

MOVING BETWEEN LANGUAGES

Language and knowledge development for multilingual children and young people



VÄXELVIS PÅ MODERSMÅL OCH SVENSKA

engelsk version



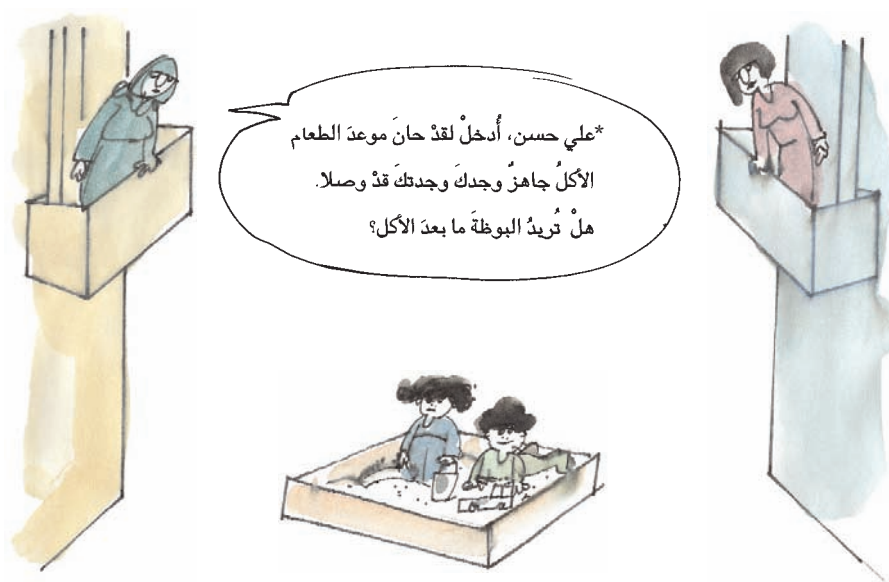
MYNDIGHETEN FÖR
SKOLUTVECKLING

My language is growing

This child who is called in his mother tongue, hears many words. He recognises most of them and knows what they stand for. He understands that grandmother and grandfather are in the apartment, in spite of the fact that he cannot see them. He is happy because there will be ice cream. And he is learning how to formulate a summons, how to make a statement and how to construct a question in his mother tongue.

This is how children learn grammatical rules. They listen, repeat and are soon able to construct their own sentences and express their own thoughts and wishes.

Children are able to translate this knowledge into the structure of the Swedish language, when they have learned the Swedish words and need to use the same grammatical construction in Swedish.



*Ali Hassan! Come in, it's dinner time! Dinner's ready and Granny and Granddad have arrived. Would you like some ice cream for pudding?

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We can learn many languages

In 21st century Sweden there are many languages. An increasing number of children are growing up in multilingual families. In pre-school and school, children often meet adults who speak several languages. How well these places manage multilingualism will have a decisive effect on the development of these children's knowledge and identities.

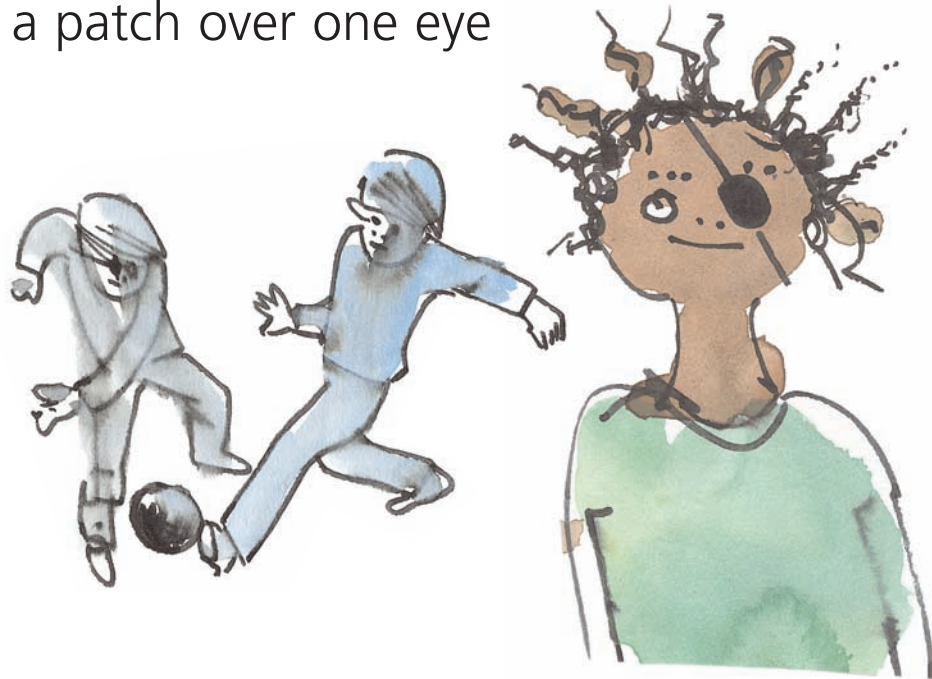
It is possible to learn a new language without losing anything from the previous language. The multilingual pupils' knowledge of their mother tongues is not to be placed in conflict with their knowledge of the majority language. On the contrary - languages breed languages! We can take the concepts that we have words for in one language with us into the new one as soon as we have learned the relevant vocabulary. Merely translating an already familiar concept is

definitely easier than learning a new one – when explanations are given using words we know well. It is the adults – parents, teachers, researchers, opinion builders and decision-makers – who decide on the opportunities offered to multilingual children and young people. Opportunities to be used to develop their knowledge with the support of, and while moving between, their different languages.

The aim of this brochure is to show how Swedish pre-schools and schools intend to support multilingual children and young people in the development of their language and their acquisition of new knowledge. Information on where material mentioned in the brochure can be obtained is found in *Links and literature* on the last page.

Culture and values are expressed through language. Language gives us self esteem. Language bears knowledge and forms the basis of meetings with other people. We need language in order to be able to think, dream, formulate questions and solve problems. *More languages bring more opportunities!*

Without a patch over one eye



It is difficult to judge how far to kick the ball with a patch over one eye. With two healthy eyes we do not see double, we see three dimensionally!

This is the situation for multilingual children. Using both languages brings more dimensions and increased opportunities to develop knowledge.

However, multilingual children do not always have an easy time in Swedish schools. Even if many of them manage very well there are others who do not achieve the necessary knowledge targets. There are several, interrelated reasons for this. One is that teaching in and about their mother tongues has decreased in all school forms during the last 10-15 year period.

In many municipalities support to training in children's mother tongues has completely disappeared. These cutbacks are not based on any pedagogical assessment – within the pre-school world it was well known that early inputs to support language and identity are especially important when children are very young. Local authorities simply needed to save money.

Most municipalities schedule the greater part of lessons in the mother tongue to late afternoons. This contributes to the fact that fewer students choose to study their mother tongue. When these lessons are carried out in empty schools and the other teachers and pupils have left for the day, the school loses the multicultural competence that these teachers possess. This, in turn, means that knowledge concerning the situation of the multicultural pupils decreases and teachers using Swedish as a medium are not able to meet the needs of these students as well as they could.

Other cutbacks during this period concerning “student health” staff – counsellors, school nurses, psychologists – have also affected especially seriously the pupils who had been exposed to trauma or who live with the insecurity of not knowing if they will be able to stay in Sweden. In many places these students have not been able to receive the support they need to be able to progress in their knowledge development.

Schools will improve

The government has taken a decision to invest extra resources to help municipalities meet the individual needs of multilingual pupils. All pupils are entitled to equal conditions as far as opportunities for achieving the knowledge targets are concerned during their compulsory 9-year school period, and also to complete their studies at upper secondary level.

As instructed by the government, the Swedish National Agency for School Improvement has established a plan for how this funding is to be used within different support inputs:

- ✿ School principals and other decision makers will be offered training in issues that concern multilingual pupils, approaches to the meeting of cultures, and cooperation between school and parents.
- ✿ Swedish speaking teachers who teach multilingual pupils in different subjects will be trained in order to provide better education for pupils with Swedish as a second language.
- ✿ Mother tongue teachers will be offered training in order to improve their study counselling skills in various subjects and so that they can teach different subjects in their mother tongue or in Swedish.
- ✿ Municipalities will receive grants to employ extra staff in schools where the need is great.
- ✿ Municipalities will receive support in the

development of methods for improved utilisation of parents' experience. In addition methods to increase parents' opportunities to support their children in their identity and knowledge development will be explored.

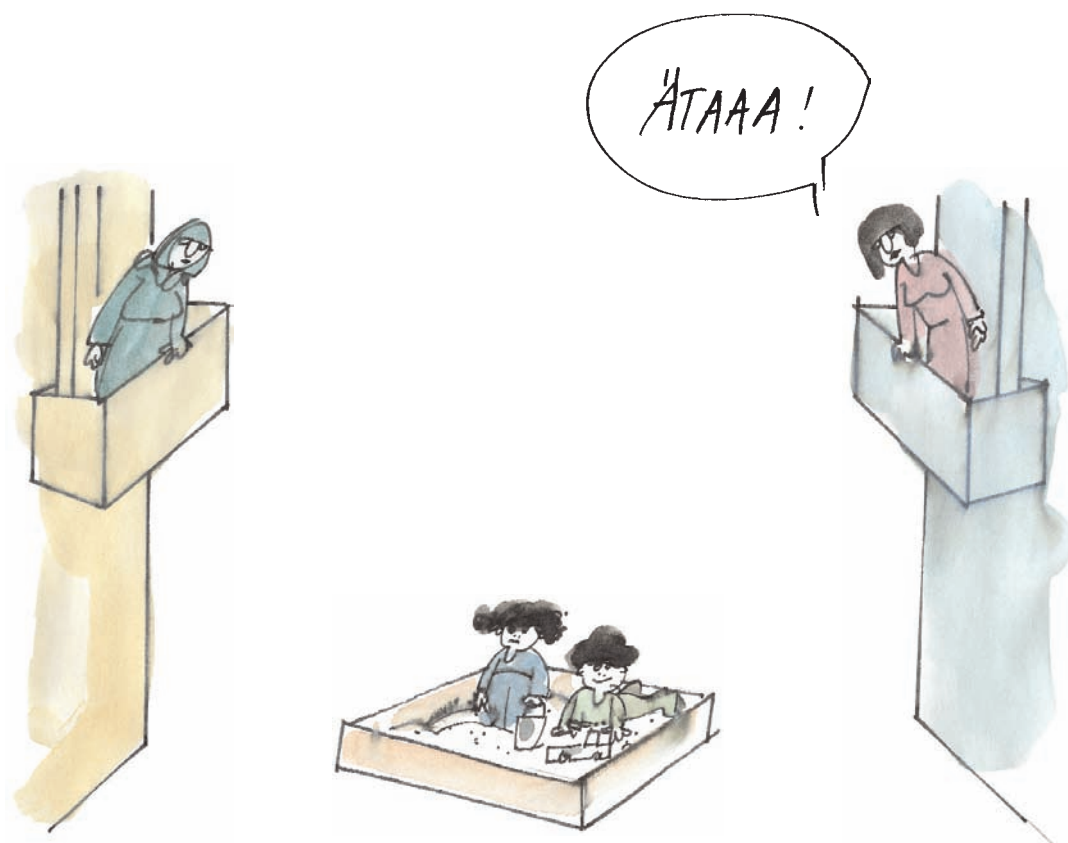
- ✿ Municipalities will receive support in order to develop education for the pupils who come to Sweden during the later years of compulsory schooling or during the upper secondary period.
- ✿ Multilingual pupils will be specially supported so that they will be able and willing to continue their studies after upper secondary level.

The majority of the funding set aside for these activities will be allocated to the more than 30 municipalities in which the distance between school targets and reality is greatest. How these funds are used will be determined by the municipality in question, in consultation with the National Agency.

Training for mother tongue teachers, inputs aimed at strengthening parent-school cooperation, development of teaching methods for older pupils who have just arrived and inputs designed to increase the interest of multilingual pupils in higher education will cover all municipalities.

The following pages present more details concerning the background to these activities.

Which language do I use to help my children most?



Who has tricked this mother into “speaking Swedish” with her children in spite of the fact that her knowledge of Swedish is limited to a few words? She means well – but all that happens is that the child’s language development will be delayed. The child will learn fewer words and will not know how to form a sentence. This will seriously affect the child’s continued knowledge development.

Parents who wonder which language they should speak with their children, what they should do if there are different languages in the family, if the child should take part in mother tongue support lessons in pre-school, if they should join in mother tongue classes in school and how they can support their children’s language development in Swedish, will find the answers to their questions in the booklet

entitled *Two languages or more? Advice for multilingual families*. This material is available in Swedish and in 16 other languages and is based on experience from a large number of multilingual families. It has been developed by the Rinkeby Institute of Multilingual Research and is published in cooperation with the Swedish National Agency for School Improvement.

Pre-school and multilingual children

In the curriculum for Swedish pre-schools, on which all activities are based, it states:

"Pre-school will work to ensure that each child who as a mother tongue other than Swedish develops his/her cultural identity and the ability to communicate in both Swedish and the relevant mother tongue."

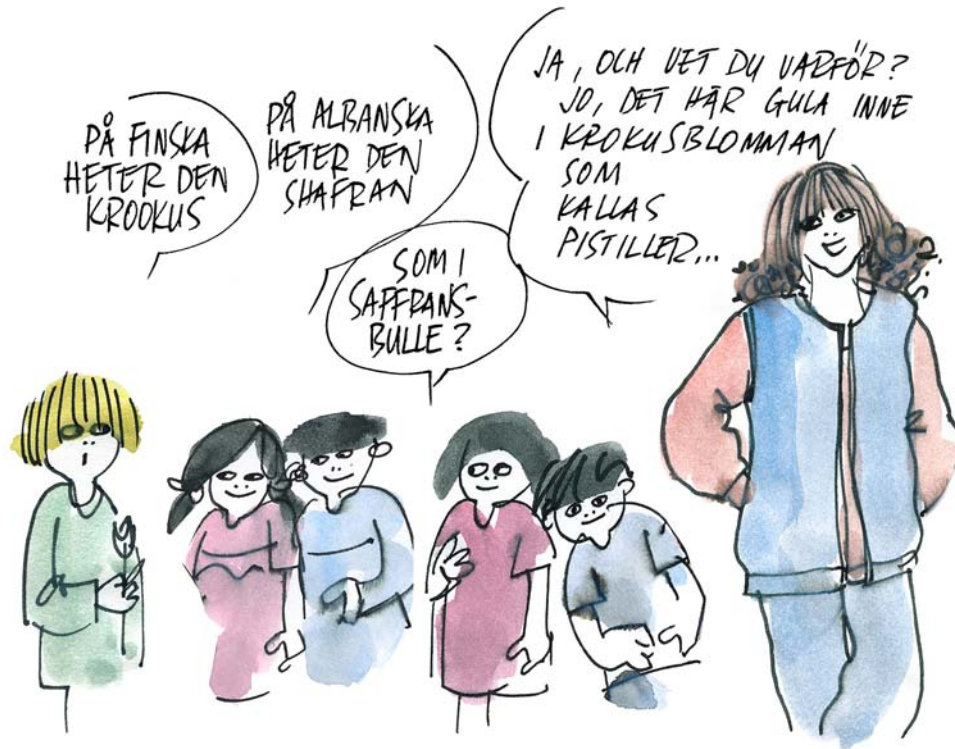
Language and identity development go hand in hand. All children benefit from meeting different languages and gaining insights into different cultures.

Some libraries stock children's books and recordings in languages other than Swedish. These can be borrowed and taken home. The National Agency is currently carrying out a study to establish which material is suitable for multilingual activities in pre-school and for reading aloud in the home. Information on this material will be published on the National Agency for School Improvement's website during the autumn of 2006.(www.modersmal.net)



The girl, whose roots are in a culture other than Swedish, feels proud when she hears a story from her first country, a story that the other children think is exciting. *Then she can take the book home to her family and they can listen to the story recorded in her mother tongue!*

Additional languages in pre-school bring more opportunities



Komma till tals. Flerspråkiga barn i förskolan is commentary material from the National Agency for School Improvement. This states the concepts and processes used concerning how multilingual children are to be dealt with and supported in their different languages.

Språket lyfter – Assessments of children's language development

It may be difficult to assess how much Swedish a multilingual child knows. Children find it easy to adopt the prevailing pronunciation, and this may mean that parents and teachers overestimate the amount of language the child is able to master. One child speaks with no accent, but is her language really as developed

as that of children the same age with Swedish as their mother tongue?

Another child speaks very little. At home his parents believe that this is because he cannot manage his mother tongue very well, but they assume that he speaks good Swedish. In pre-school the staff believe the opposite – that the child cannot speak Swedish very well but is good at his mother tongue.

There are methods to establish where multilingual children are in their language development processes. With the support of this diagnosis material, *Språket lyfter*, *Diagnosmaterial i svenska, Svenska som andraspråk och modersmål för åren före skolår 6*, such assessments can be carried out parallel in Swedish and in the children's mother tongues.

Grandparents can play an active role

A language is more than words and grammar rules. It also covers thoughts, values, approach to the world and provides the knowledge that is channelled via

language. How children meet new knowledge during their early years affects their learning and exerts a major influence on them when they arrive at school.

Granddad's allotment is his pride and joy. He has taught Mina the names of all the tools and how to dig, plant and water to make everything grow. Mina has also learned from Granddad that it takes time before the first shoots rise out of the ground. He said that you have to have patience and not to give up. *Growing takes time!*



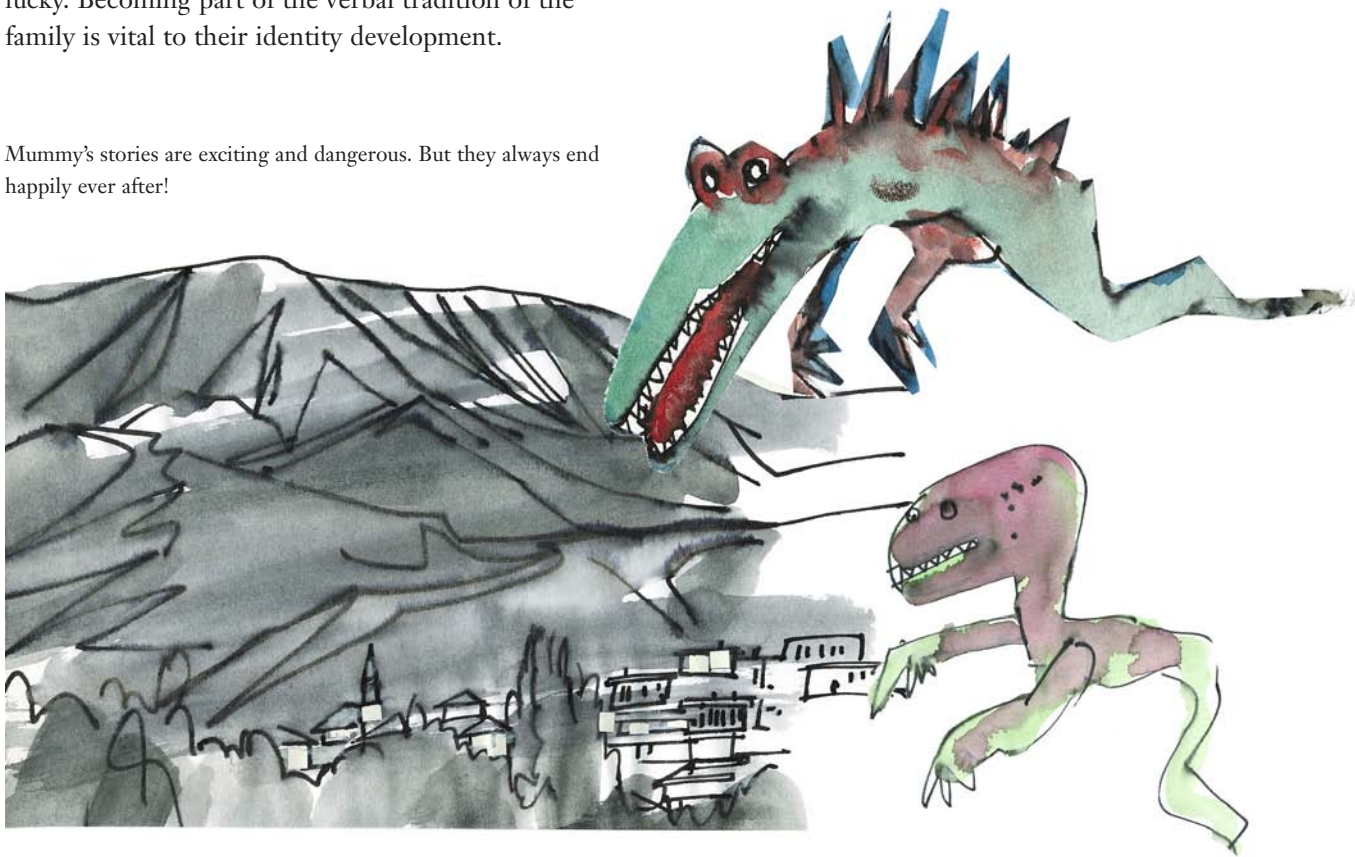
Tell us a story! Tell us again!

Children love to listen to stories. Many children are especially fond of listening to stories about themselves when they were very young. Other important stories are about their mothers and fathers and what they did as children. What games they played and how they got into mischief. A quiet chat and a special time when they can tell their parents what happened during the day is a good way for children to process the events of their day.

Children who can listen to stories told by their grandparents about their own childhood are very lucky. Becoming part of the verbal tradition of the family is vital to their identity development.

Children also enjoy adults reading to them. There is a lack of children's books in different languages in Sweden, even if some libraries do try to buy them. Sometimes "reading in the mother tongue" can work if the adult does a rapid translation of the text while they both look at the pictures in a book in Swedish. But remember that children can be very particular about the fact that the story must be exactly the same every time, day after day. It is important to remember the exact words used every time!

Mummy's stories are exciting and dangerous. But they always end happily ever after!



Good level of Swedish as a second language



Many multilingual pupils possess a good level of Swedish, for some it is their strongest language. Others do not meet the Swedish language until they get to pre-school or even the first year of school. Experience from schools in Sweden shows that it usually takes one to two years for newly arrived pupils to reach a sufficient level in Swedish to be able to communicate with their friends and keep up with teaching to a reasonable level. It usually takes five to six years before these pupils can manage the language as well as their classmates who have Swedish as a mother tongue. There are exceptions. Highly motivated pupils with a good level of knowledge in their mother tongues, and perhaps even other languages, learn Swedish more quickly. Pupils who come from areas affected by armed conflicts or who have been exposed to other traumatic events may, during certain periods, experience considerable difficulty in learning anything new.

A good level of Swedish is the key to success in school in Sweden. In order to continue studies in a national programme in upper secondary school,

pupils must achieve at least a Pass in Year 9 of compulsory schooling either in Swedish or in Swedish as a second language.

One very good way of improving knowledge levels in any language is to read books. The librarian will be only too pleased to give advice on suitable books that will reflect the interests of the child concerned.

Nationellt centrum för svenska som andraspråk och sfi

The National Centre has been commissioned by the Swedish Government. Its area of responsibility includes all activities from pre-school to Swedish for Adult Immigrants, sfi. Some of the most important areas are:

- * spreading knowledge and awareness of the special learning processes involved in acquiring a second language
- * endorsing teaching methods which support linguistic and cognitive development.

The National Centre organises seminars and conferences, publishes books and is responsible for personal contacts. More information can be found on their website at www.lhs.se/sfi

Goal-oriented mother tongue teaching

The Riksdag (the Swedish Parliament) has taken a decision that all pupils whose mother tongue is not Swedish will be able to study their mother tongue during their nine-year compulsory school period and at upper secondary level. In this, Sweden is following the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child,

"States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: the development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own..." (Article 29).

The subject is voluntary and pupils must possess "basic knowledge" of the language. Swedish municipalities are obliged to offer mother tongue classes according to the conditions stated in the Compulsory School Ordinance and the Upper Secondary School Ordinance. There are national curricula and grades awarded for mother tongue studies possess the same weight and merit value as grades in other subjects when the pupil applies to upper secondary school or university level education.

Why study mother tongue in school?

- * A person's knowledge of his/her mother tongue and the culture they originate from enables them to develop a positive, multicultural identity which will bring a sense of belonging both in the multicultural society where the pupil lives and in the original culture.

- * Knowledge of language is the key to communication. The mother tongue enables close contacts within the family and with relatives who live in other countries. In an increasingly internationalised world, knowledge of several languages is a resource for both the individual and for Sweden. Teaching is aimed at helping pupils to achieve language skills in the mother tongue which will make it possible for them to continue their studies as adults and in their professional lives in Sweden or in other countries.
- * Language is a tool for the development of knowledge. If pupils are allowed to use their different languages in school, they will be provided with increased opportunities to gain new knowledge in different subjects.

The International Library

The International Library in Stockholm contains approximately 200 000 books in more than 100 languages. There are also DVDs and video films from different countries and CDs of music from all over the world. Why not visit their website, it is provided in Arabic, English, Chinese, Persian, Russian, Spanish and Swedish. Anyone who has a borrowing card for Stockholm City Library may borrow books from this Library themselves – it is located close to Odenplan. People living in other towns may order books from the International Library through the library in their home town.

www.internationalbiblioteket.se

Theme Mother Tongue at www.modersmal.net

Internet brings radically improved preconditions for the development of language knowledge. On the National Agency's website Tema Modersmål almost 100 teachers in more than 30 languages are working with the identification of links to texts, pictures and

sound recordings that children can use for their language development. There are also interactive opportunities within several of these languages so that contacts can be established between teachers, pupils and parents.

Tema Modersmål
MODERSMÅLETS PLATS PÅ SKOLDATANÄTET

winner
ELECT 2003
Best Global Website Award

HOME | MY ACCOUNT | DOCUMENTS | LINKS | ARCHIVE | SEARCH | CONTACT US

About the theme site
About mt education
Regulatory acts
Support & Inspections
On-line Dictionaries
Skoldatanätet
Main Menu
• HOME
Info
• Recommend Us
• Members List
• Top List
• Stats
REPORT
"More languages - More opportunities!"
A summary

Resources: Wikipedia
Posted by: Admin on Wednesday, May 03, 2006 - 09:08
Multilingual Computer
Wikipedia is a project to build free encyclopedias in all languages of the world. Virtually anyone is free to contribute. The project started in January 2001 in one language, English, and currently has over 3,300,000 articles in over 229 languages! Visit Wikipedia and more.

Resources: Multilingual keyboard on the internet
Posted by: Admin on Thursday, April 06, 2006 - 02:45
Multilingual Computer
Write in your language wherever you are in the world, with an online onscreen keyboard emulator. This is also a beautiful new resource for mother tongue language learners. Gate2home now in 63 languages!

Activities: Education in the Multicultural City
Posted by: Admin on Monday, March 27, 2006 - 11:15
Conference
The City of Malmö, Board of Education, wishes to invite you to participate in a conference in Malmö on Opportunities and Challenges for Education in the Multicultural City, 17-19 May 2006.
The target group of the conference is all professionals working in education and higher education including policy-makers and politicians.

Arabiska عربي
Somaliska SOMALI
Kurdiska KURDÎ كوردی
Finska SUOMEN KIELI
Spanska ESPAÑOL
Persiska فارسی
Dari/Pashto دری پښتو
Luganda LUGANDA
Filipino TAGALOG
TECKENSPRÅK
Kinesiska 中文
Vietnamesiska TIẾNG VIỆT
Albanska GJUHA SHQIPE
Thai ไทย
ROMANI CHÎB
SÂME/SAEMIEN
MEÄNKIELI
Turkiska TÜRKÇE
Tigrinya ትግርኛ
JIDDISCH יידיש
Polska POLSKI
Bosniska BOSANSKI
Serbiska SRPSKI
Kroatiska HRVATSKI
Ryska РУССКИЙ
Syriiska ܐܪܡܝܝܐ

Newly arrived pupils want to learn English



English is one of the so-called core subjects within the Swedish school system. In this system pupils must earn a minimum of a Pass in the subject English in their last year of compulsory schooling in order to be accepted into a national programme at upper secondary level. Generally pupils in Swedish schools begin to study English in their first or second years of school. Internationally, Swedish pupils lead the world in levels of English knowledge among children who do not have English as their mother tongue.

Pupils who arrive at Swedish schools later may already have a certain knowledge of English. Some have English as their first language; others have used it as a medium of study or have learned it in a more informal fashion, while others may never have come into contact with English at all. Most newly arrived pupils are well motivated as far as learning English is concerned. This especially applies to young people who are uncertain whether they will be staying in Sweden.

English is a compulsory subject and pupils who have not been there "since the start" are entitled to study it. Most pupils possess the capacity to begin with Swedish and English parallel. Sometimes the languages may even support each other, e.g. the pupil may recognise the structure of Swedish grammar as similar to that of English, or that a word in Swedish is similar to one in English.

In spite of this, if the school feels that it would be

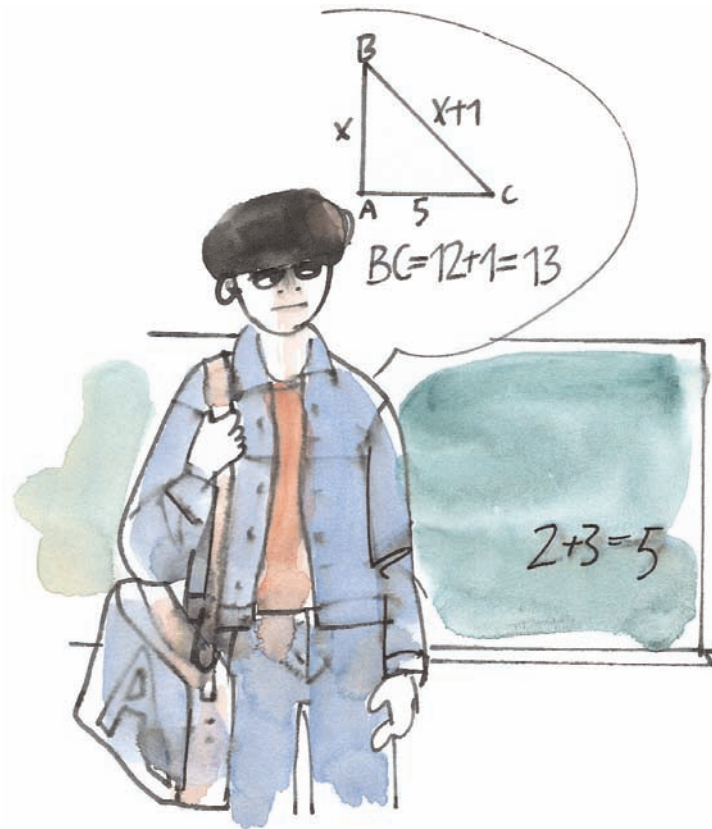
better for the child concerned to wait before starting English then this decision must be made in consultation with the child's parents or guardians. Everyone must be aware of the effect that leaving out English will have on the pupil's opportunities of continuing studies at upper secondary level.

New opportunities 2006-2007

- * During the period 2006-2007, the Swedish National Agency for School Improvement will provide financial stimulation grants to schools that offer subject teaching in other languages plus additional training will be offered so that teachers can teach other subjects in languages other than Swedish.
- * Most multilingual pupils will continue to receive the majority of teaching in all subjects in Swedish. Consequently the Agency will also invest resources in stimulating municipalities to offer competence development to their Swedish-speaking subject teachers in the field. The aim is for these teachers to develop their teaching in order to improve the preconditions for learning experienced by pupils who have Swedish as their second language.

* Har jag som är en svensk tusenfoting bara hundra fötter på engelska?

Build on the maths the pupils already know



Another core subject is maths. Many newly arrived pupils possess good levels of maths, however for those who come to the Swedish school during the latter part of the nine year compulsory period and during upper secondary school it will take several years before their knowledge of Swedish is sufficient to understand the mathematics textbooks and they are able to report on the solution of mathematical problems in Swedish.

The current solution for newly arrived pupils is that they wait with mathematics as long as they attend preparatory classes or the upper secondary introductory courses for immigrant pupils (IVIK). Sometimes they are assigned simple (childish!) number problems that do not require knowledge of the Swedish language.

Others attend the Swedish -language maths lessons without benefiting from the teaching. It is not unusual that these pupils feel misunderstood and, in a worst-case scenario, lose interest in learning Swedish.

For these pupils it is a distinct advantage if they are able to develop their knowledge of maths in their mother tongue or previous language of instruction parallel with their studies of Swedish.

There are no formal barriers to teaching in a language other than Swedish and grades from such classes have the same validity as those from classes held in Swedish.

Will my child do well? Can we help? What happens?

Parental consultations in pre-school

Pre-school invites parents to discussions concerning their child's development, on how the child functions with other children and on how far they have come in their language and knowledge development. Parents are entitled to information on how pre-school works with supporting the double identity and language development experienced by multilingual children. Pre-school staff are able to explain to the family how they can support children's language development in the home.

Development conferences in school

Each term, the school will invite pupils and parents to a development conference. The aims of these conferences are:

- ✿ To inform pupils and parents/guardians on whether the individual child is learning as he/she should, what they find easier and what they find more difficult. This discussion will also cover the pupil's school situation in general, how he/she functions with other children and adults in different groups.
- ✿ That the school is to become aware of, and utilise, the experience of the parents/guardians and their opportunities to contribute to their children's knowledge development. Active participation from the parents/guardians enables them to demand the necessary inputs from the school.
- ✿ That teachers, pupils and parents agree on what the pupil is to work on until the next time they meet and the current activities underway at the school. An agreement can also be made concerning how the home is to contribute to this process.

Individual Development Plans (Individuella Utvecklingsplaner – IUP)

In connection with this conference the teacher, together with the pupil and his/her parents/guardian, will write an Individual Development Plan (IUP) for each pupil.

- ✿ An IUP consists of a limited number of learning targets that the pupil can achieve by the next meeting, when a new plan is agreed.
- ✿ An IUP for younger children will primarily cover the basic skills such as reading, writing and arithmetic. As the child grows the focus will be shifted towards knowledge development in different subjects.

Through these development plans, the school and the home will continuously follow up each pupil's knowledge development. The aim of these agreed targets is that a greater number of pupils will achieve the school's knowledge goals.

More information can be found at *Allmänna råd och kommentarer – Den individuella utvecklingsplanen*.

The right to an interpreter

If teachers cannot make communicate with parents/guardians in Swedish, the school must ensure that a suitable interpreter is present during conferences. Pupils must never be used as interpreters during school contacts with their homes.

Grades and written assessments



The curriculum of the Swedish nine-year compulsory school, and for upper secondary school, provides guidelines for teachers when setting grades. There are nationally established criteria for the knowledge necessary in order for a pupil to receive a certain grade.

Grades in the nine-year compulsory Swedish school are as below:

- ✿ Pass (G)
- ✿ Pass with Distinction (VG)

- ✿ Pass with Special Distinction (MVG)

Any pupil who does not achieve the targets for the different subjects in this school system is entitled to a written assessment on the level of their knowledge development in the subject or subjects concerned. This assessment must also include the support activities undertaken by the school.

- ✿ In upper secondary school the grade Failed (IG) is also used.

Links and literature

Links on the website of the National Agency for School Improvement *www.skolutveckling.se*

MÅNGFALD OCH LIKVÄRDIGHET

The following websites are among those listed under this heading:

Nyanlända

Resources for schools and others who work with newly arrived children and young people.

Idéskola för mångfald

A network of pre-schools and schools who wish to develop concepts on how to work successfully with diversity issues.

Regeringsuppdrag

Links to governing instruments such as the National Agency's Diversity Plan 2006-2007 entitled "Improved Results and decreased Differences – planning for diversity activities".

Utvecklingsdialoger

Includes e.g. a list of the more than 30 municipalities who receive this special support in the form of dialogues during 2006-2007.

Tema Modersmål

Resources for everyone working within the schools and care of children systems. Includes: "language rooms" for approximately 30 different languages, basic facts on teaching, news, debates, links to research reports, invitations to courses and conferences etc. Also links to:

Lexin – dictionary online (Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian, English, Finnish, Greek, Croat, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish plus Swedish words with recorded pronunciation examples)

Lexin – Bild contains approximately 1700 nouns (with pictures, text and sound in Swedish, translation into several languages is underway)

Lexin – Film contains 370 verbs (short film clips with Swedish sound)

KUNSKAP OCH BEDÖMNING

The following websites are some of the links under this heading:

Bedömning och betyg

Individuella utvecklingsplaner

Läs och skriv

Matematik, naturvetenskap och teknik

Skolbibliotek

Språk

BOOKS AND BROCHURES

These reports and brochures may be read, downloaded or purchased via www.skolutveckling.se/publikationer

Två språk eller flera? Råd till flerspråkiga familjer



(28 pages). Published in Swedish+ Albanian, Arabic, Bosnian, English, Finnish, North Kurdish, Romany Arli and Lovara, Persian, Polish, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tigrinya, Thai and Turkish. This

gives answers to parents' questions on how to manage the languages in their family and how to support their children's language and knowledge development.

Komma till tals Flerspråkiga barn i förskolan,



2004 (Small format, 60 pages). The aim of this material is to contribute to increasing knowledge on how the multilingualism of very young children can be supported and stimulated.

Vid sidan av eller mitt i? 2005 (70 pages) Material



for municipalities and schools that identifies factors for success when working with pupils who arrive late in their school career and highlights some issues to consider concerning school activities.

MATERIAL from the National Agency for Education

This material may be read, downloaded or purchased via www.skolverket.se

KURSPLANER OCH BETYGSKRITERIER I GRUND- OCH GYMNASIESKOLAN

Flera språk – fler möjligheter, 2002 (304 pages). As



tasked by the Swedish Government, the National Agency for Education surveyed support and second language teaching in Swedish pre-schools and schools. This report includes the annexes: Attitudes to mother tongue teaching and integration, review of Swedish research on mother tongue teaching, Three decades of mother tongue support – on mother tongue support in pre-school 1970-2000.

Flera språk – fler möjligheter, 2003 (16 pages).

Short version of the above report. Also in English.



Språket lyfter – lärarhandledning, 2002 (27 pages). Diagnosis material in Swedish, Swedish as a second language and mother tongue teaching before school Year 6.



Språket lyfter – observationsschema, 2002 (3 pages). Can be used independent of language.

Allmänna råd och kommentarer Den Individuella utvecklingsplanen, 2005. The National Agency for Education gives advice and comments on the task of establishing individual development plans for all pupils.

Sweden needs multilingual people!



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