Karolina Larsson*, Polly Björk-Willén, Katarina Haraldsson and Kristina Hansson

Children's use of English as lingua franca in Swedish preschools

https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2022-0062
Received June 1, 2022; accepted September 2, 2022; published online September 26, 2022

Abstract: This paper highlights a current phenomenon reported from preschools placed in multilingual areas in Sweden, namely that some preschoolers with mutually different language backgrounds sometimes use English as lingua franca instead of Swedish during play. The data stems from a study of language environments in Swedish preschools situated in both monolingual and multilingual areas. The analyses reveal that many children are influenced by the English language in both areas, but to a much greater extent in multilingual areas. An interesting situation arises when the majority language of society, which is also the language of education and lingua franca of the preschool, acquires a less prevailing role in children's accomplishment of everyday practices. Data show that the participating children are exposed to and speak English to a varying extent. They learn and teach each other English, and speak English in an array of pragmatic purposes; to position themselves in the social hierarchies of the preschool group, to create meaning within their shared peer culture and for the purpose of exclusion of intruders. English is also used as a secret language of friendship.

Keywords: English; lingua franca; multilingualism; preschool; secret language

***Corresponding author: Karolina Larsson**, Department of Clinical Sciences, University of Lund, Lund, Sweden; and Department of Research and Development Within Education, Halmstad Municipality, Nässjögatan 6 SE – 302 48 Halmstad, Sweden,
E-mail: karolina.larsson@halmstad.se. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0170-7409
Polly Björk-Willén, Department of Research and Development Within Education, Halmstad Municipality, Halmstad, Sweden
Katarina Haraldsson, Department of Research and Development Within Education, Halmstad Municipality, Halmstad, Sweden; and School of Public Health and Community Medicine, Institute of Medicine, University of Gothenburg, Gothenburg, Sweden
Kristina Hansson, Department of Clinical Sciences, University of Lund, Lund, Sweden

1 Background

The topic of this paper is a current phenomenon reported from preschools in multilingual areas in Sweden, namely that some preschoolers with mutually different language backgrounds sometimes use English as lingua franca instead of Swedish during play.

1.1 Linguistic diversity and language policy in Sweden

Reliable data on the number of languages spoken in Sweden is hard to obtain since there are no official statistics. Despite the common view that Sweden is a monolingual country, the linguistic diversity is rich (Parkvall 2015). Data from Statistics Sweden (SCB 2022) show that over two million people (out of a total of approximately ten million people) from 206 different countries lived in Sweden in 2020. This diversity is visible in preschools located in multicultural areas, where as many different languages can be spoken as the number of children in the group.

Language policy can be defined as the sum of linguistic practices, ideologies, norms, values, attitudes and language management (Shomamy 2006; Spolsky 2004). The rights of minority language speakers have been strengthened during the past fifty years in Sweden. A state investigation (SOU 2002:27) followed by two propositions (Swedish Parliament 2005, 2009) formed a base for the Swedish Language Act issued in 2009, which establishes rights for Sweden's five national minority groups to learn, develop and use their languages, and for other minority groups to develop and use their languages (SFS 2009:600). This act is ideologically reflected in the curriculum of the preschool (Swedish National Agency for Education 2018), which states that children are to develop both the Swedish language and their native language(s).

1.1.1 The status of English in the Swedish society

Historically German, Latin and French have dominated in various domains in Sweden, for example in trade, religion and culture. Such dominance used to involve only a small elite within the population (Hyltenstam 1999). Today, English has a special position in the Swedish society, since it is widely used in international business, popular culture and education at all levels (Boyd et al. 2017), which means that the dominance of English today affects the entire population of Sweden. In fact, a high command of English is crucial for access to higher education, and large parts of the labor market (Hyltenstam 1999). The general high proficiency

of English in the Swedish population increases the probability of English becoming dominant in colloquial and official contexts (ibid.).

During the last decade translations and loanwords from English or letter abbreviations of originally English expressions has constituted between 15 and 32% of all new words registered and published with the Swedish Institute for Languages and Folklore (2022).

Most children in Sweden are exposed to English through media from an early age. Chew and Ng (2021) suggest that online communities and games can promote emergent language and literacy development but two recent studies in Sweden (Petersen 2020; Samuelsson et al. 2021) note both opportunities (for example communication through photos and symbols) and constraints (a decrease of verbal interaction) for communicative development when children use iPads.

1.2 Language socialisation

The acquisition of language is a social process (Vygotsky 1978), closely linked to the historical and cultural context where it takes place (Ochs and Schieffelin 2013). Language socialization thus presents an interconnection between language and culture (Cekaite 2020). Multilingual children's participation and language practices in Swedish preschools have been the focus of attention in several recent dissertations, which in various ways highlight local contexts as important for multilingual children's participation and interaction (Kultti 2012; Martin-Bylund 2017; Skaremyr 2019).

Corsaro (2018) argues that children's language socialization is not only a matter of adaptation and internalization, but instead suggests the term *interpretive reproduction* to emphasize the innovative and creative aspects of children's participation in, and active contribution to, society and its cultures. Several studies show how children explore the patterns and limits of the normative orders and language policies that adults interact within, which may concern for example language choices for social interaction as well as education (Björk-Willén and Cromdal 2007; Boyd et al. 2017; Cekaite 2020).

Providing children with immediate experiences of positive and stimulating interactions (e.g. encouraging children to communicate, and using language to develop reasoning skills) is necessary to achieve high quality in preschool (Howes et al. 2008), but such interaction is sometimes infrequent and shortlasting (Winther-Lindqvist et al. 2012). Peer interaction is also important. Blum-Kulka and Gorbatt (2014) note that peer interaction is a double opportunity space, both serving as an arena for creating meaning within childhood culture and as a site for developing social, cognitive and linguistic skills (Zadunaisky Ehrlich and Blum-Kulka 2014).

Children's language practices are conditioned by their linguistic and pragmatic development, which in turn is affected by their age, socio-economic status and L2 (second language) proficiency. Peer talk can thus provide both affordances and limitations in the perspective of language socialization (Cekaite 2020). Peers who speak the language of education as L1 (first language) can be a major resource for L2 learners in the process of learning the new language. Access to play and interaction with L1 speakers of the language of education is therefore essential for L2 learners (Cekaite and Björk-Willén 2013).

1.3 Children's multilingualism in preschool

Preschool is sometimes the main social arena where children from minority language homes meet L1 speakers of the language of education (Cekaite 2020). Linguistic exposure and opportunities to practice the language(s) are important features for success, no matter how many languages a child learns (Hoff 2013). Hence, children's language development is a socio-culturally, spatiotemporal process where formation of, and participation in, language communities is central (Lave and Wenger 1998). This means that children's formations of language communities in preschool affects which languages they learn, when and where they learn them and to what extent. For example, in a study of a trilingual preschool group, Puskás and Björk-Willén (2017) found that some children consistently played with peers who spoke the same L1 and thereby constructed monolingual language practices. Since teachers did not interfere with these practices, they formed a base for child-driven language policies where the different language populations did not intersect with one another. Hence, the children's possibilities to learn the official language of education became limited.

L2 novices need a higher degree of adult support than monolingual peers to get and maintain access to play (Puskás and Björk-Willén 2017; Tabors 1997), and their possibilities to learn the lingua franca of the preschool is affected by the varying degrees of access they get to communities practicing the majority language; meaning that the language learning ecologies in peer group interactions might constrain L2 novices' possibilities to learn the lingua franca of the preschool, due to their limited language skills and sometimes marginalized social positions (Cekaite and Evaldsson 2017). Adult support is important in relation to the prominent role of free play in the Swedish preschool curriculum (Swedish National Agency for Education 2018). Ethnographic research has shown that children often protect their ongoing play from non-participating children (Corsaro 1985). Also, the exclusion of parties might establish and sustain inclusion and friendship among the included parties (Cromdal 2001).

1.4 Children's motivation, agency and language choice

A child's openness and willingness to learn the language of a new community can affect language learning outcomes (Cekaite 2020), and motivation is thus a highly influential factor in language development, also playing a key role in L2 acquisition (Duff and Talmy 2011). Multilingual children are able to resist, negotiate, transform or align with linguistic norms, policies and instructions (Paugh 2012). Children are not passive recipients of language input and shaped by language policy, but rather active agents who shape the socialization process and create language practices and language policies of their own (Bergroth and Palviainen 2017). Agency is defined by Ahearn (2001) as the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act, thus pointing to the child as an agent in the larger system of society. Bergroth and Palviainen (2017) build on this theory and claim that children's bilingual agency is the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act, as reflected in their communicative actions. Almér (2017) highlights the importance of an interactive perspective on agency, which she defines as having the capacity to make one's voice heard. Agency can thus be understood as the possibilities children have to act independently, take initiatives and influence their own situation (Boyd et al. 2017).

In a globalized world where almost all children are exposed to more than one language, this process also requires decision-making as to what language to speak in different contexts, with different people (Schwartz et al. 2020). In interaction with adults, children might orient to their preferred patterns of language use and language policies, but resist these in adult-free spaces (Paugh 2012). Ovando (1990) notes that the outcomes of bilingual education are not just dependent on the teacher and activities within the classroom. They are also heavily influenced by dimensions of political power and cultural identity. Such dimensions might affect language choice, because minority languages must compete with higher status languages (Lee 2014). Language choices might be proficiency-related (Ribot and Hoff 2014), but some studies show that children make socially and strategically motivated language choices, for example to exclude participants from interaction (Lee 2014).

Schwartz and Palviainen (2016) highlight the need to study agentic behaviors in relation to children's language choices, and stress that children are able to show different agentic behaviors like engaging in repetition, using self-talk in a novel language, taking on a leading role of activities or managing the language use in the classroom.

1.5 Code-switching, code mixing and crossing

Code-switching (Poplack 1980) is probably the most common term used by researchers to describe how multilingual individuals switch between languages in conversation. It occurs when the juxtaposition of the codes (languages or dialects) is grammatical and constrained by regularities. The term is mostly used to describe the switching of languages in proficient multilingual adolescents and adults. In the case of young language learners not yet proficient in their languages the term code or language mixing can be used (Meisel 1994).

Auer (1984) highlights the dual or polyvalent functions of code-switching in that it can have both participant- and discourse-related features. Participant-related functions are based on the individual's preferences or proficiency, while discourse-organizing functions deal with, for example, topic changes or changed participation. Cromdal (2001) investigated the interactive and collaborative nature of play entry episodes taking place in a bilingual school context, and found that code-switching can be used as a social marker. In Cromdal's study children used code-switching as a resource to both publicly display their behavior as attentive and adaptive to the group, and to display social stance or exclude others from play. Hence, code-switching can be used as an interactional resource to organize the social order and hierarchies of a peer group. Children have the ability to attend to their peers' language skills and enhance others understanding by adapting their own language use (Cekaite 2020). They tend to follow the language choice of the preceding interlocutor, and such accommodation can be seen as a display of alignment (Boyd et al. 2017; Cromdal 2001). Attention to the interlocutor enables supportive practices where children scaffold peers (Olmedo 2003), but are contrasted by practices that exploit their own bilingual resources, while at the same time exploiting the antagonist's lack of them, to display opposition on the level of language choice (Cromdal 2001).

Rampton (1995) studied how adolescents use different languages spoken in the shared multilingual urban youth culture of their neighborhood. He describes the process of *crossing* as the use of a language variety associated with social or ethnic groups that a person normally does not belong to. As code-switching is an "in-group phenomenon", characterized by code-alternation between languages that are spoken by groups one can claim membership of, crossing in contrast is characterized by code-switching to the language of a group one is not an accepted member of (Rampton 1995). However, since these terms are based on a division of individuals as speakers or non-speakers of a language, there is not always a clear partition between them.

There is no consensus at hand on why individuals code-switch, and there is also limited research on why and how children choose different languages in different contexts. This paper focuses on children who choose an alternative language, which is neither their L1 nor the language of education, as a lingua franca in preschool. This phenomenon seems to be largely unexplored. Here, children's alternation between languages will be referred to as code-switching.

2 Aim

The aim of this paper is to study how English is used in everyday conversation in preschool groups with varying proportions of multilingual children. More specifically, the aim is to analyze and explore the meaning-making of children's English language choice.

3 Method

The study is part of a larger research project on language environments in Swedish preschools. The present data are drawn from a video-ethnographic study of social interaction.

3.1 Setting and participants

Children from five preschool units situated in both multilingual and monolingual areas participated. The former areas are characterized by low socioeconomic status and the latter by high socioeconomic status. In the monolingual area, most children learn Swedish at home. In the multilingual area the children represent a variety of language backgrounds, and learn Swedish as L2 in preschool. In all preschools Swedish is used as lingua franca meaning that all preschool educators (no matter linguistic background) speak primarily Swedish with the children. The ages of the participating children are 3–6 years.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

Each group of teachers and children were videorecorded during ordinary activities such as play, mealtime, teaching and storybook-reading at several occasions during a six-month period. The researcher's interactions with the children were

minimized, and when children initiated contact, responses were kept brief. Field notes were taken after each visit.

The present analyses derive from a corpus of data where children speak English. The recordings were viewed and discussed on different seminars, and analyzed drawing on Conversation analysis. All recordings were transcribed orthographically, and the relevant excerpts were transcribed in detail building on Atkinson and Heritage's (1984) transcription conventions. Transcriptions are consistent in that all verbal interaction is translated into English, including code-switched English utterances. This means that code-switched utterances appear in both the original line and the translation line. To facilitate the reading of the transcripts and direct the reader's attention, all code-switched utterances are in italics in original lines, and bolded in translation lines.

3.3 Ethical considerations

The study has been approved by the Swedish Ethical Review Authority (approval numbers 2020-00226 and 2021-01615). Consent was achieved from teachers, principals, the director of education, and children's caregivers. In addition, all children were asked to participate at each recording session. They were informed that they could end participation at any time. All names are pseudonyms and ages are revealed in age spans.

4 Analyses

4.1 "Oh my goodness" – Children's use of English expressions

The first excerpt comes from a preschool located in an area where the vast majority of the inhabitants, as well as the three children in the excerpt, speak Swedish as L1. Three boys (between five and six years old) are playing with toy cars. When we enter the excerpt, Wallis expresses joy about managing to catch a toy skeleton he just threw into the air. The excerpt shows multilingual and multimodal interaction where Swedish, English, noises and embodied interaction like movement and laughter shape a creative linguistic expression. It demonstrates how preschoolers in Sweden use English loanwords and expressions during play.

Excerpt 1 Participants: Wallis, Winter and Lee.

1	Wallis:	((throws toy)) *oh yes* jag fångade den (0,5) jag
2		**Oh yes** I caught it I
3		fångade den så här (1,1) ((shows toy in hand))
4		caught it like this.
		håller den i benet (0,9) sen bara åh doob ((picks up
		Holds it in the leg then just oh doob.
		toy))
5	Winter:	((throws toy))
6	Wallis:	wa ki åh ((throws toy and picks it up again))
7		Wa ki oh.
		åh *backfire* ((throws toy))
		Oh **backfire.**
8	Lee:	((gazes at Wallis, laughs))

"Oh yes" is a kind of exclamation that Goffman (1981) calls a response cry, more specifically an audible glee, that emphasizes a successful catch, and consists of mere expression. It is important to note that the significant parts of Wallis' story, an explanation of how he caught the toy, (lines 1–3) are expressed in Swedish. Wallis and Winter make a throw each, and in line 7 Wallis code-switches and cries "oh backfire" as he forcefully throws his toy towards the ceiling. This utterance can be seen as an attention getter (Schegloff 1968), designed to solicit his peers' attention. He uses a word closely linked to youth culture and creates a cool utterance both in terms of content and language choice. He also gets an immediate response from Lee who laughs. This exemplifies how children create meaning within their shared peer culture and contribute to each other's linguistic skills at the same time (Zadunaisky Ehrlich and Blum-Kulka 2014).

The code-switched parts are linked to concrete play activities (a successful catch, a forceful throw). This means that Wallis' peers who might not have corresponding English skills, probably understand the meaning of his utterances by the current context. Admittedly a loanword, but "yes" is nowadays a common word in everyday speech of many Swedes. It is therefore doubtful if "yes" really is to be regarded as a foreign language. "Backfire" on the other hand is a less common word, and thus constitutes a clearer example of code-switching that, in this excerpt, is used to strengthen the children's mutual play framework.

The next excerpt shows another example of a response cry in English. Two girls around four years of age play together. They speak Albanian and Arabic at home and attend a preschool in a multilingual area where the majority of children learn

Swedish as L2. The girls are laughing at a joke Lina made in Swedish, and Lina code-switches in line 2 uttering the response cry "oh my goodness".

Excerpt 2 Participants: Diana and Lina.

1	Diana:	((laughs and kneels))
2	Lina:	((laughs)) (.)↑*Oh* ↑*my* ↑*goodness*!
		Oh my goodness
3		(1,1)
4		var e Santa Lucia,
		Where is Saint Lucia

Response cries come in different shapes, and "Oh my goodness" is what Goffman (1981) categorizes a floor cue. In this excerpt, the floor cue can be understood as either Lina is inviting Diana to share the joyful experience, or to make a move in their conversation. Lina's attempt of a floor cue also shows an example of language socialization (Ochs and Schieffelin 2013) in practice. Lina tries a linguistic expression from the adult world in interaction with Diana. However, Diana does not give any response to Lina's invitation and after a pause Lina introduces a new topic. The code-switched floor cue thus here fills a function of concluding the joking/laughing-activity and opening up for new activities.

"Oh my goodness" is a euphemism of the more straightforward "oh my god", but in this case Lina reproduces a phrase and it's therefore not possible to conclude whether or not she is oriented towards any kind of linguistic decorum.

Wallis and Lina use English words and expressions as response cries to accomplish different social actions like accentuating specific activities during play or sharing emotional stance. The examples demonstrate how Swedish preschoolers are influenced by the English language.

4.2 Language choice as a social strategy

The following excerpts focus on children using English frequently and to a greater extent. They are taken from preschool units located in a multilingual, socioeconomically disadvantaged and segregated area. The area is populated by immigrants from a broad range of countries, and most children in these preschools learn Swedish as L2.

Elements of English is common in these preschools, although none of the participating children and teachers speak English as L1. Still, many children speak English regularly in preschool, and some do so with a high level of proficiency. It will be shown how children use English during play to create fellowship, but also

to position themselves in social hierarchies. In addition, children show different types of agentic behaviors and learn English from each other.

In the following excerpt two children (between five and six years old, speaking Somali and Kurdish at home) are having lunch together. The excerpt highlights how code-switching is used to tease and mark superiority in verbal interaction.

Excerpt 3 Participants: Willy and Hadi.

1	Willy:	ja kan bära dig (.) å du kan bära Wen,
		I can carry you and you can carry Wen.
2	Hodar:	((shakes head))
3	Willy:	Wen kan bära dig
		Wen can carry you.
4	Hodar:	nej
		No.
5	Willy:	hur gammal e du (.) *five year or what*?
		How old are you **five year or what?**
6	Hodar:	som (.) äh miljoner
		Like eh millions.
7	Willy:	((shakes head)) .t .t .t .t .t .t .t
8		(1,2)
9	Willy:	((points out the window)) eh ja jag ser min pappa
		Eh I I see my dad.

Willy claims that he can carry Hodar, and that Hodar in turn can carry Wen (who is not present). Hodar gives a dispreferred answer (Pomerantz and Heritage 2013), and shakes his head in disagreement. Willy then suggests that Wen can carry Hodar, who remains skeptical and clearly says no this time, which is another dispreferred answer.

What follows next can be considered a tease, but also a topic shift which is a useful strategy that children deploy after being refused (Goodwin 2002). Willy asks Hodar how old he is, a question that is followed by the code-switched tag question "five year or what?" in English. Willy who is almost a year older than Hodar thus alludes to Hodar's age in a somewhat condescending tone. Young children tend to orient to issues of age and body-size in everyday conduct (Danby 1996; Häll 2022).

Willy's questioning of Hodar's age can be seen as a way of marking superiority, a response to Hodar's mistrust and dispreferred answers earlier in the conversation. The marking of superiority is accomplished both by bringing up Hodar's age per se, and by doing it in English – a language that Hodar might not speak. The English utterance conforms to Swedish both morphologically (no plural marking on "five year") and syntactically ("or what?" doesn't follow colloquial English but

instead follows the Swedish expression *eller vadå?*) and can thus be viewed as mixed.

Hodar responds to Willy's tease with a joke and claims that he is millions of years old. Willy shakes his head and utters ".t .t .t", which can best be described as the embodiment of a "you can't fool me"-approach. Willy then shifts topic again, points out the window and says that he can see his dad.

The excerpt exemplifies how English can be used to claim superiority. Not everyone knows English, so English skills therefore become an expression of knowledge.

In the following excerpt three children (between four and five years old, speaking Albanian, Somali and Arabic at home) are playing a zombie-game. The excerpt shows how they speak English consistently during play and create fellowship by using affiliative expressions.

Excerpt 4 Participants: Enis, Wa and Mo.

1	Enis:	*zombie's coming I know zombie's* (.)
2		**Zombie's coming. I know zombie's**
		coming
		coming
3	Wa:	*zombie's coming* ((lying on floor))
		Zombie's coming.
4	Enis:	((walks away)) ps:::
		ps
5	Mo:	*oh no I'm not crazy* (0,8) *I'm not crazy bro'* (1,2)
6		*come here*
		Oh no I'm not crazy. I'm not crazy bro.
		Come here
7		((children play outside camera scope))
8	Mo:	*do not break it* (.) *I've got four* (.) *one two*
		breakfast
		Do not break it. I've got four. One two
		breakfast
9	Enis:	brefur (.) *like this dude*,
		brefur **Like this dude.**

Enis cries that a zombie is coming and Wa who is lying on the floor repeats the utterance, which can be seen as an example of L2 novice agentic behavior (Schwartz and Palviainen 2016). Enis then walks away from Mo while making a squeaky sound, but Mo invites him to come and adds the word "bro" to his invitation (bro' as an abbreviation for brother). The word bro' is an expression that

marks closeness and family bonds, hence implying Mo's positive emotional stance towards Enis. The boys then play outside the camera scope for a while. In line 8 they return and Enis calls Mo "dude", a word that just like bro' is an affiliative marker with the potential to tie the boys together.

Words like "dude" and "bro" are slang expressions with an origin in African American English. They allude to stereotypical young male qualities and bring to mind contemporary cultural phenomena like hip hop music and urban street culture. There is a possibility that the boys understand such connections, and hence are not only affiliative with each other, but also with such subcultures.

The excerpt exemplifies how English works as the boys' mutual play language, and how affiliative expressions are used to mark friendship.

The next excerpt shows four children playing in a room where kitchen toys are being stored. A market stall in the middle of the room serves as a grocery store. The participating children are Ali (who speaks Albanian at home) and Abbe, Anna and Farah (who speak Arabic at home). Ali and Abbe are between five and six years old, and Anna and Farah are between three and five years old. In the corpus as a whole, Ali and Abbe consistently speak English to each other during frequent play sessions but often code-switch to Swedish when addressing other participants in their games, which is exemplified below.

When the excerpt begins, Ali is working in the store. He has been clearly dismissive towards his customers Abbe and Anna earlier, rejecting their attempts to buy food by stating that they have no money. The excerpt shows several agentic behaviors concerning language choice and initiation of and accomplishment of social action.

Excerpt 5 Participants: Ali, Anna, Abbe and Farah (verbally inactive).

1	Ali:	Har du ↑pengar (0,3) visa min (.) visa din hand
		Have you got money? show my show me your hand.
2		(1,7)
3	Anna:	jag har ja
		I have yes
4	Ali:	↑visa ↑din hand
		Show me your hand.
5	Anna:	((walks away))
6	Ali:	↑VISA ↑DIN ↑HAND ((reaches for Anna))
		Show me your hand.
7	Anna:	men jag vet [in]
		But I don't kn-

8 Ali: [AH] tack du har ((takes pretend
9 money from
Ah thanks you have.
Anna's hand)) tack (.) får du ha
Thanks you can have.
10 Abbe: °*this is my money*°((stands by camera, 2 m from Ali))
This is my money
11 Ali:_ glassar ((give ice cream to Anna)) ((knocks table)) så
Ice cream. so
13 Abbe: ((approaches Ali))
14 Ali: *do you have money,*
Do you have money?
15 (0,7)
16 Abbe: *no* ((shakes head))
No.
17 (1,5)
18 Ali: *show me your hand* (1,1) *show me your* ((shows his hand))
Show me your hand. Show me your.
19 Abbe: ((drops colander and shows his hands))

Ali asks Anna in Swedish if she has got any money, and she gives him an affirmative answer. He is not convinced and wants to see her hand, but Anna seems discouraged and leaves the store. Ali raises his voice and reaches for Anna, urging her to show him her hand. Anna begins to say that she doesn't understand, but Ali interrupts her and shows a more conformable side. He thanks her and confirms that now she has got money and can buy something. Simultaneously Abbe is standing close to the camera and whispers to himself almost like rehearsing "this is my money". Having failed to shop from Ali earlier, and struggling to keep up with Ali's English skills, this can be understood as agentic behavior as Abbe takes an initiative, practices his next line to influence his situation (Boyd et al. 2017) and improve the odds of succeeding in buying food. Children who learn a new language sometimes practice that language in private speech (Swain et al. 2011) which according to Schwartz and Palviainen (2016) also represents agentic behavior.

After Ali has declared that Anna will get ice cream, she leaves the store and Abbe approaches Ali who is still behind the cash register. Despite rehearsing what to say, Abbe does not deliver his line quickly enough and Ali code-switches to English and asks Abbe if he has got any money. The code-switch can be seen as an orientation to the boys' language policy, and hence functions as a social marker of

an alliance (Cromdal 2001). Ali smoothly shifts between the lingua franca of the preschool when speaking to Anna and Farah, and the lingua franca of his and Abbe's play when Abbe enters the scene. Grosjean (2001) notes that the practiced dimension of language policy can be both monolingual and bilingual simultaneously, presented here in two coexisting language policies oriented towards Swedish and English, and maintained towards different participants in the group. In line 16 Abbe says "no" while shaking his head. Ali asks Abbe to show him his hands, and when Abbe does not reply, Ali clarifies what he means by repeating the message and showing his hand to Abbe. Olmedo (2003) notes that children can scaffold peers and enhance other's language comprehension. After this bodily reinforcement of the exhortation Abbe drops the colander and shows Ali his hand.

Ali is in control of the game and shows several agentic behaviors like leading the activity and managing the language used (Schwartz and Palviainen 2016). His peers seem to be aware of his superior position as they consistently adapt to Ali's authority and decisions. There are no attempts to dispute Ali's opinions, instead his peers comply (for example line 5 where Anna gives up the attempt to shop before fulfilling Ali's call to show her hand). In spite of Ali's and Abbe's choice for speaking English, Ali orients to the lingua franca of the preschool when addressing other children, which shows agentic behavior as he makes decisions about which language to speak with whom (Schwartz et al. 2020). This confirms previous research showing that children have the ability to enhance peers' understanding and attend to their language skills by adapting their own language use (Cekaite 2020).

Ali's verbal contributions consist of mainly demanding turns like instructions (lines 1, 4, 6 and 18) and decisions (lines 9–10) rather than inviting turns like, for instance questions and offers. The speaking space is also unevenly distributed, to Ali's advantage. As a leader of the group, Ali's language choices become important and perhaps also normatively formative. The other children need to gain his acceptance in order to shop in the store. Abbe is not yet as skilled in speaking English as Ali is, but he puts time and effort into trying to keep up (line 10). As will be shown later (cf. excerpt 9), Abbe is not the only child in the group who strives to adapt to Ali's language choices. Note that three out of four children in this play session are L1 speakers of Arabic, but they never use their L1 in the corpus. Instead,

Anna and Farah follow what they perceive as the language policy of the preschool, and Abbe orients to his and Ali's language policy. The excerpt shows compliance with and coordination of co-existing language policies.

In the next excerpt six children and their teacher Doris are having lunch. The children speak Arabic, Albanian, Dari, Kurdish and Somali at home and are between four and six years old. Doris is an L1 speaker of Swedish.

Doris is standing by a food cart at the short end of the table and asks children one at a time if they want more food. All children are seated by the table and play and interact while waiting for the second serving. When the excerpt begins, Hanan has asked Doris in Swedish for more food, showing her orientation towards the lingua franca of the preschool. However, Doris is busy asking Mo what he wants to eat.

The excerpt reveals the impact of peer talk – more specifically how children contribute to each other's language use and development.

Excerpt 6 Participants: Doris, Mo, Hanan, Wa, Rio, Enis and Rina.

1	Doris:	eh (.) Mo [ville du ha sås,]
		Eh Mo did you want sauce.
2	Hanan:	[*ah my god my chicken*] *nuggets*
		Ah my god my chicken nuggets.
3	Mo:	lite
		A little.
4	Doris:	[ja ja]
		Yes yes.
5	Hanan:	[*oh my god*] *my chicken nuggets* (0,9) *oh my god*
6		(0,7)
		Oh my god my chicken nuggets oh my god.
		titta på maj
		Look at me.
7	Doris:	Rio
		Rio.
8	Wa:	*oh my god*
		Oh my god.
9	Hanan:	((turns her head and looks at Wa))
10	Doris:	Rio vill du ha [mer mat]
		Rio do you want more food?
11	Wa:	[*chicken nugget*]
		Chicken nugget.
12	Hanan:	((smiles))
13	Rio:	*yes*
		Yes.
14	Doris:	ja tack
		Yes please.

Doris's question to Mo is interrupted by Hanan who chants rhythmically in English. She keeps on chanting while Mo and Doris interact, but code-switches in line 6

saying "look at me" in Swedish. In line 8, Wa who has spoken Swedish exclusively during the lunch session, now picks up on Hanan's chant in the preceding lines. He code-switches and repeats the first part of the chant without flaws, thus producing a successful recycling of Hanan's both verbal and social contribution. Phrasal recyclings or formulaic chunks of talk can be important strategies to sustain peer group participation for children who are in the process of learning a new language (Wray 2002) and is also a type of agentic behavior for children in the process of becoming bilingual (Schwartz et al. 2020). Wa's repetition is immediately recognized by Hanan who turns and looks at Wa.

Doris repeats her question to Rio and Wa then produces the second part of Hanan's rhyme. Hanan gives Wa a warming smile. Since Doris is occupied with serving children lunch, she doesn't confirm Wa. Instead it is Hanan's gaze and smile that work as confirmation of Wa's verbal contributions. This confirms earlier research showing that interaction between teachers and children in preschool is often short-lasting (Winther-Lindqvist et al. 2012) and that peer interaction is important for children in the process of learning a second language (Blum-Kulka and Gorbatt 2014).

In line 13, Rio who has spoken Swedish up to this point now answers Doris in English. Although Doris addressed him in Swedish, Rio follows the preceding interlocutor and displays alignment with Hanan's language choice (Boyd et al. 2017). Doris initiates a repairing sequence orienting to the social order of the preschool as she repeats Rio's answer in Swedish – *ja* 'yes', and adds the politeness marker *tack* 'please'. Burdelski (2010) notes that modeling and direct instruction of polite words and phrases such as 'please' socialize children to etiquette and manners, hence Doris provides a learning opportunity of what is considered to be polite and appropriate conduct. This makes visible that teaching the norms of appropriate conduct is interwoven with language teaching (Evaldsson and Cekaite 2010).

The excerpt shows that children imitate and learn language from each other, which also seems to be a process that strengthens their community. Wa imitates Hanan and gets immediate positive confirmation. In absence of an adult's confirmation, the warmth, joy and fellowship reflected in a gaze and smile from a peer might very well encourage Wa to repeat this kind of code-switched interaction again, eventually building language proficiency in English. The excerpt gives us another important insight which might help us understand why English is frequently used by some children in this study; children are influenced by peers' language choices and practices. Although none of these children speak English at home, Hanan's choice to speak English immediately impacts the language practices of her peers. After the limited exposure of one child and three sayings, one

peer is influenced by the language choice and code-switches to English during a parallel interaction with the teacher, and another peer repeats the utterances.

In this section, it has been shown how children speak English to each other to create fellowship and alliances, and that language choices can be made in the purpose of social organization. Children imitate each other and contribute to each other's language development in all the spoken languages in the preschool group. These languages rarely include multilingual children's L1 but instead include English.

4.3 English as language policy

The following excerpts are taken from the multilingual area. They show how some children have a higher level of proficiency in English, and more refined ways of using English as a pragmatic tool for social organization and power. Moreover, they teach each other English.

In the next excerpt Wa, Enis and Mo are playing a zombie-game (cf. excerpt 4). Their teacher Bodil performs administrative work nearby, and interacts with the boys only when the game gets loud or involves safety risks. The excerpt exemplifies how children use English as play language while Swedish is used in teacher's interventions and exhortations.

When we enter the excerpt, the boys have run around a table and Enis has fallen to the floor. Wa has placed himself on Enis' legs to keep him down, and Bodil interferes in line 1.

Excerpt 7 Participants: Bodil, Mo, Wa and Enis.

1	Bodil:	Wa akta nu
		Wa watch out now!
2	Wa:	((stands up holding a brick above head, walks towards Enis with raised hand))
3	Enis:	((laughs))
4	Mo:	*what's a thing (.) that's mine (.) Wa (.) that's*
5		**What's a thing that's mine Wa that's** *mine*
		mine.
6	Wa:	((walks towards Mo))
7		(1,8)

8	Bodil:	va::: va går leken ut på, (2,5) vad ska du göra
9		med den,
		What what's this game about what are you going to do with it?
10		(2,5)
11	Wa:	men jag va inte där
		But I was not there.
12	Bodil:	men inte på kompisarna va,
		But not on your friends right.
13		(3,2)
14	Mo:	*yeah (but how bout) my things* ((moves to corner))
		Yeah but how bout my things?
15	Enis:	*don't ↑know:::* ((follows Mo to corner))
		Don't know.
16	Mo:	(*chicken picking gliding pop*)
		Chicken picking gliding pop.
17	Enis:	*↑he's ↑com↑ing*
		He's coming!
18	Mo:	*hide* (3,9) *he's coming*
		Hide. He's coming!

Just like in excerpt 4, the boys are here engaging in a zombie-game, a play theme that is directly influenced by English through the loanword zombie. But children's language choices in this study appear to depend more upon the constellation of children playing together than on the game they are playing, as for example building-games and chasing-games are also consistently accomplished in English.

Bodil speaks Swedish when she interferes and admonishes Wa to watch out in line 1. He does as he is told and stands up, but stays in the play frame and acts as a zombie when he walks towards Enis with a Magna-tile in his raised hand. Enis laughs, and Mo claims ownership to the "thing" in Wa's hand. Although Bodil spoke Swedish in the preceding line, Mo orients to the boys' mutual play language and speaks English. Wa turns towards Mo, and in line 8 Bodil again intervenes in the boys' play, which might be seen as both risky and conflict-ridden from her point of view. She orients towards the lingua franca of the preschool when she questions what the game is about. Since she speaks Swedish, the intervention is ambiguous, concerning both the content of the children's play, and their language choice. Wa perceives both sides of the intervention and provides a defense speech in Swedish. Bodil adds another admonition, "not on your friends, right", referring to not touching or hitting his friends.

The following pause shows that Bodil's admonitions have distracted the children's ongoing game, but Mo reestablishes the interaction with Wa in line 14. He speaks English as he again refers to the toy in Wa's hand as "my things" and moves simultaneously to the corner. Enis replies by saying that he doesn't know and follows Mo to the corner. After a partly inaudible utterance by Mo, Wa walks towards his peers who cry with excitement "hide he's coming!"

It is sometimes hard to follow the children's ideas in this play session. They cannot clearly explain in English the what, how and why of the game. However, this does not seem to hinder their interaction or obstruct the game and the children's meaning-making. Bodil takes a monitoring role, preventing events and courses that she perceives as inappropriate or critical. Such positions can be seen as the opposite stance to the playfulness and exploration of the game. Bodil's interventions cause disruptions in the game, and the ongoing language practice. A field of tension arises as the children's playful actions are expressed in English, which promotes community between the boys, while the teacher's Swedish contributions consist of warnings, limitations and questionings which counteract the game. The children move in and out of the play frame when they are addressed by the teacher, and they switch between Swedish and English accordingly. This means that Swedish and English are alternately used as lingua franca depending on participant- and discourse-related features (Auer 1984). The code-switching here reflects a distance between the children and their teacher (and her orientation towards the rules and codes of conduct) and a somewhat conflicting relationship between Swedish and English emerges. The boys' interaction in English offers them a language community characterized by imagination, commitment, and shared joy. Boyd et al. (2017) notes that children can use bilingual resources to exclude adults such as teachers.

The next excerpt highlights the power of children's own language policies. Ali and Abbe are standing by a small table with a box full of toy cars. There are numbers from zero to ten on the wall next to the table and Ali has come up with a way to divide cars between them. He wants to take turns and count the numbers on the wall. The one that is counting should take the same number of cars as the number indicated when the other person says stop. Ali and Abbe speak English consistently during play, and Ali has just instructed Abbe on his idea when the excerpt begins.

Excerpt 8 Participants; Ali, Abbe and Leroy.

1 Ali: *one two one zero one two three four five*
One two one zero one two three four five.

2	Abbe:	*stop*
		Stop!
3		(1,6)
4	Ali:	*five* ((pulls chair))
		Five
5		(2,8)
6	Ali:	*well I have (to find)* ((looks for cars in the box))
		Well I have to find.
7	Leroy:	Ali kolla den ((shows car))
		Ali look at this!
8		(1,7)
9	Ali:	e den din
		Is that yours?
10	Leroy:	ja
		Yes
11		(4,0)
12	Ali:	((puts all his cars in the box)) come on ((walks away))
		Come on!
13	Abbe:	((puts his car away, follows Ali))

Ali has counted to five in English when Abbe says stop, and therefore gets to choose five cars. In line 7, Leroy (around five years of age and speaking Albanian at home) arrives at the scene, shows a toy car and says "look here" in Swedish. After a short pause Ali code-switches to Swedish and asks Leroy if the car belongs to him, which Leroy confirms. This can be seen as a discourse-related code-switch related to changed participation (Auer 1984). Ali orients to two co-existing participant-related language policies (cf. excerpt 5). Note that Ali and Leroy both speak Albanian as L1, but here choose to speak Swedish (cf. excerpt 5), displaying their joint orientation towards the lingua franca of the preschool. After a 4 s pause Ali puts his cars away and code-switches to English when he addresses Abbe only. This can be seen as a socially motivated language choice with the purpose of exclusion (Lee 2014) since the code-switched utterance "come on" precedes him moving away from the scene. This establishes Leroy as a non-ratified participant of the play. Cromdal (2001) notes that the entry-granting parts (gate-keepers) cast themselves as legitimate participants capable of deciding who is to be accepted and who may be refused. Abbe quietly puts his car back and follows Ali, and Leroy is left by the table with a disappointed look on his face. Leroy has called for attention in a language different from that of the ongoing interaction (Boyd et al. 2017) and is effectively precluded from it. Cekaite and Evaldsson (2017) state that

language novice's opportunities to learn the new language are usually limited because of such preclusion. The exclusion of parties might also sustain inclusion and mark friendship among the included parties (Cromdal 2001).

Ali adapts to Leroy in line 9, but his code switching back to English can be understood as he follows the normative order of his and Abbe's language choice. Even though the lingua franca of the preschool is Swedish, Ali and Abbe have chosen English as their lingua franca when playing together (cf. excerpt 5), and thereby create exclusivity since English is not known by everyone. While including each other, they display opposition on the level of language choice by exploiting their English skills and Leroy's lack of it to exclude him from play (cf. Cromdal 2001). In this sense Ali's and Abbe's choice of English works as a *secret language* of friendship between Abbe and Ali, which gives them what Corsaro (2018) terms a private interactive space. Ali and Abbe choose to leave the area and the toys behind, hence they are not so much protecting their ongoing play (Corsaro 1979) as they are protecting their private (language) community.

The final excerpt illustrates an English learning and teaching activity between peers. Ali, Abbe and Bilal (around five years old, speaking Romani at home) are building Lego. In the entire corpus, Bilal has exclusively spoken Swedish before, but here he tries to adapt to Ali and Abbe who exclusively speak English to each other during play (cf. excerpts 5 and 8). Bilal just asked Ali and Abbe the question "*va e det?*" ("what is this?") in Swedish, but Ali and Abbe have not answered him. The excerpt shows how Bilal finds a successful strategy to enter Ali's and Abbe's conversation through a crossing maneuver.

Excerpt 9 Participants: Ali, Abbe and Bilal.

1	Bilal:	((takes stick)) *what* e *this*, ((looks at Ali))
		What is **this?**
2	Ali:	((looks at Bilal))
3		(2,3)
4	Abbe:	*this is a stick*
		This is a stick.
5	Bilal:	e *this*?
		Is **this**?
6		(1,7)
7	Abbe:	*this is a tree*
		This is a tree.
8		(2,7)
9	Ali:	*I saw another tree* ((assembles Lego))
		I saw another tree.

10		(4,5)
11	Bilal:	wi-o-wi-o-wi-o ((stands up then kneels down))
		wi– o– wi– o– wi– o
12	Ali:	*now we have two trees* ((holding two trees in front of
		now we have two trees
		him))

Bilal holds a stick in front of Ali and asks what it is, but contrary to his former attempt, he now performs a crossing maneuver (Rampton 1995) and tries to speak English. This agentic behavior might be seen as a display of alignment (Boyd et al. 2017) and enables Bilal to make his voice heard (Almér 2017). In line 2, Ali looks at Bilal but it is Abbe who takes on a teaching role informing Bilal what the object in question is called in English. He chooses English instead of Swedish when answering Bilal's mixed English/Swedish question, which might be proficiency-related (Ribot and Hoff 2014) or an orientation towards his and Abbe's language policy. Encouraged by Abbe's answer, Bilal asks about another object and Abbe answers this as well. Ali picks up on their topic and adds that he saw another tree. This utterance works as an acceptance of Bilal's participation. Bilal then makes some noises before Ali concludes that now "we" have two trees.

Bilal is a novice in English and mixes Swedish and English, for example when he uses the Swedish word "*e*" instead of the English word "is". The social action of the utterance is ambiguous as it is obviously an attempt to learn English words, but at the same time it can be seen as an attempt to access Ali's and Abbe's language community (Björk-Willén 2007). Bilal tries to get access by using a language that he doesn't yet fully master, as he perceives that English is not only Ali's and Abbe's preferred language, it constitutes their language policy and a term for gaining access to their play (cf. excerpt 8). As a novice of English, Bilal faces a challenge. He needs to make interesting verbal contributions to get access to Ali's and Abbe's play and community. He resolves this by using different communicative resources (Tabors 1997) and shows the requested objects as he performs the crossing maneuver (Rampton 1995). By asking the question "what e this" he gives Ali and Abbe opportunity to display their knowledge, and displays his own willingness to learn. This is a very elegant and refined strategy which brings success. Bilal is granted access, and becomes a recognized member of the group when Ali in line 12 refers to them with the pronoun "we". Motivation is a highly influential factor in L2 acquisition (Duff and Talmy 2011), and here Bilal shows a strong motivation to learn the language that follows the normative order of the group he wants to be part of.

This excerpt highlights the somewhat blurred line between crossing and code-switching. Bilal has not spoken English at home or in preschool on other occasions, but manages to formulate a mixed question in English and Swedish. As Bilal gets more skilled in English with time, crossing maneuvers like these will be viewed as code-switching. The important thing here is that Bilal's utterance is accepted by the English-speaking community he is addressing. Abbe plays a key role in maintaining the shared community in the group. In contrast with Ali, Abbe supports and scaffolds Bilal's verbal contributions (Blum-Kulka and Gorbatt 2014; Olmedo 2003) when he chooses to answer Bilal's questions (lines 4 and 7). This works as an acceptance of Bilal's verbal contributions – even though they are not completely following the normative order of Ali's and Abbe's language choice.

5 Discussion

What is the meaning of children's choice of English as lingua franca in a Swedish preschool context? The answer is multi-faceted, since children speak English in an array of pragmatic purposes; to get attention, signal emotional stances, and for the purpose of social organization. English is spoken to express affiliation and fellowship, and to mark friendship. These are rather positively loaded purposes, but English is also spoken to distance oneself from teachers and the prevailing norms of the preschool, to take control of games and to mark superiority. English as a high status language constitutes a special knowledge and can therefore provide benefits for the individual. On occasions, English is spoken to exclude others from play and interaction and serves the purpose of an effective secret language. In short, children in this study speak English because it is a social resource like any language in everyday activities, play and peer interaction.

The participating preschools are similar in some ways. Groups of around 20 children are led by 3–4 teachers who struggle to find time to verbally interact with each child. All teachers are governed by the same curriculum, and strive for a multilingual practice where Swedish is used as lingua franca, children's use of L1 is encouraged, and ACC (Alternative and Complementary Communication) is used to support children's development of Swedish (Larsson and Björk-Willén 2020). However, children's use of both ACC and L1 is non-existent, even when children in the same play session share L1. This confirms that minority languages are disadvantaged in the competition against majority languages, and that political structures and language status play a role in this process (Lee 2014).

Major differences in the language learning ecologies of these preschools are apparent. Children in the monolingual preschools speak Swedish in all observed activities and use English words merely as a "decoration" of their Swedish

expression. In the multilingual preschools, Swedish and English are used as lingua francas alternately depending on the constellation of participants in the interaction (excerpts 5, 7 and 8). Several explanations are possible. Living in a multilingual area might promote an openness and motivation to learn new languages. Children who learn Swedish as L2 are used to speaking a language they do not fully master, which might lower the threshold for trying English. It is also possible that there is not enough critical mass (Thomas and Roberts 2011) of Swedish speakers in the multilingual areas, which means that teachers' orientation towards Swedish does not result in a wide-spread language policy among the children. Also, children in the multilingual area have multilingual models, while children in the monolingual area have monolingual models.

Even if the benefits of peer interaction on second language learning have been highlighted in recent years (Cekaite et al. 2014), the impact of peer language on children's language choices are still obfuscated. References to English popular culture like music and games are frequent in the corpus underlying this paper. Children's shared evaluative stances and familiarity with artefacts, scripts and characters from popular culture and stories promote intersubjective engagement and intrinsic motivation, creating a basis for language-mediated socialization and learning opportunities in everyday encounters (Cekaite et al. 2014). Language practices, language choices and code-switching are related to wider societal and local language ideologies (Cekaite 2020). Children's choice of English as lingua franca is a reflection of the norms and policies of the surrounding society and can thus be seen as interpretive reproduction (Corsaro 2018).

Blum-Kulka and Gorbatt (2014) found that the peer group constitutes a major resource for immigrant children's acquisition of the language of education. Such an effect presupposes that there are native speakers of the L2 who function as "language experts" in the peer group, which is not the case in some of the multilingual preschools in this study. The peer group's contributions to the language learning ecologies are still apparent, but mainly concern English as an alternative language. Access to play proves to be of central importance, as both Bilal and Wa get opportunities to interact with peer "lay teachers" (Blum-Kulka and Gorbatt 2014) in English-speaking practices.

Peer culture and peer relations are important when children are socialized into the preferred patterns of language use in communities where these languages are practiced. Being agents of multilingual practices, children in this study add a new language to their already multilingual repertoires. They are attentive and responsive to each other's communicative needs and show an interest in both learning and teaching English to each other. More proficient speakers provide help and assistance to less proficient speakers (Cekaite 2020). Hence children actively contribute to each other's multilingual development and both influence and are

influenced by their learning environment. Many of the code-switching episodes exemplify how children's peer talk is a double opportunity space both serving as an arena for creating cultural meaning, and as a site for developing social and linguistic skills (Zadunaisky Ehrlich and Blum-Kulka 2014). Ali, Abbe, Enis and Mo prefer English as lingua franca instead of Swedish – meaning they create their own local language policies. Resistance to the Swedish language is seen in various ways; when children code-switch to English after being addressed in Swedish by teachers (cf. excerpt 6), when children stick to English after teacher's interventions (cf. excerpt 7) or when excluding peers who speak Swedish (cf. excerpt 8). These findings confirm that children can resist and negotiate the cultural and linguistic norms they are exposed to (Paugh 2012). Many children are English novices, but the motivation to speak English outweighs any difficulty in expressing themselves. Schwartz et al. (2019) note that some children might resist a language if they don't believe that language is critical for their communication. Note that all children in Ali's, Abbe's, Enis' and Mo's groups are Swedish novices learning Swedish as L2, which may limit the usefulness of the Swedish language in terms of how these children communicate and understand each other.

Bergroth and Palviainen (2017) note that children are bilingual agents and policy makers. At least three of the studied preschool units are loci for learning both the majority language and the alternative language English, since, in practice a bilingual Swedish-English norm prevails. Like children in the study of Boyd et al. (2017), children in this study are free to choose and mix languages as they like, which gives them an important role in the policy-in-practice in preschool. Children spend many hours per week in adult-free peer interaction, which gives them opportunities to develop local language policies that promote development of English, as linguistic exposure and opportunities to practice a language are important features for success (Hoff 2013). Teachers seldom intervene in local English-speaking language practices. In fact, the only intervention in the corpus occurs when Doris makes a repairing sequence of Rio's use of English (cf. excerpt 6). Hence the English language policy appearing in some peer groups is by and large passively allowed and accepted by the teachers, and seems to spread and involve more children over time. Similar to Puskás' and Björk-Willén's (2017) study of language policies, there is at least a risk that teachers' non-interference in children's free play constrain the possibilities to learn Swedish. However, studies from school settings show that any kind of intervention might be fruitless, as children tend to be creative in circumventing official language regulations, which makes multilingualism hard to control in educational settings (Jordens et al. 2018; Probyn 2009).

Since linguistic exposure and opportunities to practice a language are important features for success (Hoff 2013), teachers in the multilingual area need to

ensure high-quality Swedish language education for children who learn Swedish as L2. But teachers also need to balance their teaching assignment and children's autonomy and rights to choose and speak all their languages. As Ovando (1990) notes, the outcomes of bilingual education are not just dependent on the teacher and activities within classrooms but are also influenced by dimensions of political power and cultural identity. This study confirms Hyltenstam's (1999) claim that the dominance of English in the Swedish society affects the entire population, here seen in the everyday practices of 3–6 year-old preschool children. As English is a global language these individuals are part of a large language community outside the preschool's walls. The department of education in the municipality in question has developed a vision of "educating world citizens". Without awareness of the municipality's stated vision, the children in this study have themselves taken significant steps in that direction.

5.1 Conclusion

Code-switching and crossing can be used as interactional resources to organize the social order and hierarchies of the preschool group, including both children and teachers. Already at an early age, children are multilingual policy agents who create their own social and linguistic norms through multilingual practices. Furthermore, children are able to choose an alternative language as lingua franca in preschool. When they do so, knowledge in a global language is gained, which also provides additional social and pragmatic resources for play and interaction. On the other hand, this might lead to less time and space in preschool for the linguistic goals imposed in the preschool curriculum: development of Swedish and children's L1. Finally, children make clear contributions to the policy-in-practice, meaning that children seem to find their own paths to social interaction and language development in these preschools.

5.2 Future research

Both physical and digital contexts where children are socialized into the English language are an important focus for future research, as well as how children from a wider age group use their multilingualism to achieve different social goals, and potential gender differences in such processes.

There is also a need to study how linguistic norms, ideologies and policies are established in peer culture and language education, and how they affect language practices in preschool. Preschool peer groups absent of L1 speakers of Swedish

need to be further studied, both in terms of language education and development, language management and policy, and children's motivation and language choices.

References

Ahearn, Laura. 2001. Language and agency. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30(1). 109–137.

Almér, Elin. 2017. Children's beliefs about bilingualism and language use as expressed in child-adult conversations. *Multilingua* 36(4). 401–424.

Atkinson, Maxwell & John Heritage (eds.). 1984. *Structures of social action: Studies in conversation analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Auer, Peter. 1984. *Bilingual conversation*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.

Bergroth, Mari & Åsa Palviainen. 2017. Bilingual children as policy agents: Language policy and education policy in minority language medium early childhood education and care. *Multilingua* 36(4). 375–399.

Björk-Willén, Polly. 2007. Participation in multilingual preschool play: Shadowing and crossing as interactional resources. *Journal of Pragmatics* 39(12). 2133–2158.

Björk-Willén, Polly & Jakob Cromdal. 2007. When education seeps into 'free play': How preschool children accomplish multilingual education. *Journal of Pragmatics* 41(8). 1493–1518.

Blum-Kulka, Shoshana & Naomi Gorbatt. 2014. "Say princess": The challenges and affordances of young Hebrew L2-novices' interaction with their peers. In Asta Cekaite, Shoshana Blum-Kulka, Vibeke Grøver & Eva Teubal (eds.), *Children's peer talk: Learning from each other*, 169–193. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Boyd, Sally, Leena Huss & Caisa Ottesjö. 2017. Children's agency in creating and maintaining language policy in practice in two "language profile" preschools in Sweden. *Multilingua* 36(4). 501–531.

Burdelski, Matthew. 2010. Socializing politeness routines: Action, other-orientation, and embodiment in a Japanese preschool. *Journal of Pragmatics* 42(6). 1606–1621.

Cekaite, Asta. 2020. Early language education and language socialization. In Mila Schwartz (ed.), *Handbook of early language education – Springer International Handbooks of Education*, 1–23. New York city: Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

Cekaite, Asta & Ann-Carita Evaldsson. 2017. Language policies in play: Language learning ecologies in children's peer and teacher interactions in preschool. *Multilingua* 36(4). 451–475.

Cekaite, Asta & Polly Björk-Willén. 2013. Peer group interactions in multilingual educational settings: Co-constructing social order and norms for language use. *International Journal of Bilingualism* 17(2). 174–188.

Cekaite, Asta, Shoshana Blum-Kulka, Vibeke Grøver & Eva Teubal. 2014. *Children's peer talk: Learning from each other*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chew, Shin Yi & Lee Luan Ng. 2021. *Interpersonal interactions and language learning face-to-face versus computer-mediated communication*. Cham: Palgrave MacMillan. https://link-springer-com.ludwig.lub.lu.se/book/10.1007/978-3-030-67425-0 (accessed 12 April 2022).

Corsaro, William A. 1979. 'We're friends, right?': Children's use of access rituals in a nursery school. *Language in Society* 8(3). 315–336.

Corsaro, William A. 1985. *Friendship and peer culture in early years*. Noorwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
Corsaro, William A. 2018. *The sociology of childhood*. Thousand Oaks, LA: Sage.
Cromdal, Jakob. 2001. Can I be with?: Negotiating play entry in a bilingual school. *Journal of Pragmatics* 33(4). 515–543.
Danby, Susan. 1996. Constituing social membership: Two readings of talk in an early childhood classroom. *Language and Education* 10(2–3). 151–170.
Duff, Patricia & Steven Talmy. 2011. Language socialization approaches to second language acquisition. Social, cultural and linguistic development in additional languages. In Dwight Atkinson (ed.), *Alternative approaches to second language acquisition*, 95–116. New York: Routledge.
Evaldsson, Ann-Carita & Asta Cekaite. 2010. Subverting and reproducing linguistic norms in peer groups. *Pragmatics* 20(4). 587–605.
Goffman, Erving. 1981. *Forms of talk*, 124–159. Oxford: Blackwell.
Goodwin, Majorie H. 2002. Building power asymmetries in girls' interaction. *Discourse & Society* 13. 715–730.
Grosjean, François. 2001. The bilingual's language modes. In Janet Nicol (ed.), *One mind, two languages: Bilingual language processing*, 1–22. Oxford: Blackwell.
Häll, Linda. 2022. *"Är han en jätte, nej han är liten, en bebis" Ålderskategorisering i förskolan. ["Is he a giant, no he is tiny, a baby" Age categorization in preschool]*. Linköping: Linköping University. Doctoral thesis.
Hoff, Erika. 2013. Interpreting the early language trajectories of children from low SES-and language minority homes: Implications for closing achievement gaps. *Developmental Psychology* 49(1). 4–14.
Howes, Carollee, Margaret Burchinal, Robert Pianta, Donna Bryant, Diane Early, Richard Clifford & Oscar Barbarin. 2008. Ready to learn? Children's pre-academic achievement in prekindergarten programs. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly* 23(1). 27–50.
Hyltenstam, Kenneth. 1999. *Sveriges sju inhemska språk – ett minoritetsspråksperspektiv*. [Sweden's seven domestic languages – a minority language perspective]. Lund: Studentlitteratur.
Jordens, Kathelijne, Kris Van den Branden & Koen Van Gorp. 2018. Multilingual islands in a monolingual sea: Language choice patterns during group work. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 21(8). 943–955.
Kultti, Anne. 2012. *Flerspråkiga barn i förskolan: Villkor för deltagande och lärande*. [Multilingual children in preschool: Conditions for participation and learning]. Kållered: Göteborgs universitet. Doctoral thesis.
Larsson, Karolina & Polly Björk-Willén. 2020. *Språkutvecklande och flerspråkigt arbete i förskolan*. [Linguistic and multilingual approaches in preschool]. Halmstad: Halmstads kommun.
Lave, Jean & Etienne Wenger. 1998. *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
Lee, Soyong. 2014. Language choice & language power: Children's use of Korean & English in a two-way immersion program. *Multicultural Education* 22(1). 12–19.
Martin-Bylund, Anna. 2017. *Towards a minor bilingualism: Exploring variations of language and literacy in early childhood education*. Linköping: Linköping University. Doctoral thesis.
Meisel, Jürgen M. 1994. Code-switching in young bilingual children: The acquisition of grammatical constraints. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition* 16(4). 413–439.

Ochs, Elinor & Bambi B. Schieffelin. 2013. The theory of language socialization. In Alessandro Duranti, Elinor Ochs & Bambi B. Schieffelin (eds.), *The handbook of language socialization*, 1–22. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Olmedo, Irma M. 2003. Language mediation among emergent bilingual children. *Linguistics and Education* 14(2). 143–162.

Ovando, Carlos J. 1990. Politics and pedagogy: The case of bilingual education. *Harvard Educational Review* 60(3). 341–356.

Parkvall, Mikael. 2015. *Sveriges språk i siffror: Vilka språk talas och av hur många?* [Sweden's languages in numbers: Which languages are spoken and by how many?]. Stockholm: Språkrådets skrifter 20 and Morfem.

Paugh, Amy L. 2012. *Playing with languages: Children and change in a Caribbean village*. New York: Berghah Books.

Petersen, Petra. 2020. *Delaktighet och digitala resurser. Barns multimodala uttryck för delaktighet i förskolan i flerspråkiga områden*. [Participation and digital resources. Children's multimodal expressions for participation i preschools in multlingual areas.] Institutionen för pedagogik och didaktik. Stockholm: Stockholms universitet. Doctoral thesis.

Pomerantz, Anita & John Heritage. 2013. Preference. In Jack Sidnell & Tanya Stivers (eds.), *The handbook of conversation analysis*, 210–228. Chichester: Wiley Blackwell.

Poplack, Shana. 1980. Sometimes I'll start a sentence in Spanish y termino en español: Toward a typology of codeswitching. *Linguistics* 18(7–8). 581–618.

Probyn, Margie. 2009. 'Smuggling the vernacular into the classroom': Conflicts and tensions in classroom codeswitching in township/rural schools in South Africa. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 12(2). 123–136.

Puskás, Tünde & Polly Björk-Willén. 2017. Dilemmatic aspects of language policies in a trilingual preschool group. *Multilingua* 36(4). 425–449.

Rampton, Ben. 1995. *Crossing: Language and ethnicity among adolescents*. New York: Longman Publishing.

Ribot, Krystal M. & Erika Hoff. 2014. '¿Cómo estás?' 'I'm good.' Conversational code-switching is related to profiles of expressive and receptive proficiency in Spanish–English bilingual toddlers. *International Journal of Behavioral Development* 38(4). 333–341.

Samuelsson, Robin, Sara Price & Carey Jewitt. 2021. How pedagogical relations in early years settings are reconfigured by interactive touchscreens. *British Journal of Educational Technology* 53(1). 58–76.

SCB Statistikmyndigheten [Central Bureau of Statistics]. 2022. *Utrikes födda i Sverige* [Foreign-born in Sweden]. https://www.scb.se/hitta-statistik/sverige-i-siffror/manniskorna-i-sverige/utrikes-fodda/ (accessed 2 March 2022).

Schegloff, Emanuel A. 1968. Sequencing in conversational openings. *American Anthropologist* 70(6). 1075–1095.

Schwartz, Mila & Åsa Palviainen. 2016. Twenty-first-century preschool bilingual education: Facing advantages and challenges in cross-cultural contexts. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 19(6). 603–613.

Schwartz, Mila, Claudine Kirsch & Simone Mortini. 2020. Young children's language-based agency in multilingual contexts in Luxembourg and Israel. *Applied Linguistics Review* 2020. 2019–0050.

Schwartz, Mila, Inas Deeb & Sujoud Hijazy. 2019. "Say 'What happened?' in Hebrew. He does not speak Arabic!" Early language awareness as expressed in verbal and nonverbal interactions in the preschool bilingual classroom. *Linguistics and Education* 52. 13–23.

SFS. 2009:600. *Språklag* [Language Act]. Stockholm: Kulturdepartementet.

Shomamy, Elana. 2006. *Language policy: Hidden agendas and new approaches*. New York: Routledge.

Skaremyr, Ellinor. 2019. *Språkliga gemenskaper och minoritetsspråkiga barn i svensk förskola.* [Linguistic communities and minority language children in the Swedish preschool]. Karlstad: Karlstad University. Doctoral thesis.

SOU. 2002:27. *Mål i mun. Förslag till handlingsprogram för svenska språket.* [Being able to speak out. Proposal for action program for the Swedish language]. Stockholm: Fritzes.

Spolsky, Bernard. 2004. *Language policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Swain, Merril, Penny Kinnear & Linda Steinman. 2011. *Sociocultural theory in second language education: An introduction through narratives*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Swedish National Agency for Education. 2018. *Läroplan för förskolan, Lpfö 98.* [Curriculum for the preschool, Lpfö 1998]. Stockholm: Fritzes.

Swedish Parliament. 2005. *Bästa språket – en samlad svensk språkpolitik [The best language – a coherent Swedish language policy]. Proposition 2005/06:2*. Stockholm: Utbildnings-och Kulturdepartementet.

Swedish Parliament. 2009. *Språk för alla – förslag till språklag [Language for all –language act proposal]. Proposition 2008/09:153*. Stockholm: Kulturdepartementet.

Tabors, Patton O. 1997. *One child, two languages. A guide for preschool educators of children learning English as a second language*. Baltimore: Paul Brooks Publishing.

The Swedish Institute for Languages and Folklore. 2022. *Lär dig mer om nyord* [Learn more about new words]. https://www.isof.se/lar-dig-mer/kunskapsbanker/lar-dig-mer-om-nyord (accessed 12 April 2022).

Thomas, Ennli M. & Dylan B. Roberts. 2011. Exploring bilinguals' social use of language inside and out of the minority language classroom. *Language and Education* 25(2). 89–108.

Vygotsky, Lev. 1978. *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Winther-Lindqvist, Ditte, Charlotte Ringsmose & Allerup Peter. 2012. Kvaliteter ved det sproglige læringsmiljø i børnehaven. [Qualitative linguistic environments in preschool]. In Lone Svinth & Charlotte Ringsmose (eds.), *Lærings og udvikling i daginstitutioner. [Learning and development in preschool]*, 114–152. Viborg: Dansk Psykologisk Forlag.

Wray, Alison. 2002. *Formulaic language and the lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Zadunaisky Ehrlich, Sara & Shoshana Blum-Kulka. 2014. "Now I said that Danny becomes Danny again": A multifaceted view of kindergarten children's peer argumentative discourse. In Asta Cekaite, Shoshana Blum-Kulka, Vibeke Grøver & Eva Teubal (eds.), *Children's peer talk: Learning from each other*, 23–41. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.