagined identities.

Yazan (Unit 1) wrote texts in Swedish and English, shared two videos and arranged a Facetime meeting with his dear boyhood friend from Syria. I learned a lot about Yazan that was completely unknown to me during the two years I had seen him in class. During class times, Yazan was typically on his mobile phone or talking to his friends and seemingly uninterested in school. Mostly I knew that he had a brother in Sweden and he liked cars. However, Unit 1 revealed that Yazan had a happy, peaceful childhood with deep affections for his friend who had shared part of Yazan's migration journey to Sweden stopping in Turkey. Yazan was laser-focused and prolific in creating his identity text. He not only shared details about his dear friend, but also about attending school in Syria and much about his friend's YouTube channel operating

from Turkey. He was excited for me to meet his friend through Facetime and acted as a proud translator between them speaking Arabic and to me in Swedish. He showed that, similar to youth globally, he was focused on numbers of likes and subscribers on his friend's Youtube channel, and boasted about the potential for more of each that his savvy friend could accumulate. During our conversation Yazan said:

Så han har börjat hans första video, ah det var inte så bra första gång men hade började och det blir bra och bra och bra, och efter ett år han har tio tusen subscribe. [So he began his first video, ah and it wasn't so good the first time but it became good and good and good, and after one year he had ten thousand scribes [subscribers].

I responded excitedly and extended the conversation, saying, “Wow! Är dem alla från Turkiet eller? Syrien eller? [Wow! Are they all from Turkey or? and Syrian or?]. To which Yazan with a big smile responded, “Turkiet o Syrien o Saudi Arabia o Iraq—alla arabiska länder. [Turkey and Syria and Saudi Arabia and Iraq—all Arabic countries.]

Ali, Ertugrul, and Neda provided more examples. Ali (Unit 2) wrote text in Swedish and English accompanied by three pictures of the gym where he played basketball on a community team (see Figure 5.2). The images included the outside of the gym, inside of the gym, and Ali shooting a basket.

Figure 5.2 Ali Unit 2 Sharing Out-of-School Lives—Community Basketball



Basket

Jag spela basket för två månader. Jag spela för jag älskar basket och jag vill spela basket med studier. Jag kan spela så mick. Jag började spela i Sverige för två månader sedan, jag spelar två gånger i veckan, måndag och onsdag, men jag har älskat basket för en tid sedan, men jag hade ingen chans att spela, man nu jag kan spela och jag är glad. Jag spela i ett basketlag där det finns svenskar och arabiska människor. Jag spelar basket i en stor och vacker hall...nära hemma. Jag vill slutföra min träning och bli basketbollspelare och slutföra mina studier.

I play basketball for two months. I play because I love basketball and I want to play basketball with studies. I can play so mick [much]. I started playing in Sweden two months ago, I play twice a week, Monday and Wednesday, but I have loved basketball a while ago, but I had no chance to play, man [but] now I can play and I am happy. I play in a basketball team where there are Swedes and Arab people. I play basketball in a large and beautiful hall... close to home. I want to complete my training and become a basketball player and complete my studies.

Ali was pleased to tell me that he played on a team regularly and loved basketball, showing that he considered himself an athlete, team member, played with Swedes and Arabs and was therefore integrated into Sweden's youth community. His work also gave the impression that he's consistent, reliable, and that he shows up. I encouraged his continued playing, saying, "That's wonderful, Ali!" to which he responded with a big smile. My animated gestures and facial expressions, not my expressed words, appeared identity affirming for Ali. Ali worked hard on both his Swedish and English competencies throughout the two units in the project.

Ertugrul (Unit 2) chose to write about his birthday. Notably, Ertugrul had difficulty expressing himself orally due to a significant stutter (mentioned earlier) that contributed to him almost always being silent in class, so the use of images and text to illustrate his own deep feelings was particularly revealing. Though his birthday was the focus of his work, Ertugrul included a picture of him and his younger sister on a bridge in Turkey during their trans-migration journey. This was another indication, the same as Unit 1 when Ertugrul translated a song from Turkish, that he may identify more as being from Turkey than Syria—although he was Syrian-born and considered to be Syrian in school and by other Swedish systems (e.g., migration). He had migrated as a young child and spent years in Turkey before moving to Sweden. In addition, the text about his birthday revealed a profound understanding of the passage of time, an appreciation of his family, particularly his mother, and a thankfulness that he was able to celebrate and live in peace. Ertugrul’s (Unit 2) images and text are shown in Figure 5.3.

Figure 5.3 Ertugrul Unit 2 Sharing Out-of-School Lives—His Birthday

A lot of feelings sweep me in my birthday, on this day I came to the world and left the womb of my mother who was my little world, and I came to the bigger world, which is the noisy world full of everything, full of laughter, crying, joy, sadness, goodness and evil, so my birthday occasion makes me happy because it occupies me A little bit about paying attention to my problems and my concerns, so I am interested in burning candles for the number of years of my life in order to remember every passing time in them, so I love my birthday.



Despite all the events that happen, I feel a strange joy and I am watching the day when I will celebrate this day, even if the celebration between me and myself is limited, so I mean that I was born on this day and this alone is enough to make me feel that a big change has happened to my family, so whoever What is certain is that they were waiting impatiently for my birthday, especially my mom and dad, and I see this passion in their eyes to this day, even though I am older and older.



Every time I invite my friends to share my moment of extinguishing the candles, and enjoy with them as my life increases another year, and I move to a new age and new hopes, and although my years of life diminish whenever I blow out a candle, I believe in the beauty of the moment I live in, and I spend a beautiful time in Preparing to celebrate my birthday, every year I invite my friends and share with them and my family, and the most beautiful thing is that I receive a lot of gifts on this occasion, which tells my mother every time how long was the day that I was born so beautiful.



One of the most beautiful gifts that rejoices me in every memory that passes for this occasion is that it passes on me and I am in good health, with a calm mind, and this is the most beautiful gift from God Almighty, and it is also the most beautiful gift that I celebrate

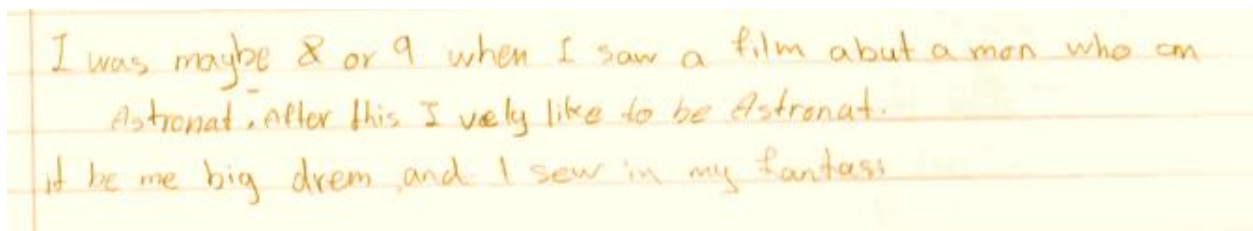
the memory of Christmas and all of them with a thousand goodness, especially my mother and father, there is no beauty for that The moment is only by their presence, because they are the basis of this celebration and the beautiful secret of this day, because I am the reason that made me come to this world.



On this day that I pass through all the beautiful memories that I spent on all my past birthdays, I can only hope for all the good, joy and pleasure for me and all those who love me from my family and friends, and that my birthday remains bright, enlightening with their presence and their wonderful gifts that bring pleasure to my heart in all Once, however old I was, I always felt the joy of my childhood as my birthday passed.

Neda (Unit 2) who wrote a small text in English telling about her dream of becoming an astronaut when she was a young girl living in Iran (see Figure 5.4).

Figure 5.4 Neda Unit 2 Sharing Out-of-School Lives—Past Dream for the Future



Neda showed through her text that she was not just a quiet girl in school who mostly kept to herself, but had dreams when she was younger, was courageous and curious, a risk-taker, and not restricted by gender norms in Iran. Neda and I conversed one-on-one about her dream of

being an astronaut for approximately 10 minutes. I was able to ask her questions (mostly in Swedish), such as whether this was still a dream for her future. However, perhaps because of her uncertain residency status she did not want me to record the conversation and said for now that she just wanted to get through school. Nevertheless, Neda sharing her past dream for her future gave me an opportunity to acknowledge her as a brave young woman, to which she smiled as a sign of identity affirmation.

Theme 3: Investment in Language and Literacies Development. The third theme is deeply interwoven with the first two themes regarding identity affirmation which were affordances of using their full communicative repertoires and their openness and willingness to bridge and share their everyday out-of-school literacies and lives inside the classroom. The third theme shows that through their actions and words the youth were likely strongly invested in the translanguaging/semiotic activities.

Indicators of the youths' investment were displayed in several ways. As mentioned previously, all of the participants except for Neda worked on their lesson units at home, outside of the scheduled research sessions and without prompting from me. Evidence of this can be seen in the amount of work they accomplished as illustrated in the examples of texts in the first two themes that was beyond what was possible for these youths in the scheduled allotted class time. In addition, as previously noted, Ella and Nai were motivated to complete an extra unit when they had the option of returning to the regular LIP English class because they completed the two assigned units before the end of the scheduled research. Ali worked outside of class throughout the project, finding images and writing texts so that he brought his nearly finished texts to the classes to use the class time for discussion and my feedback. Ella, Ertugrul, Nai, Narges, and Yazan similarly took images, searched for videos and wrote texts on their own time to bring to

the classroom activities. Ertugrul (Unit 1) stayed to work after one class until he needed to move on to his next commitment. Neda and Narges also stayed after a session for approximately twenty minutes for a confidential discussion around their projects. In addition, during the sessions while deciding on topics the youths discussed ideas and instructions with me and their peers in Swedish, English, Dari and Arabic and asked me or Mahdi, if present, for clarification that pertained only to their assignments. That is, they were not distracted beyond their tasks and were notably focused.

The exit interviews also provided insights into the participants' investment. As mentioned in the above themes, for Ertugrul and Yazan, this project was the first time I had seen them fully engaged in any classroom activities. In the exit interview, as was the norm for Ertugrul, he said few words, however through an Arabic translator he did say, "It [the project] was fun." Yazan during the exit interview, in Swedish and English, said:

fun that we wrote about my friend, and that you spoke with him, that was fun and good . . . fun that I had the chance to write about my life, what I have done, how I came to Sweden; . . . you can practice English because you want to write about your own life.

It is evident that Yazan found the projects enjoyable and was engaged in these literacy practices, and his words above were arguably a clear statement of being invested in his English language learning.

Ella with an Arabic translator said during the exit interview, "this is the first time that I speak about myself and my childhood and this is something new to me, I like this feeling very much." Her words were an indicator of Ella's emotional and identity investment in her texts. Nai said in her exit interview (Arabic translator), that the project was "way more fun [than the usual English classes]." Narges said, "It's easier to write [when I write about myself]." Notably,

however, Narges and Neda, though focused and invested in this research, worried that they may not have learned enough English and that they relied too heavily on Google Translate. Moreover, they both expressed ambivalent or negative feelings about writing about their own backgrounds and experiences. Narges said, “Sometimes. Sometimes I’m happy if I say good things. Otherwise, it is very difficult for me.” When asked if she liked to write about her background, Neda simply replied, “No.”

It is also important to consider that the youths’ investment may have been impacted by reasons more than identity affirmation. Some possible additional factors that could have positively impacted their investment include: (a) the autonomy to work at their own pace (within the research timeline), (b) the agency to choose a topic that interested and was significantly important to them, (c) the research/project was organized in a setting for more advanced learning (i.e, the adult education building) , and (d) the project was led by me who they knew from past experience would support their efforts. Overall, during the translanguaging project and in the exit interviews the youths seemingly expressed pride in their texts, possibly regardless of whatever external identity affirmation or positive feedback they might receive from me or their classmates. However, the identity affirmation and positive feedback certainly appeared to have enhanced or reinforced their self-confidence.

The next theme continues to illuminate the youths’ investment in learning and highlights their ambivalence and some dilemmatic perspectives about translanguaging/semiotic practices.

Theme 4: Youths’ Investment in Learning Alongside Dilemmatic Perspectives on Using Translanguaging. Although the participants demonstrated investment in and were enthusiastic about the translanguaging/semiotic approach taken to complete the units, in the exit interviews they also expressed a dilemmatic view regarding effective literacy pedagogies. In

general, they valued both traditional, monoglossic language and literacies pedagogies that were commonly didactic and translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies that used a sociocultural pedagogical approach.

Value in Traditional Practices. Some youths described traditional, dialectic, monoglossic teaching methods in the classroom as “boring,” as Mahdi had mentioned in the teacher focus groups reported previously in Chapter 4. Nai for example, said that “the traditional way in books and grammar is not good...it’s kind of boring.” Yazan stated, “sitting in [traditional instructional] class is boring, feels negative. However, these youths and the others nevertheless perceived value in didactic, traditional language and literacies pedagogies. For example, Neda perceived learning grammar as important although at the same time, she stressed that grammar must be put into context with the teacher’s feedback and instruction. Neda said:

With grammar, one learns it but then can’t use it, so one doesn’t know how to use it, and when we want to write something we forget. But when you write, and then it’s corrected, one understands ok, [when teacher instructed] it goes like this.

Narges valued learning vocabulary and grammar but also emphasized the importance of having a teacher to provide direct instruction, saying, “When we work with words and grammar it’s also better but we need teacher...it doesn’t matter big group or little group but we need teacher.” Nai stated that while she liked the project work that drew on translanguaging competences, she would have liked [me] the teacher to be more like a “teacher” and “to read the projects and put marks [corrections] on them.” Nai explained she preferred when her grammar was corrected and as mentioned, she was not alone in seeking and valuing being taught and corrected in her aim to learn standard Swedish and English.

Value in Translanguaging/Semiotic Pedagogies. However, clearly the youths valued not only traditional, didactic pedagogies related to grammar and textbooks, but also perceived sociocultural, translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies as very useful and so as noted in the third theme, they were invested in this learning. For example, as previously mentioned when Neda wrote in her workbook in a mix of Swedish and English after one of the project lessons, “Today was very good we kommer på många [figured out many] app för [for] English learning, we diskussion abut appar [had a discussion about the apps],” she was clearly showing investment. As also noted in the third theme presentation, several of the youths were pleased to have the opportunity to discuss and write freely and authentically about their interests, backgrounds, and experiences. They reported learning this way was “fun” and “motivated” them. Ella reported that when she finished the first unit of study she was motivated to do the second unit. Yazan said during the exit interview using Swedish and English:

I liked this för att [because] vi jobb [we worked] together, o det är roligt att man skriv om sig själv eller om min kompis så jag I liked so much att jag kan skriv om min kompis...det var jätte roligt och bra [I can write about my friend...it was really fun and good].

Narges explained that she valued learning using a non-traditional textbook method such as using apps and watching YouTube. She stated, “it was very good and great because we were listening to different clips, and then read different words, meanings, it was good.” Ali explained that he found dual language texts useful and explained, “I read it first in English, I understood some things, then I read it again in Arabic to understand more,” and he invested in this way of learning and found it helpful.

Uncertainty About Mother Tongue Use and Support in Class. Despite valuing translanguaging/semiotic practices, it was noted that translanguaging was dilemmatic for several of the youths. This dilemma may have been precipitated by the perception held by the youths and reported by their teachers in Chapters 3 and 4, that education assumed a monoglossic ideology for the youth from refugee backgrounds regarding fixed named languages and language hierarchies, reinforced by the high-stakes requirement to pass national language exams. The youths reported that they regretted translanguaging in class as a way to support subject-area language learning, either via support from the multilingual classroom assistants or from using Google Translate. Ali said:

It has both negative and positive things to have Arabic help, a native language helps inside the classroom...on the one hand, if there's a native speaker helping you, you would depend on him or her all the time, you wouldn't depend on yourself. On the other hand if there is something you are not getting, not understanding you would need that help so, you use that help at that time. (Translated from Arabic.)

Ertugrul preferred the language (being taught in class) without Arabic. "If there's someone to help and translate you would speak in the mother tongue, but if there's no one there, first you make mistakes and then you learn" (translated from Arabic). Narges agreed, "it is better not to have [the multilingual classroom assistant in class] and you only speak Swedish and English] not Dari because [the multilingual classroom assistant] is very kind and helps us a lot but we need to learn without he." The general sense is that they would prefer not to use the mother tongue although simultaneously they valued its use.

For many students learning grammar using monoglossic didactic approaches held value but value was also held by sociocultural translanguaging/semiotic approaches that built on their

background knowledge and interests, were more democratic, and provided options to draw from their full linguistic repertoires. Several students concluded that a combination of both pedagogies would be most effective for language learning. Examples were Ali and Nai who gave their perceptions of best practices for learning language in the classroom. Ali said what would be perfect would be both ways together. “You have a book, you have exercises, and then you have a project and to write a text like these [trans-linguistic/semiotic] projects” (translated from Arabic). Nai also felt it was better to have both literacy pedagogies in the classroom, as she “liked it when we were doing something not 100% traditional, you [Michelle] were putting scan on the board and you always ask them to extract verbs and adjectives and something like that.” She added, “it would be very good if we combined that method [traditional focus on form]...then...comes to this [trans-linguaging/semiotic] project, and we apply what’s been learned to make a foundation there and apply it here” (translated from Arabic).

Discussion

The Language Introduction Program provides transitional education for newly arrived youth to Sweden, predominantly focusing on Swedish language learning and in the LIP at Stjärna Upper Secondary, other subject-area content required for graduation to mainstream academic or vocational programs. Research question 3 sought to address the question: What is the potential of translanguaging/semiotic pedagogies to draw on the everyday literacies and experiences of youth from refugee backgrounds in a Language Introduction Program in a Swedish upper secondary school for identity affirmation and investment in language and literacies learning?

A Translanguaging/Semiotic Pedagogy. This study adopts the views of the Crosslinguistic Translanguaging Theory (CTT) that permeable boundaries exist between

languages that are “conceptually distinct” and are spoken by bi/multilinguals and, importantly, that languages crisscross and interrelate in active ways in the “cognitive and linguistic functioning of the individual” (Cummins, 2021, p. 264). In addition, similar to Unitary Translanguaging Theory (UTT), CTT views translanguaging pedagogy that values and draws on the learner’s complete linguistic repertoire in ways to encourage the transfer of concepts and linguistics across languages and also to promote social justice and equity in education (Cummins, 2021).

As reported, I encouraged the use of all languages including English, Swedish, Dari, and Arabic in written and oral forms, and other non-linguistic modes of meaning-making, to draw on the everyday literacies and outside lives of the youth participants in order to explore the impact on their identities and investment in language and literacies learning. Underlying the implementation of the overall translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy, several elements contributed to the achievement of the participants’ identity texts and other outcomes and are discussed next.

Democracy and Flexible Teaching Practices. At the outset of implementing the translanguaging/semiotic approach, I sought to establish interactions between the participants and me that oriented toward a “collaborative creation of power” (Cummins & Early, 2011, p. 25). My intent was to empower the youths to feel confident that they had a safe and respectful space in which to participate in the translanguaging/ semiotic project where their ideas and communicative competencies would be acknowledged and respected, and they could have the possibility to represent known and new aspects of their identity. I wanted my role to be one of communicating the goals of the identity text units (i.e., English language and literacy) and providing direction, but also of creating the conditions in the classroom that would allow the participants to shine, have autonomy in learning and make the best use of their linguistic and

other modal resources. In short, I sought to create an environment that enabled the youths' to feel successful.

After ensuring the youths understood that the research was focused on LIP English language and literacy learning and that they were able to use all languages and multiple modes to complete the units, I felt it was important to communicate a flexible approach. Though they both wanted and needed direction to begin their assignments, I chose not to be rigid about the youths following precisely the instructions I had drafted for each unit in the project (see Appendix B) as that might in some way diminish their enthusiasm by seeming too complicated or demanding. Neither did I follow my original plan to have each participant present their work to the group as a whole. I sensed they expected to try something new and different with me and the research, and I wanted them to guide their own creations within the framework of English language and literacy learning. The instructions and examples for each of the units, a film clip, a song, and examples posted in the school foyer from the mainstream project, were therefore treated as loose guidelines. Ultimately, the youths chose whatever topic and whichever linguistic or semiotic mode of meaning-making they wanted and presented their finished work to me one-on-one. My only insistence was that they attempt written and/or spoken English at some point in the process which they all did.

Identity Affirmation and Investment. The trusting relationship and the collaborative power orientation along with flexibility in the process gave the participants space to share information, and established a strong context for the creation of identity texts and negotiation of identities (Cummins & Early, 2011). Drawing on Cummins' (2001) Academic Expertise Framework, unconstrained by the limits of correctness of syntax for languages, or by academic topics unfamiliar or uninteresting to them, the youths could focus on language use and multiple

modes to produce identity texts using content that was comprehensible for them. They were able to show themselves as vibrant, resilient, and skillful human beings with unique interests and backgrounds, who appeared to thrive during the research, and demonstrated immense pride when presenting their work.

The youth participants' identity texts provided an artifact to which I could respond positively. My encouraging feedback likely added to their sense of accomplishment and affirmed their identities as more than refugees or asylum-seekers who were trying to exit the LIP. Notably, all the youths despite the challenges, disruptions, and perhaps discriminations that may have occurred in their pre-, trans-, and currently, in their post-migration ecologies chose topics and modes that identified them as ordinary teenagers. For example, the songs chosen by Ertugrul and Ella (both Unit 1) were about unrequited love, feelings common among teenagers. Yazan was focused on likes, subscribers and his friend becoming a successful YouTuber, another common topic for young people. Ali wanted to promote his love and skill for basketball with a community team by engaging in an extracurricular sport like other youth. Neda expressed a love and curiosity for science fiction choosing the *Waterworld* movie to write about (Unit 1), her dream to be an astronaut (Unit 2), similar to other youth who might pursue mainstream STEM studies. These were the topics that presumably gave depth and meaning to their lives, and are typical in the lives of teenage youth.

The ability to choose their topics and use all of their languages plus images and videos appeared to empower and give confidence to the youth, who demonstrated investment in their learning and activities throughout the research process. They chose and presented their topics with enthusiasm, asked ongoing questions to clarify and suggest ideas, and worked to complete their texts both during the research sessions and outside of the classroom of their own volition. A

number of additional factors may have contributed to their investment, such as my already-established relationship with them, a feeling of being special and mature doing activities apart from the regular LIP English conducted in a classroom typically used for adult education. However, the translanguaging/semiotic approach clearly had a positive impact and was expressly viewed by several of the youth during the exit interviews as “fun” and “less boring,” “lik[ing] the feeling of sharing their own lives and experiences,” and that it was “easier to learn English because you’re writing about your own life.”

However, although I was able to create space for the translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy to be implemented, enabling the creation of identity texts that promoted identity affirmation and investment, translanguaging in this context did not address critical literacy or social justice, also important aspects of translanguaging (Cummins, 2021; García, 2009; Flores, 2014). The research period was too short to allow for deeper focus on language meaning and language awareness. With more time for example, Nai could have built on the topic she chose for her identity text in Unit 1 (i.e., the Palestinian flag and music video) and developed an even deeper understanding of the Israel-Palestinian issues that she could communicate in English or Swedish. Gathering increasing English or Swedish language awareness at the same time, Nai would eventually be provided with relevant language to go forth in social situations and state her arguments in multiple languages. In other words, given more time additional topics could be explored and critiqued, or built on from the identity texts in this study, using increasingly complex language. The youth would eventually gain greater understandings about their broad social interests and value positions in relation to social issues in Sweden that affect their lives, and would be equipped with appropriate language to speak against injustices if they chose to do so.

Youth Dilemma with Translanguaging and Traditional Pedagogy. Based on their actions and comments in the exit interviews, the youth participants saw value in the translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy. The youths seemed to thrive within the democratic, collaborative power orientation and enjoyed having the opportunity to work independently and choose their topics and modes to express their own interests. As mentioned, some youths said they found the progressive teaching practices “fun” and “less boring” than being in class with traditional pedagogies and also that they “learned a bit more English,” or “a few more words.”

However, several participants were conflicted about the use of a translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy only. Most of the youths also wanted direct instruction from a teacher and the use of grammar workbooks. Narges in particular stressed that “no matter whether taught as a group or individually, we need teacher” of whom they could ask questions and thereby rely less on Google Translate to write texts. Most likely, a teacher providing direct instruction using grammar and other workbooks followed by regular assessments, fit their conceptions of education and learning from their home countries. Ali, Ella, Ertugrul, Nai, Narges, and Neda suggested that a combination of traditional and translanguaging/semiotic practices would be best for language learning. Based on the participants’ comments, it was apparent that a progressive translanguaging pedagogy would allow them to apply the grammar and syntax rules they learned from traditional practices.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

The focus of this exploratory study, to better understand the language and literacies needs and challenges of youth from refugee backgrounds and promising pedagogical responses, was situated within the transitional Language Introduction Program in an upper secondary school in Sweden. Moreover, the research was conducted in the post-migration ecology (Anderson et al., 2004) of youths who entered Sweden in 2015 in extraordinary numbers, mostly from Syria and Afghanistan. The small study included two focus groups sessions with four LIP language teachers to understand their perceptions of the needs and challenges of teaching in the LIP with a view to designing promising pedagogical responses. In addition, the study addressed the dilemmas the educators faced in making pedagogical design decisions that required flexible and fluid languaging practices when teaching to the LIP youths, against the fixed named languages requirements of national tests, LIP age-out limits, and other policy and structural fixities in Sweden's educational and migration systems. With seven LIP youths from the program's English class, the study also explored the affordances of implementing a translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy for identity affirmation and investment in language learning. The youths completed one multilingual/multimodal project in two units (i.e., two identity texts) drawing on their interests, real-world issues and full linguistic and semiotic repertoires to make meaning.

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012) was used for all three research questions. Relative to research question 1, analysis of needs and challenges perceived by the teachers gathered through the focus group discussions, identified three interwoven themes related to pedagogical, structural (legal and organizational), social, and emotional well-being factors. These factors are in keeping with and support the findings of previous studies in Sweden and

Canada (Nilsson & Bunar, 2016; Stewart, 2012). With respect to research question 2, the focus group data were reanalyzed to explore dilemmas faced by the teachers, who identified flexibility in instructional practices according to individual needs as critical, while necessarily having their students successfully meet fixed national education requirements (i.e., curriculum standards and national examinations). Findings showed the educators' dilemmatic thinking relating to: what to teach (i.e., choice of named, standard languages, and/or translanguaging (Cummins, 2021); and choice of syllabus, lessons, and materials); and how to teach, using either progressive/translanguaging or traditional literacies pedagogies (García, 2009; Cummins, 2021); framed within the overarching reasons for why the teachers held their beliefs. From the findings, six points were presented for future considerations by educators, as they navigate and attempt to reconcile seemingly disparate (fluid and fixed) perspectives on named languages, and language teaching and learning in their local contexts.

Regarding research question 3, through a translanguaging/semiotic project that produced two identity texts, the study explored the affordances of such pedagogies for identity affirmation (Norton, 1995) and investment in language and literacies learning (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Findings were supportive of Cummins' (2001) claim that student-teacher interactions, in the contexts of collaborative relations of power can promote identity affirmation. Specifically, positive identities within the youths appeared to foster investment in language and literacies learning that was realized as the youths created identity texts, drawing on their full translanguaging/semiotic repertoires to communicate their interests, issues, and experiences. Moreover from the exit interviews, the youths while they valued the identity-text project work, generally perceived that a combination of progressive, sociocultural, translanguaging/semiotic, and traditional, monolingual pedagogies would best suit their learning needs.

Specifically, four themes emerged, three of them interwoven. The first two themes related to how the youths' identities were affirmed by the identity texts, having been organized in a democratic classroom context. First, encouraged to use all available languages, the participants chose Swedish, English, Dari or Arabic for each oral or written exchange, depending on the interlocutors. In addition, the youths were encouraged to choose from a variety of modes other than linguistic, using digital supports. Unconstrained by language use, and using mostly videos and digital images, each youth was able to make meaning and create identity texts that revealed new, previously unknown information and abilities, adding to the perception of who I (and the teachers) thought they were as individuals. While the first theme pertained to choice of language and mode, the second theme concerned the choice of topic. The youths were invited to create texts about whatever interested them. For Unit 1 I suggested songs, movies, and videos, and for Unit 2, I asked the participants to find four images of a special place, viewing each from a different lens. Ultimately they chose topics ranging from music they enjoyed, dear friendships, and extracurricular activities, to dreams for the future, and generally did not adhere to the four-image instructions for Unit 2. However, their willingness to share about their backgrounds and past experiences added new dimensions to their identities put into light by their choices of translanguaging/semiotic modes. Importantly, choices of translanguaging/semiotic modes and interests were used to create identity texts that gave me an opportunity to affirm their identities and provide positive feedback, which I otherwise would not have been able to do.

The third theme showed that the translanguaging/semiotic project, in affirming their identities, positively impacted the youths' investment in language and literacies learning. Through comments in the exit interviews (e.g., it was "fun," not "boring," "easier to write about your own life"), smiles, time spent, and their ongoing enthusiasm the youth were clearly invested

in the activities. The fourth theme revealed in contrast however, that despite finding value in the translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy, the youths preferred a combination of progressive translanguaging pedagogy with traditional teaching, possibly because of their expectations for education that they brought from their home countries.

The remainder of this final chapter presents the pedagogical implications, the limitations of this study, suggestions for future research, and concluding comments.

Pedagogical Implications

In Chapter 4, several pedagogical implications were presented for future consideration by educators as they navigate their dilemmatic choices to enhance both students' translanguaging repertoires and their control over named languages, which may be required for national exams and the job market. These are represented in summary here:

1. The national Grade 9 examinations in Swedish and English could be broadened to include multilingual assessment in keeping with the goals of Swedish education policy to promote linguistic diversity.
2. Time could be allocated in language teachers' weekly schedules to work collaboratively to design interdisciplinary content-based units that could be taught simultaneously in each of the language classes (i.e., Swedish, English, mother tongue) with multilingual classroom assistant support.
3. Action-research could be conducted, exploring spaces/times where/when named languages are privileged, and different spaces/times where/when students are free to use their entire language repertoire.

4. Inläsningstjänst¹³ materials (i.e., multilingual, online materials across grade levels) could be used by students in class with teacher guidance, rather than outside of class as support material. This would allow teachers to privilege their language of instruction (i.e., Swedish, English, mother tongue), have control over teaching lessons to the class as a whole, while individual students could, at the same time, take advantage of the translanguaging features. Inläsningstjänst use in class might also facilitate more regular use of this resource by youth in their out-of-school literacies and languaging practices.
5. Teachers could organize lessons so that the first lessons of the week or month use teacher-directed practices, focusing on grammar and vocabulary and privileging the language of instruction. The second set of weekly lessons could be implemented using translanguaging pedagogies, including progressive, collaborative lessons and topics, with the aim of applying concepts and vocabulary learned earlier in the week in context.
6. The Swedish as a second language curriculum incorporates the importance of diversity as a resource and multilingualism as individual and societal assets, echoed by Pia as she emphasized the importance of building relationships with the LIP youths, building on what they know to affirm their identities. Using support from multilingual classroom assistants and translanguaging, content in language classes could be regularly scheduled, for example, once weekly, to include lessons that focus on an aspect or aspects of the youths' backgrounds, with output compiled as detailed profiles of the individual learners. Topics for these lessons could include for example, work skills, family histories, school experiences, hobbies, and dreams for the future.

¹³ <https://www.inlasningstjanst.se/>

Some additional implications are presented below.

Understanding Background Knowledge and School Experiences via Relationship

Building. Building on point six above, most of the learners in the LIP were youth from refugee backgrounds with limited or interrupted formal education, and all of them came from backgrounds very different from the Swedish teachers in the program. This is common in LIPs in Sweden. While multilingual classroom assistants can in many instances provide some broad details regarding school systems in their countries of origin, and the mapping exercises potentially offer some insights, the LIP language and content area teachers are in general unable to either pinpoint the levels of knowledge possessed by each of the individual learners, or the youths' prior school experiences, interests and everyday literacies practices--all information that could potentially support academic learning in Sweden. The inability to understand knowledge and school experiences presents a significant challenge even for the most caring and experienced teachers, such as those in this study. Though some of this information could be gained through traditional classroom exercises and activities, the exploration of the identity texts supported the idea that more could be done to make the hidden aspects of the students' lives and literacies more visible. Revealing hidden aspects could be accomplished by both designing more tasks that promote the production of various multimodal identity texts, for example, digital storytelling or arts-based representations of knowledge, and through informal, one-on-one exchanges between the teacher and the student outside the classroom. One clear implication for pedagogy from both Parts 1 and 2 of the present study is the importance of developing a trusting teacher-student relationship in the context of collaborative relations of power (Cummins, 2001, 2021). The development of this relationship as the nano system (Stewart & Martin, 2018) that had been nurtured by me and the students before the research when I was their teacher, probably

contributed significantly to the youths' willingness to share their background stories with me. Without a familiar and positive relationship between teacher and student, it is unlikely that youth from refugee backgrounds will authentically share their passions, interests and experiences, which are so critical for them to invest in languages and literacies learning (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

Flexible Practices. In addition to the difficulty in assessing background knowledge and experiences, and apart from separating the youths loosely into classes according to the initial mapping assessments, the LIP teachers perceived that each youth had a unique profile. That is, levels of knowledge and understanding in subject areas and past school history varied from student to student. Their perception reinforces that educators need to recognize that youth from refugee backgrounds are not a homogeneous population (Shapiro, 2018). Teachers' flexibility and capacity to differentiate learning is paramount when teaching youth from refugee backgrounds. Flexibility may be applied when planning, regarding choice of materials (e.g., traditional workbooks or progressive practices and the balance between pedagogical approaches) and topics, and whether to teach in groups or individually. This flexibility relates to both the "what" and the "how" to teach. Flexibility might also be necessary in the moment of teaching in the classroom. The deeper the understanding of the students' talents, competencies, interests, multiple identities and future aspirations the better equipped teachers will be to differentiate learning.

Translanguaging/Semiotic and Traditional Practices. This exploratory study supports work on the affordances of a translanguaging/semiotic pedagogy for identity affirmation and investment in literacies learning (e.g., Cummins, 2021; Cummins & Early, 2011; Darvin & Norton, 2015). Establishing a collaborative power orientation in the classroom and providing

degrees of autonomy for the youths by allowing them to choose their modes and topics enabled them to create rich identity texts that were perceived by the youths as well as the researcher to be beneficial. Though unable to measure specifically the increase in their investment in language and learning, the pride, time spent, and commitment with which they completed their work in addition to positive comments about the translanguaging/semiotic approach, clearly demonstrated a deep level of investment. Their heartfelt texts used their everyday linguistic and semiotic repertoires to reveal something new about their outside lives that allowed for positive and respectful feedback. The translanguaging/semiotic project, using all available languages and modes of meaning-making, addressed the need to know more about the backgrounds and knowledge held by the LIP youths for effective crosslinguistic transfer, another strong perception of need expressed by the LIP teachers.

However, both the LIP teacher and youth participants acknowledged value and importance in traditional language and literacies teaching practices also. Traditional practices such as direct instruction, workbooks, and assessments were arguably familiar conceptions of education for the LIP teachers from their Swedish teacher training and for the LIP youths based on practices in their countries of origin. This highlights the need for educators to be open to the idea of using a combination of pedagogical practices when teaching to youth from refugee backgrounds that respects the learner's possible expectations of education (i.e., traditional practices), while simultaneously valuing the linguistic/semiotic repertoires, and background knowledge and experiences the multilingual learners bring to the classroom.

Strong Leadership. Researchers for refugee background education highlight the importance of strong leadership in the schools (e.g., Anderson et al. 2004; Cummins, 2021; Mc Brien, 2005; Stewart & Martin, 2018; Taylor & Sidhu, 2012). At Stjärna Upper Secondary

School, the principal was a critical advocate for the Language Introduction Program, the LIP teachers, and the LIP students. As was reported in the findings from the focus group interviews (Chapter 3), based on listening to the needs and experiences of the LIP teachers, his championing at the community decision-making level ensured that the LIP teachers were afforded the materials and personnel that they needed to support successful outcomes in the program. Particularly important examples included hiring a counsellor dedicated to knowing changing migration and school board rules, and to act as the liaison between the students, teachers, administration, and within the wider community (e.g., the Skolverket and Migrationsverket). As reported by the educators, the guidance counsellor significantly reduced the stress and volume of questions that LIP students had previously directed toward the teachers, allowing the teachers to focus on their daily practices. In addition, the principal ensured there were enough multilingual classroom assistants on staff in the main languages held by the LIP learners to provide language support in the subject-area classrooms.

Overall, the principal was deeply committed to the success of the LIP students, and compassionate about the high stakes for those who did not have residency status. Though outside the frame of this study the principal's strong leadership, dedication and commitment extended to the teachers in the classroom, and established the strong foundational relationships within which the interactions between LIP teachers, youth, and the administration occurred. This study supports and reinforces the previous research (referenced above) on the importance of strong school leadership.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by the small number of participants of both LIP teachers and youth. As a strong and compassionate leader and an important liaison with the broader education

system in the community, the school administrator's perspectives would have strengthened the findings. In addition, the inclusion of all subject-area teachers in the LIP would have given greater breadth to the discussion of needs and challenges and promising practices. Finally, a larger sample of youth, including those who part of the group granted an extra year in the LIP (to study Swedish and math only) but were still in the school, would have contributed to the findings. These youths could have been interviewed in a focus group to gather their perceptions of what had been their needs and challenges in the LIP, and what they perceived to be effective pedagogies and learning strategies for their successful exit from the LIP. Their perceptions, although possibly limited, of using translanguaging/semiotic practices to enhance learning and to affirm identities and impact investment, and the extent to which they use translanguaging in their content area courses and outside of the classroom, would have been a rich source of data.

The research was also limited by time factors. Given that the research was required to take place during regular school hours to accommodate the after-school bus schedule, the complexity of scheduling meant that it was realistic to include only one LIP class as participants. Finally, the window of research was limited to six weeks only and one project (two units).

Future Research

This small study highlighted several possibilities for further research with newcomer, youth from refugee backgrounds with limited or interrupted formal education, who are in the process of learning the language of their host country. Further, the youth are being instructed in a language different from their language spoken at home, and are transitioning to mainstream education as part of successful integration. Cummins (2021) provides an annotated list of translanguaging/crosslinguistic and identity text initiatives that were conducted across global contexts from 2000 to 2020, including useful resources and examples with newcomer youth (p.

357). A number of these studies could be replicated in different contexts. Future research ideas focus on identity affirmation, investment in learning language and literacies, and equity in education. Some ideas to be researched include:

1. Implement a translanguaging/semiotic approach and identity texts, extending the research period to allow for topics to move from the more personal background experiences and knowledge of the youth from refugee backgrounds themselves, to address broader social issues, particularly related to social justice, in order to increase their understanding and awareness regarding issues that affect them. Over time, as the topics become more complex, with practice and increasing competence, the youth could establish their positions on the issues, and learn how to critique to make their voices heard in society as an example of successful transformative education. The identity texts could be displayed to maximize identity affirmation (see, for example, Cummins, 2021, pp. 361–362) and explore the issue of audience in identity affirmation.
2. Implement a schedule of pedagogies that alternates between traditional and translanguaging/semiotic teaching practices to explore the impact on language progression. The findings of our study revealed that the LIP teachers and youths valued a combination of approaches. For example, one week could focus on grammar and syntax of the target language, using workbooks and other materials. The following week could use progressive teaching practices to apply the concepts from the previous week in a context/topics that are meaningful to the youth.
3. Alternatively, a content-based unit of identity-text work could be designed to be implemented over an extended period of time, that addressed content objectives and

language objectives. Explicit instructional attention could be designed, as per Cummins' (2001) Academic Expertise Framework, with a focus on language form at the experiential, literal, personal, critical, and transformational levels; a focus on use to give rise to new knowledge and ability to create literature; and a focus on meaning to develop critical literacy and become involved in issues of social justice important in their lives.

4. Identify a skill unique to each research participant, especially for youths with SLIFE who may have work experience in their backgrounds. Based on the skill, develop a series of questions for each student that embeds the skill in different subject-area topics in collaboration with subject-area teachers. For example, for a youth who has sewing or tailoring abilities, ask the youth a series of simple questions they will have to research related to math (e.g., measuring, shapes), and science (e.g., how was the fabric constructed and dyed), and social science (e.g., where did the fabric come from, how was it transported). Use translinguaging/semiotic, multimodal and traditional practices to complete the research.

Final Remarks

During the time of this research in 2019, the Swedish education system including the upper secondary schools' transitional Language Introduction Programs, continued to be impacted by the large population of children and youth who had come to Sweden due to forced migration in 2015. In Stjärna Upper Secondary School, the site of this study, expert, dedicated and compassionate educators and the youth from refugee backgrounds were significantly challenged to meet the curriculum and age-out requirements of the LIP. This small study sought ways to support language and literacies teaching and learning through focus group and

translanguaging/semiotic, identity text initiatives. The study identified needs and challenges and promoted identity affirmation and investment in learning within the fixed realities of national tests and other influential variables in Sweden's broad education and migration systems.

Similar to Cummins (2014) comments about the Canadian context, Swedish education policy recognizes the importance of understanding the background experiences of youth from refugee backgrounds and of responding judiciously, provided through legislated language support structures for newcomer youth. However, gaps in academic achievement persist between mainstream youth and multilingual, Swedish language learners. The 2015 influx of foreign-born youth provided an opportunity to review Sweden's education system as the youth from refugee backgrounds participated in their post-migration environment and resettlement. Now in 2022, another influx of children and youth from forced migration is entering Sweden from the Ukraine. Although the circumstances and population characteristics of the Ukrainian-born youth are significantly different from the youth migrant population of 2015, hopefully some of the lessons learned from 2015 can be applied and tailored to meet the language and literacy needs of this new population of youth from refugee backgrounds.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Focus Group Questions for LIP Teacher Participants

1. Beliefs

- a) Some youth from refugee backgrounds adapt well to their new school. What characteristics and/or strategies do you think enable these students to successfully adapt?
- b) Some youth from refugee backgrounds struggle to adapt to their new school. What do you think these students struggle with?
- c) What are the language and literacy learning needs of youth from refugee backgrounds? Are there particular learning needs in the content areas?

2. Assessment and instructional strategies

- a) How do you identify the kinds of support youth from refugee backgrounds may need?
- b) How do you accommodate for and/or address the needs of students who may have had limited prior schooling?

3. Engagement in the classroom

- a) What is your general approach to teaching?
- b) Please name any texts, resources, or equipment that you use and indicate which class you use these for.
- c) What kinds of literacy activities do you do in your classes?
- d) How much time do you devote to language instruction? Direct instruction? Vocabulary? Knowledge building?

Appendix B: Translanguaging/Semiotic Pedagogy - Instructions for Units 1 and 2

Unit 1

1. Choose a song, a video, a picture, or a text that you like. The song, video, picture or text can be in your own language or in English. You can choose just a part of a song, a video, picture or a text. The song or video can be about 15 seconds long.

OR

You can make your own song, video or text. It will probably be easiest to use your phone to record a song or video, or take a picture. The song, video, picture or text can be in your own language or in English. You can make it about anything that interests you. The song or video can be about 15 seconds long, and the text can be one page in your workbook (double-spaced).

Then:

2. Use the computer and apps to help you make a list of English words and phrases that you can use to describe the song, video, picture or text. Some of the accounts that can help you are listed above but you can use other websites and apps if you want. Please also write a list of the websites and apps that you use.

3. Answer the questions: What is your song, video, picture, or text about? Why do you like it?

Example

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KqEZUW9TC0> (original movie video no longer available)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMAhVpgzmRU> (trailer)

Question 1: What is the movie about?

Example answer: The name of this movie is The Parent Trap. It is about identical twin girls, named Annie and Haley, and their parents. Their parents divorced when the twins were babies. The Dad lived in California with one of the twins, and the Mom lived in England with the other twin. The twins met for the first time at summer camp. After they met, they tricked their parents and switched who they lived with.

Question 2: Why did you like the movie?

Example answer: I like this movie because it is a funny and a happy story. In the end, the parents get married again so it is also a love story. I also like this movie because I watched it with my children when they were young.

Unit 2 – Who am I? or What is something special about me?

Take 4 pictures of one thing in your life that is meaningful to you. For example, 4 pictures from your life in Sweden, or pictures from your homeland, or pictures that show what you like to do in your spare time, or pictures about your dreams for the future, or pictures of something that you love.

The 4 pictures should be about the same topic. One picture shows a place, one picture shows a person in that place, one picture shows something happening in that place, and one picture gives a feeling of that place.

Write a text that describes the pictures and why you chose this topic including how this topic makes you feel.

Send the pictures and the text to Michelle. She will print them out and put them on a large sheet of paper. Then she will hang the paper on the wall and record your voice while you are reading the text.

This project is similar to the pictures that are on the wall in the foyer. Please look at these pictures to see how the project will look. The instructions are translated in Arabic:

المشروع 2 – التعليمات

السؤال هو "من أنا؟" أو "ما هو الشيء المميز بي؟"

التقط 4 صور لشيء واحد يعني لك الكثير في حياتك. عل سبيل المثال، 4 صور من حياتك في السويد أو 4 صور من حياتك في بلدك الأصلي أو صور تظهر فيها الأشياء التي تحب أن تقوم بها في أوقات فراغك، أو صور عن حلمك بالمستقبل، أو أربع صور عن شيء تحبه.

الأربع صور يجب أن تكون عن نفس الموضوع. الصورة الأولى يظهر فيها المكان، الصورة الثانية يظهر فيها شخص في ذلك المكان، وصورة تظهر شيئاً ما يحدث في ذلك المكان و صورة أخيرة تعطي شعوراً معيناً لذلك المكان.

اكتب نصاً يصف الصور الأربعة ويبيّن لماذا اخترت هذا الموضوع و اكتب ايضاً كيف يجعلك هذا الموضوع تشعر.

أرسل الصور و النص لميشيل. ستقوم بطباعتهم و وضعهم على ورقة كبيرة جداً. ثم ستقوم بتعليق الورقة على الجدار وتسجل صوتكم عندما تقرأون النص.

هذا المشروع هو مشابه للصور التي على الجدار في المدخل. من فضلك ألقوا نظرة على تلك الصور لتشاهدوا كيف سيكون مشروعنا في النهاية.

Appendix C: Exit Interview Questions for LIP Youth Participants

What did you like about doing this [multiliteracies/translanguaging] project?

What did you not like about this project?

When you were working on and completed the project, did you feel more motivated to learn the English language?

Was it interesting to apply what you have learned in class to your writing for this project?

Do you feel it's better to learn English when you talk about your own life?

Do you feel that it's better to have Arabic (or Dari) for language support?