

Readiness or resistance?

- Newly arrived adult migrants' experiences, meaning making, and learning in Sweden

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For my parents, Noria and Azy
and
for Mohamed and Issam

Nothing without meaning.

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Gothenburg, late October 2017

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PART ONE

Points of departure, research field, theory, and methods

The first part of this thesis begins with the background, purpose and research questions of the study. This is followed by an account of the research field of adult migrants' meaning making and learning. After that, the theoretical considerations of this thesis will be described. Part one ends with an account of the methods used for the research study, and includes the author's background and the ethical considerations which were made prior to, and during data collection.

Chapter 1: Points of departure

This thesis deals with newly arrived adult migrants'¹ experiences as concern the state-funded introduction measures, and their learning in the Swedish society. It investigates how these newly arrived individuals make meaning in their new life, and what learning this meaning making generates while they participate in the state-funded introduction measures (*offentliga introduktionsinsatser*) during the first two to three years of residence (after receiving their residence permit). The present text is a thesis in the field of adult learning, where my emphasis lies on adult migrants' meaning making, which, as will be described further below, is an important part of adults' learning.

Background

The main reason for the existence of the introduction programme in Sweden is to facilitate newly arrived individuals' *etablering* in society and working life, as soon as possible after their arrival. *Etablering* is a word used for the concept of establishing oneself as, for instance, a gainfully employed member of a democratic society. According to the government, *etablering* is promoted through the migrants' participation in three activities, also referred to as introduction measures (*etableringsinsatser*), which are regulated in policy documents. These are the civic orientation course, *samhällsorientering*, (henceforth also called the CO course), Swedish for immigrants (SFI), and different kinds of work-related activities, such as *internship*², at different work places. (Commission Report, SOU 2010:16). It is the Swedish Public Employment Service which has the coordinating responsibility for the introduction measures, in cooperation with several different municipal or other authorities (Arbetsförmedlingen^a). Up to 2011, the pace of migrants' *etablering* in the Swedish labour market and society has not been as the government had expected, because it has taken too long for migrants to step into and remain in the labour market (Ibid.). Therefore, the state-funded introduction measures were regulated by the state in December 2010, making it more clear what the Swedish Public Employment Service in all municipalities receiving newly arrived is expected to do to facilitate *etablering* for this group. The idea, thus, is that the new introduction measures will be more effective in accomplishing this task. Thus, it is useful to find out what experiences and meaning newly arrived migrants make during their first years in Sweden. Further, the migrants' reaction to the state-funded introduction measures can be interpreted as a reaction to the ideas behind the measures as well. For instance, what ideas are expressed, either implicitly or explicitly, in the policy documents on *etablering*, which are the texts that regulate the state-funded introduction measures? What does the notion of *etablering* entail, and what meaning do the newly arrived individuals make of their experiences of the state-funded introduction measures? The ambition is that these and related questions will be answered further on in the thesis.

¹ Throughout the whole thesis, different words will be used for the same conception of newly arrived migrants. For instance, this group will also be referred to as *adult migrants*, *migrants*, *newly arrived*, or *newly arrived individuals*.

² The word *internship* will here be used for meaning the same thing as *praktik* in Swedish. Although the Swedish Public Employment Service use *work experience* when referring to *praktik* on their official English website, in the present study's case, it seems more suitable to talk about internship, since work experience might be misunderstood in the context of making meaning of one's experiences as a newly arrived.

As migration entails specific experiences for the human beings who are involved in the process, it is necessary to start by briefly giving an account of possible experiences of adult migrants, after their arrival in their host countries.

Migration and its challenges

In this thesis, the focus lies on the second part of the migration process, i.e. the part where the adult migrants have already reached their destination country, in this case Sweden, and, so to say, live in exile. Living in exile can be compared to living in sorrow, because the adult migrants who are forced to move from their country of origin grieve over all the things they have lost. Among other things, the loss of one's social network, and occupational role are two of these things (Angel and Hjern, 2004).

In many different ways, migration, especially forced migration, means huge challenges for the individuals involved. There are different dimensions of the challenges a migrant may go through, such as psychological, social, or occupational. Al-Baldawi (2014) underscores that there is a big psychological difference between those persons who are forced to migrate, due to, for example, war, and those who choose to migrate, more or less, voluntarily, for instance, for educational or occupational reasons. The latter group can adapt to the new environment and conditions more easily, and can often find their way about faster. Further, it is underscored by several researchers that there are many factors which influence a migrant's experience of the migration, some of which are age (Magro & Polyzoi, 2009; Angel & Hjern, 2004; Al-Baldawi, 2014) and gender, early childhood experiences, and family- and educational background (Magro & Polyzoi, 2009). Therefore, and as migrants arrive with their own frames of reference, which are part of their identities, wherever they go, it is important to point out that each migrant may experience the migration process in a different way than other migrants.

Another dimension of life in exile is the confrontation with the demands of the new society, and the challenges that the individual faces, such as, for example, learning the language, adapting to new cultures, and trying to find employment (Angel and Hjern, 2004; Al-Baldawi, 2014). Al-Baldawi (2014) asserts that, although receiving a permanent residence permit in Sweden gives the migrant safety and stability, the new demands that are put on the migrant "can turn feelings of hope and expectation into doubt and fault. One doubts one's own resources to manage all these challenges", which, paradoxically, may lead to homesickness. (Ibid., p.25-26). Also Zachrisson (2014) talks about newly arrived adults' homesickness, and emphasizes that this state might last for a very long time for some individuals, and might negatively influence their motivation to learn the Swedish language. The author states that many migrants physically live in Sweden, but live in their home country mentally, and continue to have close contact with their home country regularly, through, for instance, satellite channels, and talking to relatives and friends on the phone.

Angel and Hjern (Ibid.) describe several phases of a life in exile, two of which are the "surprise" phase, and the "critical integration" phase, the latter being the last phase. During the surprise phase, some newly arrived individuals may, due to the new demands, start to criticize everything in the new society, and find faults with it, at the same time as they glorify their former society. The authors point out that, during this period, these migrants' children begin to adapt to the new environment, by attending school or preschool, and start making friends. Thus, there is a risk that the migrant parents feel that their children have become more Swedish, and that they have lost the control over their children as well. The critical integration

phase is not reached by all migrants, since it means loving the new country without losing one's love to one's home country. Nevertheless, the authors imply that there are some factors that may promote the migrant entering this last phase, one of which has to do with to what extent the newly arrived individual has succeeded in finding a professional and social context in Sweden (Angel & Hjern, 2004).

The state-funded introduction measures and *etablering*

In Sweden, as in several other Western European countries, there are introduction measures directed at newly arrived migrants, where one of the aims is to make these new residents more acquainted with different aspects of their new society. Below, a short historical context will be given of migration and the receiving countries' thinking about migrants' *etablering*, followed by a short account of the Swedish introduction measures' contents and purpose.

Historical context

One of the big migration waves around the world, which took place after the end of the Second World War, changed Europe in many ways. When the war had ended, a large-scale refugee immigration started in Europe, when many prisoners of war and exiles returned home or fled on to a third country. Between 1945 and 1973 there was a huge influx of foreign labour from such European countries as Finland, Ireland and the Mediterranean area, to the industrial centres in Western Europe (Lundh, 2010). The global refugee situation, due to, for instance, several military coups, civil wars, and different ethnic antagonisms has led to a major long-distance immigration of refugees to Western Europe and Northern America since the 1980'-s. Also as concerns Sweden, the refugee immigration has increased much since that period (Lundh, 2010).³

The UK, Germany, and other Western European countries, including Sweden, which received migrants for other purposes than work (Penninx, 2006) had to think of strategies to make the new citizens⁴ engage in society. Up to the 1970s and the 1980'-s, many Western European countries had used assimilationist approaches to migrants and minorities (Castles, 2010). The newly arrived migrants would change by adopting the norms, traditions and values of the host society (Asselin et al, 2006). But after this period, the trend shifted away towards multiculturalism or pluralism. However, this shift "came to a halt in the 1990s, in the face of political and media claims of supposed threats to national identity and security from migrants[...]" (Castles, 2010, p.1571). Since then, the Western European countries which receive a large number of migrants have been heading towards assimilation again, according to some social scientists (Castles, 2010; Penninx et al, 2006), something which is indicated by the various kinds of introduction- or integration programmes (Eastmond, 2011; Castles, 2010; Asselin et al, 2006).

³ According to the Swedish Migration Agency (*Migrationsverket*), there were approximately 32 000 asylum seekers in 2010. The number of asylum seekers increased to approx. 81 000 in 2014, and reached approx. 163 000 in 2015. (Migrationsverket^a, Migrationsverket^b, Migrationsverket^c). It should be noted that the observational data for this thesis was collected before 2015, whereas the interview data was collected in 2015.

⁴ Throughout the whole thesis, the word *citizen* refers to both a resident without a formal citizenship and a resident with a formal citizenship. Thus, also newly arrived individuals can be referred to as citizens of Sweden.

Explicit purpose and contents of Swedish introduction measures

In Government Bill, Prop.2009/10:60, it is stated that the introduction measures are “aimed at facilitating and hastening newly arrived individuals’ *etablering* in the working and social life. The measures will give the newly arrived migrants opportunities for self-support and strengthen their active participation in the working and social life” (my translation). Further, it is pointed out that the Swedish state makes a large investment in the migrant through the introduction measures, and that the reason for the self-support aim should be understood by that investment. Therefore, all the persons involved, including civil servants, should strive for the aim of self-support through employment (Prop.2009/10:60, p.40). Thus, *etablering* in both working life and society is the explicit aim of the policy for newly arrived individuals. In consequence, officially, the introduction programmes are intended to facilitate *etablering* in society.

The introduction programme in Sweden starts as soon as the newly arrived migrant has received a residence permit, and is composed of three parts, i.e. introduction measures – Swedish for immigrants (SFI), the civic orientation course, and work related activities, such as internship, which aim at facilitating the migrant’s *etablering* in the labour market. It is a two-year programme, and includes a mandatory civic orientation course that covers several themes about Swedish society, its values and traditions. Here, unlike many Western countries, the introduction for newly arrived migrants is a state responsibility, meaning that the Swedish government, together with the municipalities, provide all courses and activities that are included. The introduction programme is for all newly arrived migrants with either refugee status or the like, or whose next of kin are refugees⁵. In this thesis, I have chosen to use the term *migrant*, *newly arrived migrant*, or *newly arrived adult* to refer to all categories of newly arrived individuals.

There has been some criticism levelled against the introduction programme which was prior to 2011, most of which is connected with employment, because it has taken too long for migrants to step into and remain in the Swedish labour market (Andersson et al., 2010; Commission Report, SOU2010:16). As a consequence, there has been an effort to improve this situation by launching institutional reforms over the past 25 years, but still without much success (Andersson et al., 2010). The *etablering* policies have not been successful. “Some might explain the failure by stating that the task is very challenging, not least because of the overall labour market development (fewer job opportunities for low skilled workers from the 1980’-s onwards)” (Ibid., p.53, my translation). Also discussed is the difficulty in planning activities that can be synchronized and overlapped in a flexible way to counteract migrants’ long wait. Waiting time is discouraging for newly arrived migrants, because it results in feelings of passivity (Ibid.). Also the language course for migrants (SFI) has been considered a major problem, since, for example, there are groups in which both highly educated migrants and migrants with little education are mixed (Andersson et al., 2010).

⁵ For this category of migrants, the civic orientation course is mandatory. However, after the data was collected for the first part of the study, the regulations for the course got changed, making it possible for all newly arrived migrants and their next to kin to participate in the course. For the category of migrants who do not receive the introduction benefit (*etableringsersättning*), the course is voluntary.

Learning and meaning making

The present thesis is about adult migrants' learning. It is possible to look upon learning, which is a very complex matter (Illeris, 2009), in different ways. In this thesis I choose to regard learning as a conscious or unconscious change in a human being, which is preceded by the ongoing meaning making process, because it is through our meaning making that we learn new things (Mezirow, e.g. 1991, 2000; Schutz 1967). Thus, henceforth in this thesis, *meaning making* will be used to refer to a significant part of the *learning process*. Kegan (2000) explains meaning making as "the activity by which we shape a coherent meaning out of the raw material of our outer and inner experiencing.[...]Our perceiving is simultaneously an act of conceiving, of interpreting" (Ibid., p.52). Thus, as meaning making includes an interpretation process, an outcome of meaning making is seen as *meaning*, or *construction*.⁶ At the same time as we make our interpretation of the new experience or situation we encounter, we make our construction of it (Schutz, 1967).

It should be pointed out that human beings make meaning both intentionally and unintentionally (e.g. Mezirow, 2000). In addition, meaning making is subjective for each one of us, since it occurs according to our previous *meaning perspectives*⁷ and experiences, together with the new information we receive about the situation in question. Nevertheless, often several individuals can make similar meaning, because they have got a similar set of meaning perspectives, and obtain similar new information on which they can base their new meaning making. An example is a group of newly arrived individuals, with the same academic, geographical, religious and sociocultural background, who attend the civic orientation course, and obtain the same information about Swedish society. The chance that several of these individuals make the same construction about Swedish society is big. However, due to the different experiences they make in the new society, there could be differences even in a group of migrants who have many things in common.

Purpose and research questions

All human beings make meaning in their lives, in order to understand their experiences and all the things they go through. The starting point for individuals' meaning making is their meaning perspectives, and the new experiences they make. The result of one's meaning making, i.e. how one makes meaning of a new experience, in turn, influences one's meaning perspectives, and thus there is an interrelation between the two phenomena. When an adult leaves his or her country of origin and moves to a new country, he or she makes different experiences than before, and makes meaning of these experiences by relating them to his or her meaning perspectives. During the first years of the adult migrants' residence in Sweden, when they have received their residence permit, a part of their meaning making occurs while they are in the context of the state-funded introduction measures. In this thesis, this context is divided into three parts: the educational situation of the CO course, the meeting with the

⁶ These two conceptions are used as each other's equivalents.

⁷ Meaning perspectives consist of sets of assumptions and expectations that are based, for example, on an individual's cultural, religious or political convictions, by which the individual sees and thinks about the world and his or her experiences in a specific way. (Mezirow, e.g. 1991). Thus, the individual's previous experiences are included in his or her meaning perspectives, since it is through our previous experiences, such as those we have made during our socialization, that our meaning perspectives get shaped.

public, which mostly concerns migrants' experiences of the Swedish Public Employment Service⁸, and values in Sweden. These parts of the context will be highlighted in the chapters that follow.

Thus, the overall purpose of this thesis is to find out what meaning newly arrived adult migrants make, and how they construct their new life situation in Swedish society, during the two years' introduction period (after the receipt of the residence permit).

The research questions are:

- 1a. What is *etablering*, and how is it said to be achieved for newly arrived migrants, according to policy documents?
- b. How is the *etablering* conception manifested and discussed in the classroom of the CO course?
2. What in the newly arrived migrants' present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants' meaning making in Swedish society, as concerns employment, language and values?
- 3a. How is the newly arrived migrants' meaning making expressed, in light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives?
- b. What learning can be discerned in the newly arrived migrants, as a result of their meaning making?

Outline of the thesis

The above introductory chapter has described the points of departure for the whole thesis, which include the main purpose and research questions, a short account of the meaning making concept, and an account of the Swedish introduction measures. The nine remaining chapters of the thesis and their contents will be briefly accounted for here:

Chapter Two deals with the main findings from the research field, which concern the meaning making, experiences, and learning of adult migrants.

Chapter Three is dedicated to the theoretical considerations that have been made, in order to interpret and understand the collected data. Here the social constructionist perspective is described in more detail. In addition, those parts of the theory of transformative learning that are used alongside the social constructionist approach are accounted for. Thus, the concepts of meaning perspectives, disorienting dilemma, and critical reflection are found here.

The data collection methods and data analysis methods are accounted for in Chapter Four. This chapter includes a description of the target group, and ethical considerations. Further, in this section, my own background is described, since it has proven an important tool in the data collection and data analysis part, and thus has, inevitably, affected the outcome of the research.

⁸ The Swedish Public Employment Service will also be referred to as SPES from now on.

Chapters Five, Six, Seven, Eight and Nine are the result chapters, broken up in the following way: the focus of Chapter Five lies on the policy documents' ideas about *etablering*, and how *etablering* is carried through. This includes a description and analysis of some selected passages from both the observational data material, and the course material of the CO course. The results of this chapter pave the way for talking about meaning giving, as the idea of the "good" citizen can be seen as a meaning which the policy documents give to the newly arrived adults. Chapter Six describes the qualitatively different variations of meaning which the participants have as concerns employment, the Swedish labour market, and the Swedish Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). In Chapter Seven, there will be an account of participants' different variations of meaning as regards the Swedish language, and the acquisition of it. The role that the adult migrants' values and meaning perspectives play for their meaning making will be accounted for and discussed in Chapter Eight. Here, among other things, the values and perspectives regarding bringing up children in the new country is brought up, since raising children is one of the most conspicuous issues in the participants' utterances. In this chapter, there is a mix of both interview data and observational data. Further, the idea of the "good" citizen is returned to, in light of what the newly arrived migrants' stance is towards this meaning which they are given during the introduction period, and how they are influenced by this meaning giving.

Chapter Nine is dedicated to the transformative learning process, and shows how some of the stages of this learning process can be discerned in participants' utterances and interview statements. The 10 stages of Mezirow's TL process (e.g. 1991) are juxtaposed to the adult learning process of Merriam and Heuer (1996), and the outcome is a modified model of the two models, which also takes the empirical findings of the present study into consideration.

In the final chapter, Chapter Ten, there is a discussion of both the findings and the methods of the study. Some suggestions for further research are also made.

Chapter 2: Research field

In this chapter, there will be an overview of some of the previous research on adult migrants' meaning making and learning in their new country of residence. Even if I have not found much previous research on the meaning making and learning of newly arrived adults specifically, there are several empirical studies conducted in the field of adult migrants' learning, a selection of which will be presented briefly here. The search for and selection of studies have been done on the basis of their relevance (either explicit or implicit) to my research questions. Further, the studies have been chosen, based upon how well they can contribute to a background for my own empirical study, and thus facilitate understanding of my data.

The overview starts with an account of studies which have focused on migrants' experiences in their new country of residence, which, in different ways, are connected to their learning. The different contexts for these experiences are brought up, which include the occupational and educational context, the language context, and the context of values. The chapter ends with an account of migrants' experiences of, and meaning making through, civic education courses, and the present study's possible contribution to the research field of adult learning. Thus, my research exposition deals with different phenomena that influence meaning making and learning: employment, language, and values. The civic education course is something different from these phenomena, and lies at a different level, but it nevertheless constitutes the frame within which experiences of the other three phenomena may occur. In other words, the course could be presumed to provide some of the context for adult migrants' meaning making and learning, as many of them attend it as a part of their introduction to the new society they have arrived in. Since a large part of the empirical data for this thesis will be collected from the civic orientation course (*Samhällsorientering*) in Sweden, and since this Swedish course has not yet to my knowledge been scientifically studied, with a focus on the course participants' views, it seems relevant to seek some previous research about the course's counterpart in other Western countries that receive many adult migrants.

Adult migrants' experiences and learning in the new society

As adults' experiences and learning are closely intertwined, (Jarvis, 2006; Gustavsson, 2002; Mezirow, 2000), in this section, adult migrants' meaning making and learning will be examined in close connection to their experiences in society.

What affects migrants' meaning making and learning?

The learning of newly arrived adult migrants seems to occur when they face different kinds of challenges in the society they have migrated to. These challenges are connected to experiences in the host country which concern different domains or contexts. One such domain is employment. The loss of an individual's occupation in his or her country of origin - and hence loss of financial independence - has been described as affecting learning in the new society. Thus, the recognition of migrants' skills and previous knowledge is very important (Bellis & Morrice, 2003; Kemuma, 2000). Another domain which might pose a challenge for adult migrants is the language of the host country as it relates to the migrant's mother tongue. Also here, a misrecognition of the migrants' languages and cultural backgrounds has been found (Bellis & Morrice, 2003). In addition, there is in this context an idea of how the learning of the host country's language can be influenced by the migrant's sense of identity. Their learning may also be affected by whether the migrant resists or is open towards what he

or she regards as being the host country's "ways" (Zachrisson, 2014). The identity formation and learning of adults can also emanate from an inevitable change in the individual, due to, for instance, a life crisis (Mezirow, 1991), or the upheaval of the migration experience, which often pushes individuals to search for new, more relevant, identities (Morrice, 2014). Further, even if it is asserted that motivation plays an important role in learning a new language, (Zachrisson, 2014), many adult migrants see the Swedish language as an obstacle (Kemuma, 2000; Osman, 1999). However, as soon as the individual has acquired communication skills in the host country's language, these skills facilitate his or her understanding of the new society (Zachrisson, 2014), which eliminates the obstacle. Something else which has been described as facilitating the migrants' understanding of their new life situation is social participation, which can mean participating in gatherings with other migrants (Valtonen, 1998), or benefiting from a "sponsorship" offered by migrants who have lived in the new country for a long time (Zachrisson, 2014).

Previous research has also shown what role citizenship education courses, which can be seen as the equivalent of the CO course in Sweden, might play for migrants' learning in their new society. Among other things, there are both benefits and disadvantages with this kind of course for adult migrants. While the benefit lies in the fact that the newly arrived individuals may obtain useful knowledge, which helps them orientate themselves in the new society (Han et. al., 2010), the disadvantages derive from the finding that there are aims of mediating the receiving country's norms and values, by presenting them as the desirable, something which, in turn, aims at making the migrants more or less adjust to these norms and values (Eriksson, 2010; Griswold, 2010).

Occupational and educational context

Newly arrived migrants' experiences of their new country of residence include several challenges which the adults may face: uncertainty about their future, mental health problems, and "the experience of 'culture shock' arising from 'the process of coming to terms with the otherness of a different society'" (Bellis & Morrice, 2003, p.80). Besides this, many of the 17 adults who were interviewed in Britain expressed a feeling of loss of social status, self-confidence and financial independence, and missed their employment in their home countries (Ibid.). In addition, it is also asserted that the learning of migrants in their receiving society depends on the degree of choice and the extent to which they can plan and contribute to their own future (Morrice, 2014), which might be connected to the loss of employment.

It is widely known that adults often learn from their occupation, and that this, in turn, contributes to shaping their professional identity (e.g. Vähäsantanen & Billett, 2008; Billett, 2007; Billett & Somerville, 2004). When it comes to adult migrants' educational or occupational spaces, Kemuma's (2000) research has made a contribution. The author has looked at 17 adult migrants from Kenya, where the aim was to understand how they function and orientate themselves in Swedish society. These migrants' past experiences from their home country have also been considered when looking at the way they go about their orientation (Ibid.). Several of the interviewed participants consider the Swedish language an obstacle to, for instance, obtaining employment, particularly when "good Swedish" is required. In addition, the participants' mastery of Swedish is used by the public to judge their educational and occupational abilities in society. This language obstacle seems to push the individuals aside, according to Kemuma (Ibid.).

Similar to the findings of Bellis and Morrice (2003), Kemuma (2000) underscores the role of societal factors for migrants' new lives. The lack of employment, for example, discourages some of the participants from undergoing long-term educational programmes. One big problem is the disregard for the migrants' previous knowledge, so when they get the advice to acquire Swedish credentials by, for instance, attending municipal adult education (*Komvux*), the migrants feel humiliated, because their educational and occupational experiences are not recognized. This feeling is also described by migrants in other empirical studies (e.g. Osman, 1999). Kemuma (2000) emphasizes that there is a structural influence which is articulated in the wider societal arena, as regards, for example, educational or occupational opportunities, and the Swedish language. One way of recognizing newly arrived migrants' foreign vocational or educational competence may be through the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)⁹. This concept was introduced in Sweden in 1996, although it is older in an international perspective (Andersson & Fejes, 2014). The hope has been and is still that RPL will enable the use and acknowledgement of newly arrived individuals' knowledge, and in that way shorten their period of study in adult education (Andersson & Fejes, 2010). To assess and document individuals' knowledge and competencies, and thus make them visible, and recognize them, RPL has been considered a useful tool. However, there are several empirical studies which show that there are weaknesses with RPL (Andersson & Fejes, 2014; Diedrich & Styhre, 2013). One weakness is that there is no well-established, national validation procedure for the assessment and documentation of newly arrived migrants' skills and knowledge (Ibid.). RPL also risks posing an obstacle to a "fair" assessment of the migrant's vocational competence. One of the reasons for this risk is that when the assessment is done, it is done in Swedish, and therefore those migrants who have not yet acquired enough Swedish skills to mediate their professional experience from their countries of origin, might not be able to obtain a valid assessment of their competence (Andersson & Fejes, 2014; Andersson & Fejes, 2010). Andersson and Fejes (2010) suggest that if RPL becomes an integrated part of a learning process in a specific work context, where the individual has his or her competence, the RPL may lead to a more valid assessment. In such cases, the migrant's specific knowledge would be recognized during working hours (Ibid.).

Among those who succeed in orientating themselves in the new society, there are individuals who have "sponsors" in Sweden, who are either native Swedes or migrants who have lived in the country for a long time, and who assist the newly arrived adults by giving them information or offering support in other ways (Kemuma, 2000). However, the negative side of this kind of "sponsorship" is also brought up, and it is implied that there is a risk that if the sponsor has negative experiences from, for example, the labour market, he or she will transfer their negative attitudes towards Swedish society to the newly arrived countrymen (Zachrisson, 2014). Besides the influence of sponsorship on the newly arrived migrants, the duration of migrants' residence in Sweden may play a role in their ways of thinking of their future, and the occupational or educational activities they are engaged in (Kemuma, 2000).

The attitudes some adult migrants take up are dependent partly on opportunities and obstacles in Sweden, partly on previous experiences and expectations from the home country. The adult migrants in Kemuma's study (2000) regard Sweden as either a country of opportunities, or a country of obstacles, where those who consider Sweden to be providing opportunities are content with either their educational programmes or the activities which are connected to the labour market (Kemuma, 2000). On the other hand, those migrants who regard Sweden as a country full of obstacles, mention the misrecognition of their previous educational and

⁹ In Swedish this is referred to as *validering*, which means validation (Andersson & Fejes, 2010).

occupational experiences, learning Swedish, discrimination, and unemployment (Ibid.). This reasoning may occasion the suggestion that the fact that migrants are social beings, who are caught up in such intersections as gender, education, religion, age and life cycle stage, influences the way they experience and handle their new life situation (Morrice, 2014). Thus, it seems that the meaning making and learning of the newly arrived migrants is individual, even if all of them live in the same society.

Language

Adult migrants' learning of, and their acceptable communication skills in the host country's language have proved to facilitate their understanding of the host country (Zachrisson, 2014). To ascertain, among other things, how their language development occurs and what sociocultural phenomena it is affected by, Zachrisson (Ibid.) has asked migrant students about their experiences from participating in the Swedish schools, and their post-migration life situation in Sweden. Among the findings is that motivation plays an important role for learning, as is clearly shown in the study (ibid.), where one interesting remark is that adult migrants generally, during their first years of residence in Sweden, continue to be emotionally attached to their home countries, and maintain contact with those ethnic groups in Sweden that seem familiar to them. This home country attachment might affect the individuals' views on the Swedish language, as their motivation for learning it might decrease. The author regards motivation as one of the major factors in second language learning and emphasizes that the migrant's investment in a second language is dependent on to what extent he or she regards the new country of residence as attractive or possible to make an investment in. This, in turn, is dependent on whether the migrant feels a sense of belonging in Swedish society (Ibid.). This finding, and the reasoning about the newly arrived migrant's investment in Swedish society, is parallel to Kemuma's (2000) research question of whether Swedish society is regarded as being full of obstacles or full of opportunities, in that there might also be an external - that is, not only psychological - aspect in the foundation of an individual's motivation¹⁰. Examples of such external aspects may be a lack of employment, and a disregard for a migrant's previous educational or occupational experiences. Since many migrants' motive for attending SFI and studying the Swedish language is to obtain employment (Carlson, 2002), one can suggest that a lack of employment might lower the motive for learning Swedish. Besides this, there is an attitude among adult migrant SFI-students that they should not have to attend school at their age to secure employment, and therefore they sometimes feel irritated by, and question the Swedish demand to learn Swedish as a prerequisite for obtaining employment (Ibid.).

Identity formation and values

Adult migrants' learning, as previous research has shown, is also affected by their sense of identity, and how they experience the way this identity is regarded by others in the host country. In the literature, the word *identity* seems to represent several different things. On the one hand, identity, in itself, is nuanced, where different sides of a person's identity can be shown in different contexts. On the other hand, identity can also be seen as embedding both a national and a transnational part. For instance, in contemporary society, there is talk about

¹⁰ Henceforth, the word *motive* will be used instead of *motivation*, since the former can have two significations, and is thus more appropriate to use in this thesis; it can either stand for *reason* (for something), or something which is the *incentive* to an action, i.e. mainspring. An exception will be made where there are quotations in which the word *motivation* is written: in that case, the original word will be used.

transnational identity, which stands for when migrants, rather than adjusting to the majority society's identity (values etc.), in certain cases, strive for a belonging that straddles borders. This transnational "identity" contributes to the migrants' sense of belonging in several countries at the same time. Thus, the new host society is regarded as one of several different societies which are included in the migrant's identity (Khayati & Dahlstedt, 2013; Vertovec, 2001). As an example, Bellis and Morrice's study (2003) reveals that many refugees observe that their own language and "cultural" background is not valued in their new society. It is also clear that a "sense of belonging" in the new society is very important for these adult learners. The authors emphasize that this should not be associated with assimilation or enforced homogeneity, but should mean that the migrants' skills and knowledge are recognised, and that their characteristic "cultural" identities should be celebrated (Bellis & Morrice, 2003).

Further, it is found that, even if the migrants have a safer life in Sweden, politically speaking, they do not feel more comfortable in their social life (Zachrisson, 2014). The reason is that they are expected to develop an identity in the public and educational area which might be in contrast to their home identity. This kind of twofold identity, swinging between what the new society advocates and what the former frames of reference encourage, results in some of the migrants wondering what is considered right and what is considered wrong when they wish to approach Swedish society (Zachrisson, 2014). However, not all migrant participants want to "learn" about Swedish habits and customs. Some of the migrants resist what they regard as strategies to make them more like Swedes. This state of ambivalence, which dominates the daily lives of most of the 30 migrants that Zachrisson studied (Ibid.), places many of them between "two worlds": the home country's world and the Swedish world. One of the consequences is that it negatively affects the ability to concentrate on learning the Swedish language (Zachrisson, 2014). The kind of resistance that Zachrisson (Ibid.) brings up has also been mentioned by pointing out that migrants of today differ from the migrants who emigrated to different countries before the Second World War, in that some of today's migrants tend to resist the explicit or implicit demands for adjustment to the host society's identity (Khayati & Dahlstedt, 2013), which can be suggested to include the prevalent values of this society. In connection to this view of resistance, Griswold (2010) has concluded that migrant students seem unwilling to accept and adopt the ideological view of the US, which is expressed in the classes they attend. According to the researcher, this could be linked to the students' personal experiences in the US, especially if they have experienced racial or ethnic discrimination (cp. Kemuma, 2000).

Something that can mitigate the tensions between the values of the new society and the values which the newly arrived individual embraces is participation in different forms of social gatherings (Valtonen, 1998). During the *etablering* process, there are newly arrived adults who highly value social participation, i.e. participation in society (Ibid.). In Valtonen's research (1998), newly arrived migrants from the Middle East say that they have not had enough opportunities to participate in Finnish society, the society they have settled in. However, many of the individuals frequently visit the mosque, not only for religious worship, but also because they "found there a place where problematic aspects of resettlement and cultural transition could be encountered collectively" (Valtonen, 1998, p.53). Just being given the opportunity to discuss with others cultural or other differences between one's country of origin and the host country can promote one's understanding of the differences (Morrice, 2012). One example of the problematic aspects for newly arrived migrants is the challenges which concern the children, and how they often find themselves at "home" in the new society more easily and faster than their parents (Al-Baldawi, 2014). These and other challenges have to be handled by the migrant adults, and can, as Valtonen's (1998) and Morrice's (2012)

studies indicate, be discussed collectively. This shows that the challenges concerning the children can be overcome by interacting in such non-formal settings as a mosque or a church, in that these settings can generate the meaning of the country of resettlement. Further, this kind of interaction may promote critical reflection together with others. It can thus be suggested that the migrants' learning may be promoted by their participation in religious or social gatherings during their first years of residence in the new society.

There is also a reasoning in the adult learning research field that identity formation is an inevitable aspect of migration, and that learning, and thus meaning making, is multifaceted, with both positive and negative outcomes for the newly arrived migrants (Morrice, 2014). Among the positive outcomes is the newly arrived individual's development of linguistic or cultural competencies which make him or her better pleased with his or her new life. Contrary to this, negative outcomes of learning may be that the migrant individuals cannot use their former social, educational, or occupational skills to establish themselves, and that their former identities cannot be on display, since European immigration policies often encourage other kinds of social and cultural capital for *etabling* in society (Ibid.). As an example, success in the Swedish labour market is seen as depending largely on to what extent the adult migrant is familiar with, and can live up to the Swedish norms (Dahlstedt et. al., 2013). In this context, the migrant is described by, for instance, coaches of the SPES as the "different" individual, who needs to be transformed in the direction of a "normal" individual, which is connected to Swedishness. In the notion of Swedishness is included to be a free, independent, and choosing individual, who knows about Swedish norms, and social codes for behaving at, for example, a workplace (Ibid.).

Migrants' experiences of civic education courses

The Swedish CO course could, according to my interpretation of it, be considered as a kind of civic education in Sweden, although this education, as a concept, is not used in Sweden. However, the official purpose of the CO course is the same as for civic or citizenship education, i.e. to shape democratic citizens who actively participate in shaping and maintaining a democratic society (SOU 2010:16).

As concerns adult migrants' learning in their new host society, there are studies which have dealt with the benefits of civic education courses, among which is the one by Han et al. (2010), who conducted interviews with staff, and a focus group discussion with eight students involved in ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) at London Community College. The purpose of their study was to provide an account of students' experiences of language and citizenship programmes. They have found that the citizenship class is thought to be a positive experience, because the students acquire information about life in the UK, which they regard as useful. For example, one student appreciated that one can obtain useful knowledge about culture, language, transport etc. The course seemed to have contributed to a changed understanding of the UK. All the students said that they had become more aware of the country's diversity concerning ethnic cultures, religions and nationalities, something which they regarded as positive (Han et al., 2010). Further, the authors found that civic participation was not the adult students' first purpose with the course, but rather they had practical considerations, such as improving their English skills and obtaining employment. Thus, their motives were more personal than civic. Nevertheless, Han et al. (2010) conclude that their findings indicate that the language and citizenship course gives migrants confidence, and helps them find their way in their new country, thus helping them to become established socially and financially too. It is also found that the course could facilitate basic kinds of civic

participation, such as voluntary work at one's child's school (Ibid.). Thus, one can assert that the citizenship course in this case has assisted the migrants in their learning process.

Some adult migrants appreciate the practical knowledge which they gain from, for instance, a community-based citizenship course at a voluntary sector adult education centre (Bellis & Morrice, 2003). There is an example of newly arrived individuals who show a huge degree of resourcefulness and a strong will to make the best of the opportunities that are available to them. For this reason, these migrants may feel that citizenship classes are a good idea, if the classes are practically relevant to everyday life. It is also local rights and duties that the migrants want to know about, not issues pertaining to the host country's democracy, which are regarded as less relevant to everyday life (Ibid.). This is also obvious in Valtonen's (1998) empirical findings, where one of the newly arrived migrants points out that he or she wants to know about his or her duties and rights in Finland. The researcher points out the importance for newly arrived adults to receive information about the new society they will live in.

There could also be a negative aspect of the kind of learning which might take place in citizenship education courses, something which is also discussed in the previous research. For instance, the assimilationist purpose of the citizenship discourse that exists in many Western countries is brought up (Eriksson, 2010; Griswold, 2010). Through her empirical study on Swedish teachers' way of mediating citizenship to adult migrants, Eriksson (2010) asserts that there are two parts of citizenship education: one part is more or less unproblematic and deals with conveying "facts"; the other part concerns norms, traditions, social codes and so forth. The underlying assumption appears to be that the migrants' customs, traditions, norms and so forth differ from those of Swedes, and to be accepted by Swedish society, they need to behave like most Swedes (Eriksson, 2010) (cp. Zachrisson, 2014). The teachers describe the Swedish "culture" as superior, and seem to think that it is a static culture which is important for migrants to learn.

For this study, the relevance of the research field presented above; and the different views of other researchers are manifold. As seen, meaning making and learning are individual, contextual and multifaceted. Emphasis is placed on several factors, all of which have an impact on meaning making and learning, and which will be briefly accounted for in the section below.

Contribution to the research field

One of the aspects that previous research has shown relating to newly arrived adult migrants' meaning making and learning is the importance of the receiving country's recognition of their former occupational or educational skills and competencies (Andersson & Fejes, 2014; Kemuma, 2000; Diedrich & Styhre, 2013). Connected to this, the motivational aspect of learning is underscored for, among other things, acquiring the Swedish language (Zachrisson, 2014). For example, it is shown that many migrants' motive for acquiring Swedish is to obtain employment (Carlson, 2002). Further, it is implied that a migrant's motive also depends on whether he or she has a sense of belonging in the new society or not. Even if many newly arrived adults feel politically safe in Sweden, they do not feel socially comfortable, as they have understood that they need to adopt Swedish ways of thinking, to be able to succeed in the public and educational fields, which include the Swedish labour market (Zachrisson, 2014). In this context, there might be some resistance from those migrants who do not want to adjust to the host society's identity, and hence its values (Khayati & Dahlstedt, 2013). Therefore, as several researchers have pointed out, the receiving country's recognition

of migrants' different identities is also important (Morrice, 2014; Bellis & Morrice, 2003; Kemuma, 2000).

In addition, the interplay between the individual and the collective, and the role this interaction plays in meaning making, is underscored. For example, it is asserted that the interaction with other newly arrived persons or with other people in society may make the adult migrant look at his or her own points of view in a different light (Morrice, 2012; Valtonen, 1998), which implies that it may trigger the migrant's critical reflection on his or her points of view. Also, it is found that other migrants' role as sponsors to newly arrived individuals may contribute to either positive or negative meaning of the Swedish society. The sponsors can assist the adult migrants with useful information about the new society, and support them in different ways. However, the sponsors' own negative experiences from the labour market might also influence the newly arrived migrants to have a negative view of the Swedish labour market, and their future role in this labour market (Zachrisson, 2014).

In addition, there is some consideration taken to the time aspect of the newly arrived migrants' new life, where it is implied that some of them, due to the different challenges they may encounter and have to deal with, may need more time and space for finding their place in the new society (Kemuma, 2000).

Thus, the factors enumerated above should be considered when looking at and analysing the data for this research study, since these factors may contribute to a wider understanding of the research field.

The benefit which the research field can obtain from this study is insights into an area where there is a lack of scientific research, the migrants' own perspectives, for instance (e.g. Penninx et al., 2006). Although several of the studies presented in the last chapter are based on interviews with participants, and thus consider the migrant individuals' perspectives, only one of them (Morrice, 2012) has touched upon newly arrived migrants' meaning making process, and has looked at meaning making as a part of the adult learning process. However, Morrice's study (2012) has not, in a deeper sense, considered what affects adult migrants' interpretation and construction of their new experiences in the receiving society, something which will be highlighted in this thesis. Furthermore, there is a need for such studies which look at the Swedish CO course, and this is where my study makes a contribution. This study may also be beneficial to society, in that the civil servants and authorities can better understand the newly arrived individuals, by knowing how they go about meaning making in the new society, and by getting a glimpse of the life situation that can be constructed.

Although the study has been carried out in a limited Swedish context, readers, either researchers or practitioners, may interpret parts of the results as being applicable to similar contexts in other Western countries which receive similar groups of migrants, in particular newly arrived Arabic speaking adults. As Larsson (2009) emphasizes, an individual research study can be potentially useful in other cases, for instance, if the contexts are similar, and if the objects of study are certain kinds of processes. As is explained above, this study deals with the adult meaning making and learning process.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Considerations

It can be suggested that human beings have always been pondering what the meaning of life is, or what meaning their own life has. Thus, the question of meaning has been present in the human mind, no matter where or when the individual has lived. This may be a philosophical question, but it is also, to the highest possible degree, a question for the social sciences, and for those disciplines that deal with human beings' understanding of their experiences, and life. In this study, meaning and meaning making have a central position, as they can increase our understanding of how newly arrived adults regard their new life, and what this "picture" of theirs is influenced by. Two of the most relevant theoretical approaches for this purpose, in my view, are the social constructionist perspective, and the theory of transformative learning (TL). The reason is that both can assist in understanding how newly arrived migrants make meaning and construct their new experiences in Sweden, as the social constructionist perspective deals with how human beings construct their experiences, and TL describes how meaning making in adults occurs. Further, the TL theory includes some useful analytical concepts, such as the *disorienting dilemma* and *critical reflection*, which can provide a background to migrants' experiences, on which I can build parts of my analysis. The TL theory was first introduced by Jack Mezirow in 1978, and has been used in many different ways and by many different social scientists, especially in the field of adult education and learning. It has also been further discussed and developed by other researchers, such as Merriam and Heuer (1996), whose learning model will be described and applied later in this study.

As the TL theory has grown out of the ideas developed by social constructionism, this latter approach will be described first. However, since there is an interrelation between the two approaches, there will inevitably be some overlap between the section on TL theory and the following section about social constructionism.

Social constructionism

In the present study, I have used the constructionist perspective to look at how the newly arrived adults make meaning in their new life situation in Sweden. As is explained above, meaning is made while the migrants have different kinds of experiences in Sweden, with the help of their meaning perspectives.

Meaning and construction

In the social constructionist sense, *meaning* does not have quite the same connotation as people's understanding of it in everyday life. As is explained in Chapter One of this thesis, in this context, meaning is a *construction* of one's experiences, and thus, one's social reality (Schutz, 1967). Saying that "human beings make meaning of their experiences" is the same thing as saying that "human beings make a construction of their experiences". Simply put, it is this meaning (or construction), then, that one bases one's actions and thinking upon. However, one's actions and thinking can also be based on one's meaning perspectives. Thus, meaning does not lie in a person's experience, but is rather a result of that person's reflection upon his or her experience – accordingly, meaning is the way in which the individual understands experience (Schutz, 1967). Schutz's approach to meaning resembles Mezirow's, with the main difference that while Mezirow sees meaning as understanding, according to Schutz (1967), meaning has several dimensions, one of which is the common concept of meaning, which is how important an experience is for us, i.e. how meaningful it is. However, it is the

other dimension that is relevant in this study, namely the kind of meaning which constitutes the individual's interpretation of his or her new experience.

Also Hacking (1999) and Crotty (1998) have studied how we humans, as social constructionists, ascribe meaning to objects and the like in the world around us, to be able to understand and deal with these objects. According to the authors, this meaning is embedded in the construction. Therefore, the social constructionist approach holds that we should differentiate between real objects in the world and our ideas of them. For instance, Hacking (1999) brings up the example of money, and explains that the real object is the piece of paper that we have called "money". This object would not have had any significance to us, had we not put a meaning on it, i.e. the meaning of a trade value. Applied to this study's participants' lives, one can also say that the "object" money may be ascribed the further meaning of "an acceptable level of financial situation for the family who is left in the country of origin", since the newly arrived migrants may have family members left in the home country, whose financial situation may be secured by the newly arrived individual's money transfers to them from Sweden. Patton (2002) follows the same line, and asserts that because "human beings have evolved the capacity to interpret and *construct* reality – indeed, they cannot do otherwise – the world of human perception is not real in an absolute sense, as the sun is real, but is 'made up' and shaped by cultural and linguistic constructs" (Ibid., p.96). This implies that meaning and interpretation of experiences are subjective to each one of us, and, as we interpret through our individual meaning contexts, person A cannot interpret person B's experiences in precisely the same way as person B him- or herself does (Schutz, 1967).

To be sure, not even individuals who have been brought up in the same society and environment can interpret each other's experiences in that society in exactly the same way; nevertheless, it can be suggested that newly arrived migrants might make meaning of their new experiences in Sweden differently than native born Swedes. The reason for this is that the migrant's primary socialization has taken place in another society, where he or she has acquired specific meaning perspectives, and thus a specific pair of "spectacles" for viewing the world. For, as Crotty (1998) describes, socialization can be regarded as a world of meaning that we are born into. We enter a social environment, wherein we "inherit a 'system of significant symbols'. [...] when we first see the world in meaningful fashion, we are inevitably viewing it through lenses bestowed upon us by our culture. Our culture brings things into view for us and endows them with meaning and, by the same token, leads us to ignore other things" (Crotty, 1998, p.54). When the newly arrived individual enters Sweden, he or she encounters a new kind of social environment, which requires a new set of meaning perspectives. This occurs, during a re-socialization process, necessary for him or her to make meaning of society in a way that facilitates his or her *etabling* (cp. Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Berger and Luckmann (Ibid.) assert that "in re-socialization the past is reinterpreted to conform to the present reality, with the tendency to retroject into the past various elements that were subjectively unavailable at the time. [...] the reality base for re-socialization is the present" (p.149-150).

Meaning contexts

Alfred Schutz, as the precursor of social constructionism, was inspired by Edmund Husserl's phenomenological theory, when he, for example, described his ideas about schemes of experience and meaning context. The idea of meaning context has many similarities to Mezirow's notion of meaning perspectives. Both Schutz and Mezirow consider the basis of our meaning making as constituting two components – our former experiences and our

“culture” or socialization etc. In other words, it is not only our former experiences that are our spectacles when we interpret and try to make meaning of our new experiences – other factors in our meaning perspectives could be involved too. Schutz implies that one makes meaning of one’s new experience by reflecting on it through one’s *meaning contexts*. These contain “a stock of knowledge of physical things and fellow creatures, of social collectives and of artifacts, including cultural objects [...] here also are to be found all products of the activity of the mind and will” (Schutz, 1967, p.81). When we interpret a new lived experience, we refer back to these meaning contexts. Schutz regards meaning contexts as a help for the individual to order his or her life, as explained in the following quotation:

Now, to the natural man all his past experiences are present as *ordered*, as knowledge or as awareness of what to expect, just as the whole external world is present to him as ordered. Ordinarily, and unless he is forced to solve a special kind of problem, he does not ask questions about how this ordered world was constituted. The particular patterns of order we are now considering are synthetic meaning-configurations of already encountered lived experiences (Schutz, 1967, p.81).

Thus the meaning contexts (or, in Mezirow’s terminology, meaning perspectives) contribute to humans’ control over their lives. It can be suggested that this control, or rather feeling of control, over one’s life is something that tends to disappear when a migrant arrives in Sweden, since he or she encounters unfamiliar situations and experiences which cannot be understood by the meaning perspectives with which he or she has come to Sweden. When several of the newly arrived individuals interviewed for this study talk about their new experiences of prevalent Swedish openness towards, for instance, the sexual freedom of youth, they express an astonishment over this kind of phenomena, because they have not been used to them in their former societies, as their meaning contexts have not contained such a phenomenon, and, therefore, their former meaning tends to be that this kind of behaviour should be forbidden for unmarried young people. In this new life situation, the meaning making process, described earlier in Chapter One, will start. According to Mezirow (1991), a human being’s need to make meaning of his or her experiences may be that person’s most unambiguously human feature. To be able to know how to act effectively, we have to make meaning of our experiences.

The theory of transformative learning (TL)

Since the focus of this thesis is the meaning making and learning of newly arrived adult migrants in their host country, it is suitable to frame it with the theoretical approach of social constructionism, and complement it with a learning theory which specifically deals with the meaning making and learning of adults. As Fejes (2016) asserts, TL is one among a few theories which is specifically based on adult learning. Further, TL has a multifaceted nature, which has been verified (Grabove, 1997; Taylor, 2000), and has made different researchers and practitioners focus on different dimensions of TL (Taylor, 2000). In addition, the TL theory can be used in one of two ways: either as a means of developing analysis tools for the interpretation of empirical data or as a practical guide for pedagogical methods which aim to promote change in students (Hagström, 2003).

Choice of TL

In the TL theory, which is in conformity with the social constructionist perspective, adults’ meaning making is highlighted as central to human beings’ learning. The TL theory considers both the individual and society in the meaning making process, which is more applicable to this thesis, and its empirical findings. Society plays a role in that the individual’s meaning

making, for instance, is also influenced by the interaction and communication he or she makes with other people who may be in the same situation, and may share the same context. Another reason for choosing the TL theory is that it deals specifically with the adult human being's meaning making in a changed life situation, something that is relevant for the present study, as newly arrived migrants' lives change to a great extent when they come to Sweden bearing experiences which might not be compatible with the new experiences they make in the new society. In addition, the TL theory looks explicitly at learning as a process of which a primary component is meaning making.

It should be pointed out that I have not adopted the TL theory in full, but have instead chosen and used those concepts and ideas which can widen the understanding of newly arrived individuals' experiences, and which facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the empirical findings of the present study. For this purpose, the concepts of *meaning making*, *meaning perspectives*, *disorienting dilemma*, and *critical reflection* are relevant. The main emphasis lies in the first two concepts, i.e. meaning making and meaning perspectives, as these may be useful to help answer the research questions, which mostly deal with how the adult migrants' old and new experiences influence their meaning making in Sweden. Since meaning making has been described thoroughly in Chapter One, it will not be discussed separately here.

As will be shown further below in this section, there have been several critical voices raised against TL, which need to be considered. In addition, although the TL theory includes a kind of collectively inspired meaning making, by, for example, pointing out the strong hold which our culture has on us, and advocating collaborative reflections and dialogue, it puts too strong an emphasis on the individual and the individual's cognitive abilities for learning (e.g. Jarvis, 2006; Fejes, 2016; Lundgren & Poell, 2016). Further, in Grabove's (1997) words,

[...] transformative learning appears to have two layers that work in tension. At the center is the person. The transformative learner moves in and out of the cognitive and the intuitive, of the rational and the imaginative, of the subjective and the objective, of the personal and the social (p.95).

Meaning perspectives and transformation

That all humans do not make meaning of the same experience or situation in the same way can, as is described in the section above, be explained by the fact that each individual bases his or her meaning making on his or her meaning perspectives. These are the cultural, historical, and biographical contexts in which he or she has been originally socialized, and in which the individual's knowledge, beliefs, values and feelings have been acquired (Mezirow, e.g. 1999, 2000). In Mezirow's (e.g. 2000) point of view, humans make meaning of a new experience or context by using a prior interpretation of old experiences "to construe a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of" our new experience, and this, in turn, would function as a guide to us in future interpretations of experiences (Ibid., p.5). This means that we cannot always hold on to old meanings when we encounter new situations that cannot be understood or explained by the old meanings, and therefore, our meanings change when we have such new experiences as, for instance, migrating to a new country with different customs and cultures than our country of origin. Thus, Mezirow (Ibid.) points out, as "there are no fixed truths or totally definitive knowledge, and because circumstances change, the human condition may be best understood as a continuous effort to negotiate contested meanings" (Mezirow, 2000, p.3).

Everything we humans think and communicate, and everything that happens during the meaning making process is affected by our meaning perspectives, which contain

sociolinguistic, epistemic and psychological dimensions. These three dimensions are shaped by different factors, where the sociolinguistic ones, for example, are structured according to those social norms or roles, or those cultural codes which the individual is a part of.¹¹ Meaning perspectives also include our identity and self-image, for, as Mezirow (1991) states, our meaning perspectives “determine our concept of personhood, our idealized self-image, and the way we feel about ourselves” (p.44). Since our meaning perspectives guide our thinking and reasoning, our actions in every part of our lives, and shape our points of view, we should critically reflect on them.

When the human being encounters a new experience, he or she first tries to use his or her meaning perspective to make meaning of the experience. When this fails, and the meaning perspective proves insufficient for making meaning of the new experience, the human being tries to find a new *meaning*, i.e. interpretation or construction, of the experience. This is done, for instance, by acquiring a new way of thinking about the experience. At the same time, the individual makes his or her construction of the new situation, i.e. forms a “picture” of what the new situation or experience means in his or her life. Thanks to this, meaning has been made, and therefore the former meaning perspective may be changed. Whenever the adult human being encounters a new situation again, a different meaning and construction has to occur, in order for him or her to deal with the situation in a suitable way (Mezirow, e.g.1991; Schutz, 1967). This has been pointed out in other contexts also, for instance by Gustavsson (2002) and Bourgeois (2002), where the former emphasizes the individual experience as an important stage in the learning process, and points out that this process always begins with the subjective, “in our former interpretations and ways of making meaning of life. But it is in the meeting with new knowledge, with something which is unfamiliar and different to us that development occurs” (Gustavsson, 2002, p.45). Berger and Luckmann (1966) have put it in yet another way, when they assert that the “validity of my knowledge of everyday life is taken for granted by myself and by others until further notice, that is, until a problem arises that cannot be solved in terms of it. As long as my knowledge works satisfactorily, I am generally ready to suspend doubts about it” (p.41). Thus, unless one’s meaning perspective is challenged, it is not likely to be altered.

According to my interpretation of Mezirow’s reasoning about meaning perspectives, they can either consist of one large meaning perspective, or several sets of meaning perspectives. Even in his later works (e.g. 2000), Mezirow sometimes seems to note that there are different meaning perspectives operating, depending on what the individual experiences at the time of his or her meaning making. As Mezirow himself has not, to my knowledge, explained what he means by using the concept in both the plural, i.e. to become “meaning perspectives”, and the singular, my stand towards this theoretical shortcoming is that I regard the phenomenon as one large meaning perspective. As a consequence, the ten phases of transformative learning, shown below, are seen as resulting in a changed meaning of one’s experience. This change of meaning, in turn, makes a change in the individual’s (larger) meaning perspective.

¹¹ In his earlier writings (e.g. 1991), Mezirow considered the three dimensions as three different types of meaning perspectives. However, in later works (e.g. 2000), he seems to have thought of them as three components or assumptions of the same meaning perspective, as he implies that they are among those assumptions of our meaning perspectives that “act as a filter for interpreting the meaning of experience” (Mezirow, 2000, p.17). Henceforth, I will not make any distinction between the three dimensions or parts, since it lacks relevance for the purpose of this study, and since Mezirow himself does not talk about these dimensions as separate in his later works.

As has been explained here, a meaning perspective transformation can occur when the individual faces a new situation which cannot be made meaning of through his or her former meaning perspective, i.e. which does not make any sense to the individual. Whether a transformation of that person's meaning perspective occurs or not depends on which of the phases of transformation he or she goes through. According to Mezirow (2007), there are 10 phases which may lead to transformative learning, i.e. meaning perspective transformation. However, as Kitchenham (2008) and other social scientists suggest, it is not necessary that a human being experience all the phases, or experience them in a certain order to experience a perspective transformation. The ten phases of meaning perspective transformation are, briefly, as follows:

1. a disorienting dilemma
2. self-examination with feelings of anger, guilt, fear or shame
3. a critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
4. recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared, and that others have negotiated a similar change
5. exploration of options for new roles, relationships and action
6. planning a course of action
7. acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans
8. provisional trying of new roles
9. building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. a reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective (Mezirow, 2000, p.22; Kitchenham, 2008, p.105).

In Taylor (2000), there is an indication that the age factor may also be of importance for transformative learning, as it seems that elder adults generally are more resistant to change, maybe because their meaning perspectives are deep-rooted, since they have lived with them for a long time. Further, Courtenay et al (2000) point out that perspective transformations seem to be irreversible, something that Mezirow (e.g. 1991) also claims. This implies that once an individual has reached transformative learning as concerns a specific meaning, he or she will not likely return to his or her former meaning perspective regarding this specific meaning later.

As one can interpret Mezirow's (1991) TL theory, collective meaning making may occur, in that meaning perspectives may be discussed within, and shared by a whole group of individuals. Further, the group an individual feels he or she belongs to and participates in can promote his or her individual transformation by easing his or her disorienting dilemma, providing him or her with alternative perspectives, supporting a change, and becoming engaged in validating changed perspectives through critical dialogue (Ibid.).

Disorienting dilemma

While the meaning making and transformative learning process is described in detail in the TL theory, with for example ten phases prior to meaning transformation, it is only outlined broadly in the thinking of Schutz and his followers. Schutz has not specified how a meaning perspective is altered. In the social constructionist sense, on the other hand, it is the motive¹²

¹² Schutz uses the word *motivation*, but here *motive* is preferred, for the reasons brought up in Chapter Two of this thesis.

that triggers a human being's learning- and change process. Motive may play a huge role in adult learning, in that the learning process has to start with a will to become engaged in the situation, and a readiness to make the cognitive and emotional efforts to deal with the new situation. In other words, there must be a motive for undergoing the learning process and change. Similar to this social constructionist view, Mezirow considers an experienced dilemma as the starting point for the learning process (Mezirow, 1991; 2000). A dilemma may trigger a motive, in that the individual often feels a strong need to handle the dilemma and solve the problem, which means that he or she is confronted with new meaning making.

A disorienting dilemma takes place when the human being is subjected to, for instance, a loss of a life partner, an illness, retirement, or a divorce. "A situation arises in which contradictions related to the anxiety-producing dilemma [...] become apparent" (Mezirow, 1991, p.162). The role of a disorienting dilemma has been found as one of the important factors for learning (Taylor, 2000). It is an experience of losing control over one's life, and therefore pushes the human being to change. However, as TL theorist Brookfield (2009) underscores, it is human nature to want to hold on to what is comfortable, and therefore it is not easy to want to change.

A dilemma can also stem from an emigration from one's country of origin to another country, when the migrant needs to make, as Taylor (2000) puts it, "efforts to understand a different culture with customs that contradict" his or her own previously accepted conceptions (Ibid., p.168). Morrice (2012), another TL theorist, has described migrants' disorienting dilemma by asserting that the process of migration disrupts the hitherto gained meaning perspectives and the already acquired knowledge and understanding repertoire, so the newly arrived migrants are forced to learn new rules, behaviours, and values, among other things (Ibid.). Therefore, the author underscores, the state of being a refugee or migrant paves the way for learning, as this individual confronts unexpected changes in his or her life plans, and needs to reconstruct his or her life and identity (Morrice, 2012).

Critical reflection

Kegan (2000), referring to Huxley,¹³ says that "our experience is less what happens to us, and more what we make of what happens to us" (Kegan, 2000, p.52). This implies that we, as thinking beings, can reflect on our experiences critically. In fact, critical reflection is regarded as an important part of meaning making, since it has to do with not regarding our own meaning perspectives as the only ones that are valid (Mezirow, e.g. 1991). An extended reason for the central position that critical reflection has received in TL is that the realization of it helps adults to become democratic members of society (Mezirow, 1991, 2000). Thus, the overall aim of the TL theory is implied to be the fostering of democratic citizens, something which will be discussed in the next section below. Also in perspectives other than the Western one, reflection is highlighted. For instance, Kamis and Muhammad (2007) have studied the Islamic perspective of learning, and assert that reflection plays one of the central roles of learning in the Islamic view, and that "humans are asked to travel the world so they can better reflect on their actions" (Ibid., p.33).

¹³ Aldous Huxley was a British writer in the early 20th century (www.ne.se).

Although Mezirow (e.g. 1991, 1998) talks mostly about critical reflection in a discourse¹⁴/ dialogue with others, he asserts that this kind of reflection may also occur outside a group, that is to say, individually (self-reflection), and be, first and foremost, derived from a disorienting dilemma (Ibid., 1998). From Mezirow's point of view, there are three forms of critical reflection – *content*, *process*, and *premise reflection* (Mezirow, 1991). The last one is the most important for transformative learning to occur, and is also referred to as *critical reflection of assumptions* (CRA). Cranton (2006) has made a clarification of these three kinds of critical reflection by formulating questions for each of them. She asserts that the question “What is the problem?” or “What is happening here?” may characterize the content reflection, whereas “How did this come to be?” is typical for process reflection, and that, finally, premise reflection occurs “when underlying assumptions or the problem itself are questioned: ‘Why is this important to me?’, ‘Why do I care about this in the first place?’” (Ibid., p.34). This kind of reflection enables humans to “think for themselves rather than act on the concepts, values, and feelings of others” (Mezirow, 1998, p.185). Mezirow also underscores that there is a difference between *reflection* and *critical reflection*, in that the former does not include a judgement of what one is reflecting on (Ibid.).

Nevertheless, as shown by several social researchers (e.g. Brookfield, 2000; Lundgren & Poell, 2016), it is not an easy task to ascertain what critical reflection is. Brookfield (2000), for instance, asserts that ideas about what critical reflection stands for are vastly divided, as many social researchers use the notion in different ways. For some, for instance, critical reflection is to reflect deeply and more profoundly. For Brookfield (2000), however, critical reflection has to include “some sort of power analysis of the situation or context in which the learning is happening”, and the persons concerned “must also try to identify assumptions they hold dear that are actually destroying their sense of well-being and serving the interests of others: that is, hegemonic assumptions” (Ibid., p.126).

It is neither within the scope of this thesis, nor relevant to the purpose of it to elaborate on the three kinds of critical reflection. Rather, when talking about reflection or critical reflection henceforth, I refer to the kind of critical reflection that makes the individual ask him-/herself any of the three questions listed by Cranton above. The reason is that Mezirow's idea about the phenomenon seems hard to implement. Among others, Mälkki (2010) asserts that “Mezirow's theory implies a rather idealized and rational process of reflection, compared to the meaning making emerging from empirical studies. In fact, the insights emerging from empirical studies seem to suggest that reflection is more than a rational process, and that it is not always easy to carry out” (Mälkki, 2010, p.43). Merriam (2004) questions Mezirow's standpoint on critical reflection as well. She points out that the ability to critically reflect and, especially, to critically self-reflect on both our own and other individuals' assumptions requires an advanced level of cognitive development, something which a large number of adults do not reach. Merriam (2004) finds support for this view from several researchers. According to Kitchener and King (1990) and other researchers, the advanced level of cognitive development in adults is closely correlated with their level of education, self-directedness, and age. Furthermore, the strength to involve oneself critically in a dialogue is also influenced by some personal characteristics not possessed by adults who, for instance, are desperate, sick, destitute or frightened, or are under any other psychological strain (Merriam,

¹⁴ Mezirow uses the concept *discourse* to mean a special kind of dialogue in a group, which is “devoted to presenting and assessing the validity of reasons by critically examining the widest possible range of evidence and arguments in the context of attempting to find understanding and agreement on the justification of beliefs” (Mezirow, 1998, p.196).

2004; Mezirow, 2000, 2003). This kind of obstacle could exist for many of the newly arrived adults' critical reflection, since their migration experiences are often traumatic and overwhelming, something which was clarified both through the informal talks I had with several participants during my fieldwork, and during the interviews. In addition, Mezirow himself (2003) gives some examples of the abilities, insights and skills in an individual that may bring forth critical reflection and critical self-reflection. Among other things, he mentions a person's open-mindedness, empathic listening, and qualities of emotional intelligence, such as "self-awareness and impulse control, persistence, zeal and self-motivation, empathy, and social deftness" (Mezirow, 2003, p.60). This, too, makes critical reflection, the way Mezirow sees it, very difficult to reach for those newly arrived individuals who have been through hardships and traumatic war experiences.

The democratic citizen

The essence of TL appears to be that reaching a transformation makes the adult individual more democratic and open towards other meaning perspectives than one's own (Mezirow, e.g. 1991), and, by that, which is implicit, becoming a "better" individual both for oneself and for society.

Although Mezirow has not explicitly described what he thinks characterizes a democratic adult learner and citizen, in his writings some characteristics of such a citizen can be chiseled out. First, Mezirow (e.g. 1991) thinks that most of our meaning perspectives are problematic, since they place limits upon the way we think, and keep us narrow-minded. By transforming, i.e. changing these perspectives, we become more open-minded, reflective and discriminating,¹⁵ and the outcome would be possessing such meaning perspectives that "are better than others because they are more likely to generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action" (Mezirow, 2003, p.58-59). Thus, according to Mezirow (Ibid.), besides being open-minded, discriminating, and critically reflective, democratic citizens are well-informed, rational (rather than emotional), have a strong self-concept, and are individuals who can think in the abstract (Mezirow, 1991). Worth noting in this context is that Mezirow (1991) mentions several conditions that he says are, more or less, required for individuals to become involved in the transformation into democratic citizens. These prerequisites are a "minimal level of safety, mental and physical health, shelter, and employment opportunity, as well as acceptance of others with different perspectives and social cooperation" (p.199). Mezirow (e.g. 1991) says that there are values, "such as freedom, democracy, justice, equality, and social cooperation", which are the important conditions under which humans can make meaning of what happens to them (Ibid., p.199).

What is interesting about these enumerated values, and with Mezirow's view of what characteristics a democratic citizen should possess, is that they are very much alike the values which the Swedish policy documents for newly arrived migrants include (explained in Chapter One), and that permeate the CO course, for example. For instance, the democratic values of equality and personal freedom are mentioned, as are the ideas of being self-supporting and taking responsibility for one's own situation and life, i.e. being independent. In addition, being a participating member of society, which is also emphasized in the Swedish policy documents, can be compared with Mezirow's "social cooperation". Despite the resemblance of the values expressed by Mezirow to the Swedish policy documents'

¹⁵ Here, the word *discriminating* stands for the ability to discern, and should therefore not be associated with the negative connotation of the word.

democratic values (e.g. SOU 2010:16), the theorist has made it clear that his intentions with the TL are not political in the first place, but rather to emancipate human beings, since these values are regarded as a necessary foundation for the meaning making of individuals' experiences.

One can read between the lines that Mezirow thinks there are some meaning perspectives which are more "true" and "right" than others, and that the individual adult should strive to acquire them. These perspectives, as we have seen above, generate a person who is open-minded, reflective and judicious. In addition, Mezirow's democratic citizen can be interpreted as someone who knows what kind of meaning perspectives are accepted by the majority of people in Western societies. Indeed, among others, Merriam (2007) critiques Mezirow's theory for representing a Western view which only advocates independence, rational dialogue, and reflective thought. Therefore, wanting to be rational may be seen as an expression of the meaning perspectives of many Western Europeans who are not religious. In other words, religion and rationality seem to be regarded as each other's opposites in Mezirow's reasoning. This might not be applied to all the newly arrived migrant participants in the present study. The reason is that many of them are eager to think in religious terms when thinking about their new life situation, and how they can manage life in Sweden. This is not to say that many of these individuals do not think rationally, but rather, based on the data analysis, it could be suggested that rationality is not something which is prioritized in all situations they encounter. Instead, the individual may choose to understand things from a religious perspective in certain situations.

Taylor (1994) sheds light on intercultural competency, and argues that even though TL theory "provides a model of the learning process of intercultural competency" (p.394), it has limitations, one of which is Mezirow's belief that culture is an obstacle for learning, because it might hinder the human being from critically assessing his or her assumptions and becoming more open to new perspectives. Instead, as Taylor (1994) implies, one's culture should be considered as offering an orientation to one's new reality and facilitating meaning making in a new social environment. Mezirow's normative view, the idea of which is that a perspective transformation is always good for the individual, is being critiqued, as one might ask "who, by what means, and from what cultural perspective decides the best 'ways of knowing'?" (Ibid., p.405). It is emphasized that although critical questioning is a central part in the TL theory, the theory itself is not usually questioned by TL theorists, as concerns, for example, its normative idea (Taylor & Cranton, 2013). This idea is rooted in Western values, in which, for instance, are embedded the notion that any person can become free and happy, if only he or she is persistent enough to overcome all the obstacles (Ibid.).

TL and the social context

There are social researchers who pay attention to the individual transformative learning taking place within the social context, which goes in accordance with Mezirow's (2000) point of view (e.g. Cranton & King, 2003; Cranton & Roy, 2003; Grabove, 1997). The way the adult learner is affected by the social context he or she is involved in is an issue that Cranton and King (2003) have discussed. They have studied transformative learning as a professional development, and, like Grabove (1997), emphasize that an individual's critical reflection on his or her meaning perspectives, if discussed with others, can be promoted by ideas and "evidence" from those others, which makes the individual consider his or her own views from a new angle. Therefore, one may assume that critical reflection can be developed and

expressed in the social fora for the migrants, which, for example, is the civic orientation course, where there are co-participants to exchange experiences and thoughts with.

Use of theories

Even if there is a strong normative feature of the TL theory, and TL has been developed in another context than the Swedish, as most research based on the TL theory has taken place in North America (Taylor & Cranton, 2013), several parts of it can be useful and their application can be justified in answering the research questions. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the utilization of the notion of meaning making, for instance, is, according to my interpretation, very useful when trying to find out how newly arrived migrants understand their experiences in a new social environment, and what they make of these experiences. Therefore, the theory's normative intentions can be turned into intentions to help adult learners, through their own reflection, to "move toward a fuller and more dependable understanding of the meaning" of their experiences (Mezirow, 1991, p.224). In addition, the notion of meaning perspectives may be fruitful when looking at what things in a migrant's life, prior to migration, may influence his or her construction of their experiences in the new society. Thus, the TL theory, together with the social constructionist perspective, present analysis tools for understanding the data in a way that takes the whole spectrum of adult migrants' learning into consideration. Since one main argument against the TL theory is its normative thinking, a deeper discussion of this will be found in Chapter Ten.

Chapter 4: Methods

To be able to answer the research questions about migrants' meaning making, I have conducted field observations, and individual in-depth interviews. Field observations enabled me as a researcher to obtain an overall picture of the verbal interaction during lessons, and I could see how and when a certain participant commented on or reacted to what was said. In a classroom situation, where many migrants have the space to bring out their thoughts and experiences, and receive comments on them from co-participants, observations make it easier to get a grasp of the migrants' verbal interaction with and affection on each other. The classroom environment invites and so to speak encourages individuals to share their views, since the migrants are free to bring up their experiences while a certain theme is dealt with, and the theme is often prepared for such a discussion.

There are several reasons why I chose the interview method for the second part of the empirical data collection, one of which is that this kind of face-to-face interaction is necessary in order "to get at deeper meanings" (Patton, 2002, p.49), i.e. to reach the participants' deeper thoughts and perspectives about, in the case of the present study, how they, through their experiences, make meaning of and construct their new life in Sweden. The purpose of interviewing, according to Patton (2002), is to enter into another person's perspective. Qualitative interviewing presupposes that the other person's perspective is meaningful, and that one can obtain knowledge about it, and make it explicit. Patton (*ibid.*) implies that we interview to gather other individuals' stories. I chose to interview the participants, to listen to what they say about their new experiences in Sweden, and to find out what their reactions to the state-funded introduction measures are.

Target group

The target group of this thesis are newly arrived Arabic-speaking adults of different ages, from 18 up to 65 years of age, and, as concerns those observed, come from different Arabic-speaking countries, as well as from diverse socioeconomic, religious, and academic backgrounds. Thus, in some respects, it is a heterogeneous group of individuals, who share the same language. The reason for choosing the Arabic groups was that my own ethnic and language background is Arabic, which is advantageous both for me, as a researcher, and for the respondents. For, as Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) point out, such characteristics as ethnic identification may shape informant-researcher relationships in important ways. I experienced this latter circumstance myself during the field observations. Thanks to an ethnic identification, I believe several of the participants began to confide in me, and let me share their joy, sadness or distress about a particular occasion or experience they had.

While the intention was to study the meaning making of Arabic speaking individuals from different geographical backgrounds throughout the entire study, to obtain a spread in the empirical data, it was the second part of the data collection, where interviews were carried out, that rendered a fulfillment of this intention impossible. Due to a severe civil war in Syria some months prior to the interview data collection period, there was a sharp increase in the number of Syrian migrants in Sweden, which unavoidably limited the geographical spread of the newly arrived adults to be studied. This resulted in most of the interviewees coming from Syria.

There may also be some other differences between the observed and the interviewed participants. One difference, apart from their geographic background, between those

participants who were observed and those who were interviewed is that the latter did not have to be taking the civic orientation course at the time of the interview. Another difference concerns the time the respondent groups were studied, where those who were observed in the field were observed in 2010/2011, whereas the interviewed respondents were interviewed in late spring 2015. The difference here may lie in the fact that the Swedish labour market looked brighter in 2015, compared to 2010/2011, when unemployment rates were higher (Statistics Sweden). However, one criterion which had to be met was that the interviewed respondents, in similarity with the observed respondents, apart from their status as refugees, were still undergoing their introduction period of two years, something which all the interviewees lived up to. The reason for this criterion was the risk of there being too big a discrepancy between those participants who had finished the introduction period and thus would have lived in Sweden for a longer time, and those participants who were still undergoing their introduction.

Worth noting in this context is that the CO course, in the beginning of the data collection period (in the end of year 2010, and the beginning of year 2011), was for all newly arrived migrants with either refugee status or the like, or whose next of kin were refugees. For this category of migrants, the course was and still is mandatory. However, after the data was collected from the field observations, the criteria for acceptance to the course were changed, making it possible for all newly arrived migrants and their next of kin to participate in the course, not only refugees. Generally, this category of migrants did/do not receive the introduction benefit (*etableringsersättning*), and therefore the course was/is voluntary. However, when conducting the second part of the data collection, i.e. the interviews, all of the respondents were classified refugees, and received the introduction benefit.

The field observations

This section starts with an account of how the data collection of field observations was carried out. Included is a description of the concrete details of the data collection, such as how notes were made, and a presentation of the factors which have influenced this data collection. The section finishes with how the data was analysed.

Data collection

I chose to start my empirical research by conducting field observations in two groups of Arabic-speaking migrants who attended the civic orientation course in Arabic on different weekdays. The main reason why it was only these two groups that were studied was that I wanted to observe the participants during most of the course themes, to find out more about the interaction that occurred over time, and whether there were differences between the course themes, as concerns the discussions and the topics. Each group participated in the course once a week for 20 weeks. Access to the two groups was gained through a colleague who had contact with two of the responsible persons at the unit for civic orientation for newly arrived migrants in a large city in Sweden. My colleague informed those persons and asked them for permission to gain access to the Arabic-speaking groups. They asked, in turn, the course tutors involved, and when all parties had given their consent, I visited and informed the participants, both orally and by handing out a letter in Arabic, about the main purpose of the research study. Once I had obtained their written consent, I started my observations.

There are approximately 62 hours of field observations, collected during approximately six months, between October 2010 and March 2011. I have mainly conducted open, non-

participant observations. This means that I was mostly observing in a passive way, i.e. without interfering in the group's "life" or the interaction and communication between the group members or between them and the tutor, unless some participant or tutor addressed me. The idea behind the passive stance was that I wished to affect the data as little as possible, to be able to obtain as trustworthy a data collection as possible. However, the open observations had a certain feature of participation, since I sometimes also had informal talks with some of the migrants, either during break time, or after session ended, when they asked for my assistance with tasks like interpreting a letter from the authorities.

When conducting the observations, I primarily focused on what the group members told each other, and what they told the tutor during class. Attention was paid to both what they said about their own or their friend's personal experiences, and to their expressed reactions to what a co-participant/co-participants or the tutor said. The reason was that I also wanted to see how the verbal interaction during sessions affected the group members. For instance, I observed in what way a particular kind of information (about something in Swedish society etc.) that the tutor brought up was received, by recording what questions a participant/participants asked or what comments he, she or they made about the issue. In other words, I observed participants' overt reactions to each other's different narratives of experience in Swedish society, i.e. what they said and asked one another after listening to a lived experience or a problem that a co-participant had to deal with. The purpose was to try to see how the migrants' meaning of their new experiences in the Swedish society was manifested.

Observations are, according to Johansson (2011), to a great extent governed by the observer's frames of reference, and these frames can be both cultural and cognitive. "There is, thus, strong empirical evidence that we cannot observe unprejudiced. This does not mean that one always has explicit hypotheses. Therefore one may defend an ambition not to have any explicit hypotheses or preconceived opinions about what one sees or hears" (Ibid, p.100-101, freely translated). This latter is the stance I took when conducting my field observations at first. For the first few weeks, I started out by making observations and taking field notes on almost everything I saw and heard, without considering any theory or hypothesis. The final object of focus was decided after several weeks of observing. At this later stage, some aspects of the TL theory were identified as useful, since the theory deals with adults in a changed life situation.

The actual field work was documented by taking handwritten notes during every session of civic orientation that I attended, and I often placed myself either in a corner at the back of the classroom, or, when the groups were larger, among the participants. Sometimes I did not take notes parallel to listening to the conversations and discussions, because I wanted to concentrate fully on what was being communicated. Instead, these kinds of notes, which dealt with the verbal interaction between the parties, were written in solitude directly or shortly after the session had ended. The handwritten notes included hastily jotted down quotations of the migrants' utterances, but, since the observations were neither audio- nor video-recorded, the quotations were not completely verbatim, due to time constraints (cp. Emerson et. al., 1995). Nevertheless, I was anxious to represent the participants' expressions and statements as accurately as possible, by only omitting such words as conjunctions or certain pronouns etc. This meant that all the meaning bearing words were written directly when observed. In the result chapters of this thesis, the quotations are shown in full, to facilitate the reading and understanding of them. To illustrate this procedure, an authentic example is given here: a. "Swedes should wait till you've learnt proper Swedish, before they expect you for example register at the Public Employment Service, you don't have any knowledge different laws rules

before then” (authentic quotation of my note). b. “Swedes should wait till you’ve learnt proper Swedish, before they expect you for example **to** register at **the** Public Employment Service, **since** you don’t have any knowledge **about** different laws **and** rules before then” (rewritten quotation). As Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) have emphasized, as far as possible, speech during observations “should be rendered in a manner that approximates a verbatim report and represents nonverbal behaviour in relatively concrete terms; this minimizes the level of inference and thus facilitates the construction and reconstruction of the analysis” (Ibid., p.145). However, there was not always time to write down every detail of a particular participant’s speech, which meant that the representation of their speech sometimes had a somewhat fragmented character. However, I was anxious to let the central points of the participants’ speech, that which concerns the study’s purpose, become these “fragments”.

There were reasons for not audio-recording or filming the CO course sessions. As many newly arrived migrants come from war-torn countries, it can be assumed that many of them have been through traumatic circumstances, and therefore they may be more cautious and might have a difficulty trusting authorities or people who are connected to the authorities in some way, such as researchers. Angel and Hjern (2004) describe how refugees tend to view representatives of authority with suspicion, and state that it is normal for a traumatized refugee to find it difficult to trust the authorities in their new country. In addition, had I used a video camera during data collection, it might have affected the outcome and the participants’ behaviour during the field study, as Kemuma (2000) has reported. Another disadvantage of videotaped observations is that “they are very complex to work with since both transcription and analysis are more difficult than is the case with audio data” (Silverman, 2000, p.47). Silverman therefore suggests that unless the researcher feels there is a strong need for video recordings, he or she should avoid it. The complexity also lies in that several decisions “have to be made about [...] whether the camera should be fixed or mobile, whether a single focus is to be adopted or whether the focus should vary; and if so when and how” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p.148). On the other hand, after the fact, I can state that the lack of a video camera or audio recording resulted in poorer data. Had the apparatus been used, the material would have been richer and fuller. And, since I do not have any stenography skills, I was not able to write my field notes faster and more literally than I did. As a consequence, many of the participants’ and tutors’ statements, when written down, lost their dialogue- or conversation-like form, which they often had in reality.

Factors influencing data collection

There are some factors which might have influenced the data collection during the field observations. For example, I noticed that the participants trusted me, in that they asked for my assistance with different kinds of things that required good Swedish skills, such as calling a civil servant for an appointment, or translating a document which was written in Swedish. As I spent some of the coffee breaks with the respondents, it was possible to meet their needs. Sometimes I also remained seated after the course session had finished, to be able to assist. Apart from the ethnic identification aspect, the long period I was in the field, meeting the same participants, can also be suggested to have encouraged their trust.

There can also be disadvantages for the study, when the researcher shares the same language and ethnic background as the respondents. One of these, which I experienced during my first data collection period, is that the researcher risks becoming too close to the respondents and might lose focus of what he or she is studying when becoming involved in other areas of attention, such as helping individuals with different kind of things, such as those described

above. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) touch upon this issue and assert that informants “will try to gauge how far the ethnographer can be trusted, what he or she might be able to offer as an acquaintance or friend” (p.65), and state that it is crucial for the researcher to make as good an impression as possible. Those impressions “that pose an obstacle to access must be avoided [...] while those which facilitate it must be encouraged, within the limits set by ethical considerations” (Ibid., p.65). I therefore consider my “service” as a way of strengthening the relationship between the participants and myself, something which has facilitated and been beneficial for the data collection.

There are also pitfalls in personal involvement with one’s respondents, one of which is what is often referred to as “going native”, i.e. becoming too comfortable and identifying too much with the people under observation. This might both make the researcher abandon the task of analysis and result in a bias that arises from “overrapport” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). While it was very hard to remain detached while observing the adult migrants, and disinterested when listening to their experiences, in the beginning of my data collection I made an effort to avoid such pitfalls as far as possible, by trying to set a limit for when to focus and when to “assist”, and by getting some distance to the field by being absent from it a few days every week. Remaining dispassionate was harder the first few weeks of data collection, but became easier at a later stage.

Apart from the description here of my closeness to the participants, there has, most likely, also been a risk that I have had some influence on the data due to my role as an “outsider” (Patton, 2002). Therefore, my presence as a researcher has undoubtedly affected the participants to some extent and might also have influenced the civic orientation tuition.

Data analysis

Surely, the data analysis of the empirical material has been influenced by my preunderstanding, something which will be described in more detail further down in this chapter. I had a preconceived notion of there being a “conflict” or tension between the Arabic-speaking migrants’ and native Swedes’ meaning perspectives, to the extent that their perspectives could be generalized, and that this tension would be expressed during the CO course sessions. Nevertheless, with the chosen concepts of TL in mind, I tried to look for patterns in the data that showed what factors affected the participants’ meaning making in their new society and life situation, that is to say what was “deciding” their meaning making. Further, I tried to find out how the migrants reacted to the course contents and discussions. Thus, a basic content analysis of the observational material was used, and, more concretely, the analysis started out with repeatedly readings of the written field notes, where short sentences or words were written in the margin while reading the text. After this was done, a coding of the “raw” contents of the field notes was carried out, where I picked out those data sequences which were relevant to the purpose of the study, and this means that some of the field notes were ignored and only the other parts were coded. For instance, those field notes which only described the tutor’s explanation of a certain phenomenon in society, such as how the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (*Försäkringskassan*) works etc., were ignored, as they did not contain any comments or reactions from the participants, and thus were irrelevant to the purpose of the present study. The third stage of analysis included a kind of gathering of the codes into clusters, which got placed under different relevant categories that became headings for the codes. As Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) make clear, the process of analysis involves, among other things, developing a set of categories which capture the relevant aspects of the data, and picking out particular items of the data for these categories.

This basic content analysis procedure is described in more detail in Elo and Kyngäs (2008), among others, as an *inductive content analysis*.

When the first steps of analysis were completed, I analysed the data by using the social constructionist approach and the TL theory “as a source of inspiration for the discovery of patterns which provide understanding” (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008, p.56). I also alternated between the two approaches and my empirical findings in the analysis process, and let the findings get interpreted and reinterpreted in the light of the theoretical approaches. Also the formulation of the research questions was done in an abductive process after the collection of the observation data, and, later, the interview data were collected. Thus, the concrete questions were predominantly based on the two collections of data. According to Alvesson and Sköldberg (2008), abduction is a kind of combination of both the inductive and the deductive method, but goes beyond them, by, for example, being open to an alteration of the theory. While the TL theory has not been altered in the case of this thesis, it has been clear that it cannot be used in its entirety, but parts of it can be selected in order to carry out a relevant analysis of the data, even if this does not seem to be what Mezirow himself had intended.

The interviews

This section will give an account of how the interviewees were selected, how the interviews were carried out, and how these were analysed.

Data collection

The second part of the empirical data collection has been done by conducting individual in-depth interviews with newly arrived adults, carried out from March to July in 2015. All the interviews lasted somewhere between 45 minutes and 1.5 hours, and were digitally recorded on a Dictaphone,¹⁶ in order not to miss any important comments etc., and to be able to return to respondents’ statements whenever needed. Furthermore, I wanted to focus on what was said during the interviews, so that I could take notes on my thoughts directly after the interview. The latter is not possible when I have to listen and write at the same time. The plan was to interview several newly arrived individuals in different groups attending the CO course. There was a difficulty in deciding the total number of respondents in advance, since it was dependent on how many of the individuals who attended the CO course would give their consent to be interviewed. Nevertheless, the intention was to interview somewhere between 10 and 15 participants, the limit set merely for the possibility of reaching a saturation in the data. The reasons for using the observation and interview methods and combining them was that I judged that they would aid in answering my research questions, and that the two data collection methods complement each other, which would produce a richer material, and, in this way, more reliable results.

A permission to get in touch with interview participants in the CO course was gained through the oral consent of the head of the unit for civic orientation in a large municipality in Sweden, which was the same place I was when the observational data was collected some years earlier.

¹⁶ As described earlier in this chapter, the field observations were not recorded, since a recording could harm newly arrived migrants in the CO course groups who had been through war traumas and the like. However, as the interviewees had volunteered to be interviewed, I asked them, prior to the interviews, whether their interviews could be recorded, to which all the respondents gave their consent.

It is at that unit where the newly arrived individuals receive their tutoring in civic orientation. I, personally, took contact with the head of this unit and described the general purpose of my study, and the planning of interviews with the Arabic-speaking migrants. I also made it clear that the migrants would be given both oral and written information in Arabic, concerning the purpose of the study. The oral version would be given in front of the whole group, during one of the course sessions, so that everyone would get the opportunity to ask questions if they needed to, and because they could get a first impression of me, as a person and researcher. After this oral information, a written letter in Arabic was handed out to the participants, in which all the relevant information was stated, including a brief introduction to the researcher's academic background, contact details and the contact details of the dissertation supervisors. To this letter, a separate consent sheet was attached, and I made sure that it took at least a week, before I visited the group again to collect the written consent sheets. This way, the newly arrived adults would get some time and space to think over whether they wanted to take part in the study or not.

Prior to the regular data collection, a pilot interview¹⁷ was carried out, in order to promote researcher reflexivity and avoid bias as much as possible. As Patton (2002) asserts, reflexivity is important, because it emphasizes the role of the researcher's self-awareness, awareness of one's perspectives, and one's political/cultural consciousness. This means that reflexivity makes the qualitative researcher attentive to, among other things, the sociocultural, linguistic, and political foundation for his or her own perspectives, as well as the points of view of the individuals he or she interviews or studies (Ibid.). Conducting and analysing the pilot interview made me more conscious of where I "stand", in relation to the respondent, and, for example, how my personal and academic background or my assumptions about newly arrived individuals may influence both the questions I ask and the way I analyse the interview. As no qualitative researcher can be entirely objective (Patton, 2002; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007), a pilot interview may open the researcher's eyes to the shortcomings of the data collection, so that these can be considered and, to a certain extent, avoided in future interviewing, thereby reducing bias in the results. Among other things, reflexivity involves asking yourself the following crucial questions: (About yourself, as a qualitative inquirer): "What do I know? How do I know what I know? With what voice do I share my perspective?"; (about those studied): "How do they know what they know? What shapes and has shaped their world-view?"; (about those receiving the study, i.e. the readers): "How do they make sense of what I give them?" etc. (Patton, 2002, p.66).

Asking the questions about those studied, for instance, is one way for the researcher of "giving voice" to the participants (e.g. Mishler, 1986; Patton, 2002). Several researchers also point out the advantage of regarding the respondents as collaborators, instead of as mere informants/respondents (Mishler, 1986; Patton, 2002; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This is a natural view for Mishler (Ibid.) and Kvale and Brinkmann (2009), since they emphasize that we should see the interview as a conversation between the interviewer and the respondent. Mishler (1986) underlines that these two parties construct the conversation together, and that "[...] both questions and responses are formulated in, developed through, and shaped by the discourse between interviewers and respondents". This was clear during the real interviews between me and my respondents, where most interviews felt like conversations in an organized form, as it could happen, for instance, that the respondent asked me questions about

¹⁷ As there was a positive outcome of the pilot interview concerning rich data that was relevant for the study's research questions, this interview was later included in the data analysis. A more detailed explanation will be found further below in this chapter.

my background or asked my advice. Therefore, Mishler continues, “an adequate understanding of interviews depends on recognizing how interviewers reformulate questions and how respondents frame answers in terms of their reciprocal understanding as meanings emerge during the course of an interview” (Mishler, 1986, p.52).

An interview guide has been used during the interviews (see Appendix E), as it would ensure that the same issues are pursued with all the participants involved, although there is the possibility of adding new questions in interviews conducted later, if necessary. Another advantage of such a guide is that it “provides topics or subject areas within which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and ask questions that will elucidate and illuminate that particular subject” (Patton, 2002, p.343). Thus, the interview guide helps to establish a conversational style for the interview, without losing focus on the particular subjects, which have been decided beforehand. My interview guide did not contain any detailed questions, since these would run the risk of placing limits on the participants’ answers. Instead, it was more like a mind-map of themes which seemed interesting to discuss with respondents, and which suited the research questions. The plan was to keep the interviews as open-ended and in-depth as possible, and therefore it was better to make the respondents speak as freely as they could and felt like.

Factors influencing data collection

There are also disadvantages of the interview method, which might affect data collection, one of which being that the interviewer may receive contradictory statements or statements with various meanings (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 1995), which might be hard to interpret/analyze. This disadvantage, though, may turn into an advantage, since “lies, evasions, and inconsistencies can provide useful information. What was so important about that point that they (interviewees) felt they could not tell the truth about it? [...] A lie or distortion usually means that interviewees care deeply about something; you might want to figure out what that was” (Rubin & Rubin, 1995, p.223).

Problems recruiting interview participants

When one week had elapsed, after my first visit to the two groups at the unit for civic orientation, I revisited the same groups and wished to collect the consent forms, but I only got two forms back from each group of approximately 20 course participants. This meant that I would only be able to interview four of my planned 10-15 participants. Therefore I paid a visit to two other Arabic-speaking groups, following the same procedure as the last visit, i.e. handing out the information letter together with the consent form, at the same time as the oral presentation in Arabic. When I noticed there would still be a cool interest in participating among the civic orientation participants, I decided not to lose more time, and instead used the snowball method (Rubin & Rubin, 1995), by talking to one of the informants who had already undergone an interview and asking him to tell his friends on the course or elsewhere about my research, and try to recruit them for interviews. I also thought of other alternative contexts for recruiting informants, which was at a municipal adult education school (*Komvux*), where there were many newly arrived Arabic-speaking students who study the Swedish language. For this reason, contact was taken with a former colleague at that school, and she was asked to check which of the students in her groups were still undergoing their two-year introduction period. After this was done, I sent the Arabic information letter to her, to hand out to the students in question. The plan was to visit the groups after I had been informed of how many were interested in participating. In case there were not many responses from the school, an e-mail

was also sent to a colleague in another city, where there are other newly arrived adults attending the CO course. After a few weeks, two participants from that city gave their consent.

At the end of my first interview, my informant and I addressed this issue of few participants willing to undergo an interview, and he gave me an explanation. He told me that even if I am an Arabic-speaking person myself, and am born in an Arabic country, the newly arrived migrants regarded me as an authority, who wanted to “milk” them of personal information. And the fact that they did not know me from before naturally made it harder for them to trust me. He also told me that most of the migrants had gone through a lot of pain and suffering due to the war in, for instance, Syria, and were suspicious and afraid of authorities and people representing authorities of any kind (cp. Angel and Hjern, 2004). Because of this difficulty of recruiting informants, my ambition was to continue looking for other recruiting venues than the civic orientation course unit. Through two colleagues, one of whom was in another city, I got in touch with newly arrived individuals studying SFI (Swedish for immigrants) at municipal adult education schools. This respondent recruitment procedure lasted from March 2015 to July 2015, and the final number of interviewees was 12, the pilot interview included, among those three women and nine men, between 25 and 45 years of age. Of these 12 respondents, two were recruited via the snowball method, two respondents through a former colleague at a municipal adult education school in the large city, and two other respondents through another colleague in a small city. The rest of the interviewees were recruited when visiting the unit for the civic orientation course in the large city. More detailed information about each of the interviewees is given in Figure 1 on the next page.

The interview respondents

	Age (estimated)	Stay in Sweden	Education and level	Housing situation	Family/relatives in Sweden	Present occupation/activities	Previous occupation (home country)
RP¹⁸	35	Approx. two years	Economics at university	Second hand with a younger brother and "friends".	Two brothers.	Studies SASG. Has finished SFL.	Company owner. Service of copy machines, printers etc.
R1	30	One year	Upper secondary school	With other migrants, as roommate.	?	Language studies (Swedish). Driving practice.	Worked with the Red Crescent/Cross as a volunteer. Worked with "human relief" for 10 years. Paid job as a salesman for cleaning agents.
R2	44	?	Upper secondary school	With his brother.	Two brothers.	Internship.	Watchmaker.
R3	33	Six months	Economics programme at upper secondary school, and two years' college	Second hand flat.	Wife and small daughter.	SFL.	Salesman at a mobile phone company for 10 years.
R4	25	Approx. one year	Management studies at university	Illegal flat together with a friend.	None.	SFL.	University studies. Had planned to take a Master's degree in Canada.
R5	45	One year and two months	Upper secondary school, and two years' college	Second hand with other people.	Grown-up niece (sister's daughter).	Works with building decoration (recent job).	Worked with decorations in buildings.
R6	40	One year and two months	Economics at university	First hand flat. (Privately rented).	None, but his wife and two small sons will arrive soon.	SASG and <i>Korta vägen</i> (for academics).	Worked with many things, the most recent job was as a regional manager at a phone company.
R7	32	Approx. two years	University degree	Second hand flat.	Mother, and a 7 year-old	SASG.	A university librarian.

¹⁸ Here, the abbreviation *RP* stands for the pilot respondent.

						niece. A married brother, and a married sister. Mother's cousin.			
R8	40	Three years	Upper secondary school (unfinished)	Illegal flat.			SASG, and an English course.	Tourist bus driver for several years.	
R9	43	One year and two months	Compulsory school (unfinished)	At a hotel.	Wife and four small children. A brother who has lived in Sweden for 25 years.	SFI.		Worked as a mobile phone- and computer specialist. Owner of a mobile- and computer service shop.	
R10	45	Approx. eighteen months	University degree civil engineer.	First hand flat.	Husband and two teenage children.		SASG.	Engineer for 22 years.	
R11	45	Eighteen months	Compulsory school	Very small first hand flat.	One grown-up son and his family, and a brother.		SFI, and has applied for internship.	Housewife.	

Figure 1 – Chart over the interview respondents.

Location for interviews

The physical place for nine of the interviews, including the pilot interview, was a fairly quiet and peaceful end of a long corridor at the far end of a university building, where there were only a couple of classrooms. I chose the university corridor after a long consideration, and after considering other options. First, when I consulted the head of the unit of the CO course for a suitable place where the interviews could be carried out, I was informed that there were no available classrooms for this purpose. Then I considered my own office at the university where I have my doctoral post, but soon I abandoned this idea, because my university lies in another city, and it would be too much to ask of the informants to travel to that city for an interview. Therefore, the only good alternative was the end of the corridor in a university building in the same city where the informants lived. I visited this corridor at two different occasions and two different hours of the day, to determine whether it was quiet enough for the interview purpose.

All interviews except three were carried out at the university building described above. The three exceptions were conducted at peaceful and less crowded cafés close to the railway stations of the two small cities, where the participants lived. The reason was that I did not want these individuals to travel to the big city merely because of the interview, so I offered to go there myself. For most of the participants in the big city, our meeting started out when I fetched them at the nearest bus stop and we took the walk of approximately seven minutes to the university building. After that, I offered them a cup of coffee or tea from the student café, and then we would go and sit at the place for the interview. This “premeeting” gave us a chance to break the ice and get acquainted with each other by chatting. Ekholm and Fransson (1984) point out that it is important to give the informant warming up time, to be able to get acquainted with the interviewer and the unknown environment. Without our premeeting, I think it would have been harder for the informants to open up and talk freely at the interview.

Interview language

The participants were interviewed in Arabic, as they chose, after being asked if they wished to be interviewed in English (or Swedish) instead. Arabic is presumably the language they know best, and therefore can communicate best in. As to the data collection, naturally, it is more advantageous to carry out the interviews in a language that the newly arrived migrants know best and feel most comfortable with. Another reason why I chose to interview in Arabic, apart from the migrants’ personal wish, was my tiny contribution to the migrants’ feeling of holding power, which would emanate from using the language they know best and can best communicate in. This is also connected to the idea of recognition, in that using their language may give the migrants a part of the multi-dimensional recognition which Heidegren (2003) talks about and which he means is a prerequisite of developing a positive relation to oneself.

Since I have not studied Arabic for a very long time, my Arabic language proficiency is a little limited. However, for my part, it is harder to write in Arabic than to speak it, so the limitation for the interview situation has not been so great. Nevertheless, I had to ask for clarifications from the respondents often, as they spoke other Arabic dialects than the one I am used to. This is, of course, a matter which might be regarded as reducing the reliability of the study, but since the advantages of conducting the interviews in Arabic outweighed the disadvantages, the decision to interview in Arabic was taken early during the research project. There were other advantages than the one mentioned above, such as the adult migrants’ opportunity to use their mother tongue to communicate freely with the researcher, and without

the interference of an interpreter. This, in turn, may have made the data more valid, as the respondents' statements were entirely their own.

Data analysis

The interview data was first listened to and transcribed in English. When this was done, the interviews were listened to again, to discover whether there were any points missed or sequences or words that had been forgotten or omitted by mistake in the transcriptions. After that, all the transcriptions were read closely several times, during which reoccurring thoughts or ideas that were relevant to the purpose of the study were noted and categorized. These categories were interpreted in light of the social constructionist approach, the chosen concepts of TL, and previous research about migrants' introductory experiences in their host countries. The interpretation was also connected to the study's purpose and research questions.

As there was a positive outcome of the pilot interview, in terms of rich data, which was also judged as highly relevant to the study's research questions, this interview was included in the data analysis. This was done by using the pilot interview data as an "amplifier" to certain categories. In addition, it was sometimes also used and interpreted on the same premises as for the regular interviews, for instance, as concerns the category of the SPES, since the pilot respondent has many interesting things to say about his meaning of this authority.

A more concrete account of the analysis steps for the data analysis below is given briefly here:

a. To begin with, I transcribed the interviews in English directly when listening to them in Arabic. Naturally this posed a small challenge in itself, since not all the Arabic words have the same meanings when translated to English. I tried to find as accurate counterparts to the words as possible, with the help of dictionaries. As not all the informants' statements were relevant for the purpose of my research and the research questions, they were not transcribed verbatim. Instead, those statements that were not connected with the purpose of the study were omitted and only those that were relevant or could become relevant for future analysis (considering the research questions) were transcribed. In the transcriptions, humming, long pauses, laughter, and other kinds of emotional reactions were included, since these utterances can cause statements to have a different meaning. Further, I focused on a linguistic translation, i.e. I did not turn the idiomatic words in Arabic into idiomatic counterparts in English, but rather the idiomatic words in Arabic were translated literally, and when this could pose a problem in understanding, I put the idiomatic English counterpart in brackets, to facilitate the understanding in English. In addition, the Swedish words that many participants sometimes used during the interviews were included, and the English translation of them was put in brackets in the excerpts.

b. The interviews were listened to once more, to ensure that I had not missed anything important, and thus to be able to fill in possible gaps in the transcriptions.

c. After reading each transcribed interview separately, I picked out the most important parts of the transcriptions which were connected with my research questions, and coded the statements. This meant that the issues most frequently talked of were named and commented upon in the margins of the transcribed document, such as for instance "Housing" and "Work".

d. I wrote a summary of the most frequently mentioned codes.

e. For the first five interviews, an analysis of each informant's interview was done, and coded separately. The reason was that this would give me an opportunity to obtain an overview of what topics the respondents talked about most, to be able to chisel out the first categories for the analysis of the rest of the interviews.

f. A cut and paste method was utilized, where all respondents' quotations and excerpts of the same categories were divided into several envelopes, something which made it easier to find relevant quotations for specific categories. To obtain a general view of each respondent's unique life situation, a data matrix was constructed, with vertical columns for themes, such as "Educational level" and "Family situation", and horizontal lines for respondents. (See the chart above.) This enabled, when need arose, a return to, for example, each individual respondent's present housing situation, or his or her present occupation and activities.

g. The same codes from all the informants' interviews were put together, as they appeared to be connected, such as "SPES" and "internship", which were categorized as "experiences from, and meaning making of SPES and the labour market". The suitable categories of the codes that were written, were analysed and interpreted, both in light of the four chosen concepts of TL (meaning making, meaning perspectives, disorienting dilemma, and critical reflection), previous research, and constructionist theory.

When it came to the data analysis, the interview language posed a small challenge. Firstly, I had to write the interview transcriptions in English, since the thesis would be written in English. This probably altered the original meaning of some of the Arabic words or expressions, since not all the words in a specific language have the same meaning as their equivalents in another language. If we consider the frequently used Arabic expression, which several of the informants in this study used, "Try, my worshipper, and I'll try with you", it refers to God's exhortation to the human being to do his or her best to succeed, and God will help him or her on the way to his or her goal. In English, it seems like an insignificant expression, but in Arabic it sounds like a very powerful and uplifting saying. Another example is the Arabic expression "a boy of this country", which means "a citizen" in English. The Arabic version includes more feelings than the English equivalent, therefore it seems a bit banal to say it in English, whereas in Arabic it sounds as if the person who has uttered it really feels strongly for his or her country of residence. Secondly, before I wrote the final version of the study, I could not show the participants my interpretations of their statements, and in that way give them the opportunity to make suggestions for changes and so forth, since I was only able to write in English, due to several circumstances. This meant that the respondents had to rely entirely on my making "correct" interpretations. For ethical reasons, therefore, I told the migrants about this circumstance before they made their decision to participate in the study. Naturally, some of them told me that they could read English, and would be happy to receive the final version of the thesis.

The participants' and my similar ethnic backgrounds were probably advantageous for the data analysis, in that there might be some issues which the participants have brought up during the interview, which tend to be misinterpreted if one is not familiar with the context to which these specific issues are connected. Therefore, these issues may be best interpreted by someone who has cracked the specific cultural code, for, as Mishler (1986) underscores, "[...] meanings are contextually grounded", and there are "cultural frameworks of meaning in eliciting and interpreting responses", which most probably helps to achieve a shared understanding of the conversation (Ibid., p.117). This shared understanding of the conversation, which, from my point of view, may lead to a mutual construction of the

conversation, does not come easily, if the two parties do not share the cultural background or meaning perspectives.¹⁹ Further, Mishler (1986) emphasizes that terms or words “take on specific and contextually grounded meanings within and through the discourse as it develops and is shaped by speakers” (p.64). Mishler (1986) also brings an important question up, namely the relationship between interview and meaning, i.e. the underlying meaning of the interview statements, compared to the statements which are concretely expressed during the interviews, which is considered a central problem for the analysis. However, for this present thesis, I have only been interested in what the respondents say about things during the interviews, and thus not what they think, or what underlying significations lie behind their statements. One thing that I did to reduce the tendency to misinterpret linguistic significations in the participants’ responses was to follow up a statement which I was unsure about, by asking the respondent for a clarification during the interview. In addition, while working on my analysis, I listened to the same interviews as many times as was necessary, and considered the parts of the interview in the context of the whole interview, to be convinced that the interpretations would do the data justice.

As concerns the anonymization of personal names, the plan was to come up with fictitious names for the informants, because that way they would not only be represented by a number in the analysis and results, but would get realistic names, which would be more ethically defendable. However, after some time during the analysis process, I realized that even if the names were fictitious, they might jeopardize the anonymity of the participants, in that real participants in the CO-course could bear the Arabic names that were not identifiable with the informants’ names. Therefore, this idea was abandoned, and I ended up naming all the informants by giving them the letter R, which stands for “respondent”, followed by a number, which corresponds to the temporal order of the interview. Simply put, R1 stands for the first respondent whom I interviewed, and R2 the second interviewed person, and so forth. When referring to the pilot interview respondent, the abbreviation RP is marked.

The author’s background

As a human being’s preunderstanding plays one of the most important roles in interpretation, I shall here give an account of those parts of my own background, and my view of the social constructionist perspective that may have marked the data analysis and interpretation in some way, and may have contributed to them.

I was born in Iraq, but my family moved from there to Iran in the early 1980s, due to the war between these countries. As Kurds with roots in Iran, we were safer in Iran. However, we moved to Sweden in November 1984, when I was nine years old. The experiences after our arrival in Sweden were very different for me and my young siblings on the one hand, and for my parents, on the other, since, unlike my parents, my siblings and I found our place in the country very quickly, since we made Swedish friends in school, and learnt Swedish in a year or so. Fortunately, our family was not traumatized, as we were not refugees of war or the like.

¹⁹ I am aware that the uses of the words *culture* and *cultural* are controversial, and here the words are only used for the sake of simplicity. Also the respondents in the study use these words, for example when they want to describe differences between their ways of thinking and the Swedes’. In my view, culture could be defined as a changeable and non-static set of values, norms, customs, social codes etc., which a group of human beings, either small or large, construct, share and renegotiate. However, the definition of culture has not been problematized by the theorists and social researchers presented in this thesis. For the reasons mentioned here, I will use the plural form of the word whenever I need to use it for my own explanations, to show the multifaceted aspect of it.

Also, the labour and housing markets were good back in the 1980s, so neither my parents nor my elder siblings suffered from unemployment. Nevertheless, we had to make new meaning in the Swedish society, something which was easier and less painful for me and my young siblings than it was for my parents. For them, almost every day was like a struggle to fit in the Swedish “world”, and, at the same time, try to keep both feet firmly on the ground. Therefore, when I got in touch with the newly arrived migrants in this present study, I could recognize many similarities between them and my parents. This made my contact with them easier, as they confided in me and shared with me their thoughts, experiences and dreams. As a Muslim, I had good relationships with the Christian migrants as well, since they, as I interpreted it, considered it more important to be a believer than having a specific religion, a conviction we had in common. If I had had a different background, I believe it would have been more difficult to step into the adult participants’ lives.

As for my professional background, receiving my teacher’s certificate from university, I worked as a teacher in several junior high schools, primarily teaching English and Swedish as a second language. This latter school subject meant that I came in contact with many young migrants, many of whom were Arabic speaking. After four years, I decided to move on to teaching adults, and started to work as an English and SFI (Swedish for migrants) teacher at *Komvux*, a school for municipal adult education. I stayed there for five years, and got to know many different people with diverse backgrounds, which taught me a lot about what life could be like for newly arrived migrants, and how a human being can construct his or her own life. From this period, I began to think that knowledge is not “out there” to be grasped, but that it is rather something that has to be constructed and worked on individually. Therefore, the social constructionist approach already suited my epistemological view, even prior to my work with the present thesis.

Preunderstanding of the researcher

My own personal and professional background accounted for above, together with the social constructionist theoretical perspective, constitute the frame for my preunderstanding. This makes my interpretation, like any other researcher’s, subjective and dependent on subjective grounds. Thus, every researcher constructs his or her own version of interpretation. For scientific research purposes, this interpretation is determined, among other things, by the researcher’s preunderstanding and his or her theoretical considerations (Ödman, 1979; Gilje & Grimen, 1995). A preunderstanding comprises such components as individual personal experiences, beliefs or faith, and language, among other things (Gilje & Grimen, 1995). For this reason, a preunderstanding may be regarded as the meaning perspectives which Mezirow (e.g. 1991) talks about, and which are grounded on the human being’s background (historical, linguistic, cultural, religious etc.). These meaning perspectives or preunderstanding may be altered, due to the encounters out in the world and when making new experiences. Therefore, we cannot understand a phenomenon fully without considering it in light of the context it is embedded in, and, for this reason, the context of the newly arrived migrants’ meaning making and learning will be further described in the coming chapters.

Having said that, the question arises of how the researcher can know which interpretation is the most “suitable” or “correct” one. According to e.g. Larsson (2005), there are certain interpretation criteria, the following of which can show whether the interpretation is the most “correct”. As Larsson (2005) and Rubin and Rubin (1995) have described, most validity indicators cannot be applied to qualitative research, and therefore, there are other criteria to follow, to be able to uphold a high quality in the interpretation of results. In my view, two of

these criteria - *consistency* and *empirical anchorage* - have been met in the present study. Consistency and high quality may be possible, when the data is treated in such a way that there is harmony between the whole and the parts (Larsson, 2005). According to my view of this reasoning, the whole is my interpretation of the entire material, whereas the parts are the separate parts of the data, such as the observation data. The interpretation, which, as underscored above, is based on my preunderstanding, makes my empirical data more understandable, at the same time as these empirical data affirm my interpretation. When a research study has an empirical anchorage, it means that the data which is being interpreted actually represents some part of “reality”, for example the reality constructed by the newly arrived adults of my study and by myself, as a researcher.

Issues of trustworthiness

According to Rubin and Rubin (1995), the researcher has to demonstrate the study’s credibility “by its *transparency*, *consistency-coherence*, and *communicability*” (Ibid., p.85). It is not suitable to talk about validity and reliability when we conduct qualitative research (Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Larsson, 2005). As for this study, the transparency indicator is provided in that the whole process of recruiting participants, and the difficulties connected to the studies, have been described as openly as possible. Regarding the communicability of the study, my hope is that the language skills have been good enough to present the findings and the interpretation of them in a clear way, in order not to leave any obscurities. When it comes to consistency or coherence, it is more complicated to prove this has been checked, because it means, for example, that the researcher can offer explanations as to why there are apparent contradictions in an interviewee’s statements. This requires good interviewing skills, which means that the researcher, when discovering a contradiction during the interview, asks for deeper and more detailed responses than the original ones. In other words, the researcher has to show that he or she has explored the obvious contradiction (Ibid.). As concerns the present study, I cannot guarantee full consistency, since several of the respondents, due to their migration experiences, have been vulnerable and, therefore, I have not wanted to ask too many attendant questions. Nevertheless, I have made an effort to show contradictions that are obvious in the interview data, and have tried to find reasons for them.

Ethical considerations

As the description above shows, for the observation study, the ethical considerations have been taken care of through the information letter and consent sheet in Arabic, and through making sure that all the participants had understood the information about participation in the study²⁰. Further, participants’ real names have neither been used in the collected data material, nor in the final version of the thesis. As has been described earlier in this chapter, there was a strong reason not to use any video camera for recording the observations during the course sessions. Many of the newly arrived Arabic-speaking adults have been through traumatic circumstances, due to war and personal loss, and therefore there was a strong risk of causing them more harm by video recording their interaction and statements. This would not have been justified by the purpose of the research.

As concerns the interview part study, prior to visiting and informing the newly arrived migrants, and before conducting the individual interviews, an application for ethical vetting was written and sent to the regional ethical vetting/review board in a large city in Sweden.

²⁰ At the time for the observations, applying for ethical vetting was not considered necessary.

The application was accepted and the interview study was approved. Shortly after this positive answer, in March 2015, I carried out a pilot interview with a newly arrived individual, in order to promote researcher reflexivity and avoid bias as much as possible.

According to the Swedish research council, *Vetenskapsrådet*, there are four main requirements for conducting an ethical scientific research project. These are called the *information requirement*, the *consent requirement*, the *confidentiality requirement*, and the *use requirement*. The first of these is mainly about informing the respondents and study participants of their role, and the conditions for their participation. This means, for example, that they be informed that their participation is voluntary, and that they have the right to discontinue their participation. For this present study, after the pilot interview had been transcribed, and the interview guide had been slightly revised to suit the research questions more, I visited several Arabic-speaking groups at the unit for civic orientation. I informed them orally about the study, and told them that, for instance, if a respondent wishes to discontinue his or her participation in the middle of the interview, he or she has the right to do so, and that this would not cause any harm to his or her participation in the CO course.

To meet the consent requirement the researcher has to get the participant's written consent of participation in the study, prior to the collection of data. This rule applies to various sorts of methods for data collection, such as interviews or questionnaires. After the oral, Arabic presentation of the study, I handed out a letter in Arabic, together with an enclosed consent form. At this time, I told the participants that I would visit them again the week after to collect the forms from those who give their consent to be interviewed, and to answer any questions that may have come up during the week for consideration. Also at this moment, I made sure they knew about their right to withdraw their consent whenever they wished, and that this would not affect their participation in the CO course or any other activities they were involved in.

The idea of the confidentiality requirement is that information about participants "should be given the highest possible confidentiality, and" that the personal particulars shall be kept in safe custody, "in a manner that unauthorized persons cannot access them" (*Vetenskapsrådet*, 2002, p.12). Therefore, the empirical data material was safely locked in my researcher's cupboard at the university library in the city where the observations and interviews were carried out. This circumstance also made working on the analysis easier, as all the material was always near at hand. The confidentiality principle includes taking care that the participants of a study cannot be identified by persons outside the study, in other words, information about them is made anonymous. As described earlier in this chapter, during the analysis procedure, all the respondents received a designation with the letter R and a number, in order not to be identified by an outsider.

And finally, the use requirement demands the researcher use data about individuals only for research purposes. This implies that information about individuals ought not to be lent out for commercial or non-scientific purposes. The present study is intended to be used only for scientific research purposes, primarily in the fields of adult learning and pedagogy.

PART TWO

Results and discussion

The second part of this thesis contains five result chapters, where Chapter Five will describe, by presenting and analysing some of the power point slides used in the CO course, the meaning which is given to the newly arrived migrants in that course. This chapter will also bring up what is written in the policy documents about *etablering* and the introduction measures, to highlight the background of the CO course, and the idea behind the concept of *etablering*. Chapter Six presents the meaning which the newly arrived adult migrants themselves appear to make of work and internship in Sweden, and of the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES), through which the meaning giving occurs. The meaning which the adult migrants have made of the Swedish language is accounted for in Chapter Seven. In Chapter Eight, a presentation will be given of what influence the adult migrants' meaning perspectives have on their meaning making in the Swedish society. Here, the focus lies on the values regarding children's upbringing, and religion. In Chapter Nine, a meaning making and learning model will be presented, where concrete examples from the empirical chapters will be put in the model, to illustrate what aspects influence adult migrants' meaning making and learning, and how the learning process may manifest itself.

In all the chapters dealing with the newly arrived adults' own meaning making, i.e. Chapters Six, Seven, Eight and Nine, there will be three meaning variations represented when describing the migrants' meaning of different things in their new society; the meaning variations of *difficulties*, *slight difficulties*, and *easiness*. These meaning variations are, to a great extent, varied meanings of the new experiences which the migrants make in Sweden. The migrants' experiences are often made in such contexts that constitute expressions of the meaning perspective of the "good" citizen, a meaning which is given to the newly arrived adults through, for instance, the introduction measures. The way I have interpreted the empirical data, when a migrant makes a specific meaning of e.g. difficulties, it is difficulties of accepting aspects of the meaning perspective of the "good" citizen, or experiencing difficulties of reaching the goals of the "good" citizen idea. Worth mentioning is that the meaning variations in the thesis are used as analytical categories, which I have constructed, to deal with the empirical findings.²¹ The three meaning variations have been chiseled out by making a rough classification of the study participants' statements of their experiences and reactions to the new society, which they have had in relation to the "good" citizen idea.

²¹ Sometimes, when the analytical category coincides with the "traditional" sense of the word, it will be shown by making clear that it is the newly arrived individual who has expressed, for example, a difficulty in finding an employment.

Chapter 5: The idea behind *Etablering* in policy documents, and its expression in the civic orientation course

This chapter deals with the research questions “What is *etablering*, and how is it said to be achieved for newly arrived migrants, according to policy documents?” and “How is the *etablering* conception manifested and discussed in the classroom of the CO course?” The focus lies on the second question.

Parallel to the collection and analysis of the observational data, there was a curiosity to find out more about the background of the civic orientation course, and the ideas behind it. The awakened curiosity led to the reading of several Swedish policy documents dealing mostly with *etablering* of newly arrived individuals, and the introduction period.²² In all, there were initially seven policy texts; Commission Reports SOU 2010:16, SOU 2008:58, SOU 2010:37, Government Bills Prop.2013/14:104, Prop.2012/13:63, Prop.2012/13:188, and Prop.2009/10:60. However, the two policy texts which were more closely read are Commission Report SOU 2010:16, which deals mostly with the CO course and circumstances around this course, and Commission Report SOU 2008:58, which is more focused on establishing oneself on the labour market, and what factors that can promote it.

The choice of type of policy texts has been decided both by the research questions, and by Sjöberg’s (2011) reasoning when reading policy texts, which, in turn, is inspired by the Finnish educational researcher Simola. Sjöberg (Ibid.) makes a distinction between “authoritative policy documents” and “steering policy documents”, where the authoritative documents have less formal status than the steering documents, which aim at directly influencing the concrete activities in question. Government Bills belongs to this category, whereas the Commission Reports count as authoritative policy documents. My intention here was to have a blend of different policy texts, to get as comprehensive a picture as possible of the ideas presented in the policy texts concerning newly arrived migrants.

Also the CO course material, consisting of power point slides and the textbook *About Sweden* (2010), has been studied, since this material is considered as an important “extension” of the policy documents. The reason is that the course material is based on the policy documents, which regulate the course contents.

The chapter starts with a general description of the Swedish conception of *etablering*, and the introduction measures that it has resulted in. After that, some of the power point material and some short sequences of the tutors’ “tutorials”, which are selected from the civic orientation course, will be shown and discussed. Further, since the policy documents dictate, to a large extent, the CO course contents, they provide a background to the course, and therefore, comparisons will be made between the course material and the *etablering* concept written about in the policy documents. In other words, the primal focus of this chapter lies on what the policy documents say about *etablering*, and what the CO course contents and tutorials demonstrate to newly arrived adults about this concept. In this context, the CO course will be

²² Those policy documents that were the basis for the new law that came into effect in December 2010, and which thus laid the foundation for the CO course, were read parallel to the observational data collection and analysis, whereas more recent policy documents were read after the collection and analysis of observational data.

used in two ways; first, it will be described as an introduction measure, and, second, its contents will be used for analysing the *etablering* concept. It should be pointed out that the excerpts from the policy documents have all been translated by me.

Etablering – what is it?

As concerns Sweden, *etablering* is connected to employment and becoming self-supporting. Not until the migrant is involved in employment, will he or she have a feeling of belonging in Swedish society or be able to participate socially in it. This is clearly stated by Swedish policy texts:

In those countries that have succeeded the most with the integration, the work strategy (*arbetslinjen*) is applied. One has to get an employment to support oneself. It is at the workplace and through the colleagues one gets one's introduction to the social life, the culture of the country etc. It is through one's own support that one gets self-confidence, dignity, and feels solidarity with one's new homeland. Nowadays, it is the work strategy that is applied in Sweden too (Commission Report, SOU2008:58, p.62, my translation).

The above policy document shows that being established in a country is thought to be achieved if the individual becomes engaged in the labour market, since he or she then gets in touch with different kinds of people who may be of assistance socially. Through work, it is believed that the migrant gets the opportunity and motive to establish in society, therefore several policy texts have emphasized the importance of employment during the two years' introduction period: "Unemployment is not only an integration problem but also a labour market- and educational problem. Increasing the supply and demand of work, and improving the matching on the labour market are, therefore, the most important measures for an improved integration"²³ (Government Bill, Prop.2012/13:63, p.38).

Besides employment, it is expressed that getting established in Swedish society requires embracing democratic values, something which facilitates social cohesion (*social sammanhållning*):

Social cohesion is about establishing and animating democracy, and increasing the knowledge about the democratic processes and ground rules, but is also about increasing the knowledge and broadening an understanding of human rights and their importance for an open democratic society. To give individuals born abroad the opportunity to acquire knowledge about the receiving country's fundamental values and norms[...]are important aspects for a successful social cohesion (Government Bill, Prop.2012/13:63, p.77).

This kind of social cohesion is also underlined in other policy texts, such as SOU 2010:16, where some characteristics of a citizen who shares the social cohesion are enumerated. Among these are being a critical rationalist (which includes questioning and understanding how other people think), a law-abiding citizen, and an empathic member of society. In Sweden, one important way of bringing about democratic thinking and social cohesion is through the civic orientation course. In a Commission Report it is stated that the value aspect of the CO course should be

taken from the constitution (*regeringsformen*), which is the most authoritative and binding formulation of the constitutional values that exist in Sweden.[...]Without familiarity with these constitutional ground rules one misses real opportunities to act as a citizen. An ambition to make these issues somewhat more concrete may

²³ The word *integration* is used alongside of *etablering* in some of the policy documents, and there is, as far as I can see, no distinction made between these two terms.

willingly take as its starting point phenomena which usually get summarized by the expressions ‘human rights’ and ‘democratic values’ (Commission Report, SOU2010:16, p.63).

In this Commission Report, it is thus implied that becoming established as a member of Swedish society includes knowledge about this society’s basic values and organizational structure, since it is believed that differences as regards these things can lead to inequality in political participation. It is emphasized that “If one does not have knowledge about these ground rules, one lacks an important prerequisite of being able to live and operate in the new society” (SOU 2010:16, p.23). Further, in order to take one’s stand on, and become a participant in society, a newly arrived individual has to become aware of his or her own role and points of view about, for instance, the basic values that society is built upon, and become aware of the problems that might arise when these values are to be realized in practice (Ibid., p.61).

Also knowledge about how everyday life functions in Sweden, and how this is connected to the state’s constitutional values, is stressed as important for becoming established here. Among other things, knowledge about social codes, such as the etiquette at a workplace, the role of religion in society, and the celebrating of traditions is regarded as useful knowledge. The reason is that this kind of knowledge “can be a valuable tool for facilitating the meeting between people with different cultural backgrounds” (SOU 2010:16, p.65).

The way *etablering* is viewed in Northern European countries, among others, and the way the idea of *etablering* is carried through in reality has been criticized by social researchers as putting all the newly arrived migrants in the same stereotypical categories, which do not consider the individual migrant’s needs and competency (Scuzzarello, 2010; Fog Olwig, 2011). These categories tend to be set up by professionals, among others, in the host society instead of being adjusted to the specific situation of the migrant (Fog Olwig, 2011). As Asselin et al. (2006) has discovered, “processes on the macro-level are mostly not the product of goal-orientated action of individuals or groups locally; people generally do not feel to have command over them and they are often felt to intrude on the life of individuals and groups” (Asselin et al., 2006, p.139). This is the more so as concerns the Nordic countries, which have been considered as far more interventionist and citizen controlling than other European countries (Romme Larsen, 2011; Carlson, 2010).

Introduction measures

The Swedish concept of *etablering* has given rise to several measures which are arranged by state authorities. By looking at some of the policy documents’ ideas behind the introduction measures, and describing the main measures, a picture will be discerned of what the conception of *etablering* stands for, from the perspective of the policy documents. Therefore, here, the three main introduction measures will be presented, since they constitute the major part of the *etablering* idea of the policy texts. These three measures are activities promoting employment, Swedish for Immigrants (SFI), and the CO course. Here, the first two will only be described briefly, while the CO course will be described more thoroughly, as this course provides the newly arrived migrants with a basic framework for what Swedish society contains. As a consequence, it is in this context that a large part of the empirical data material for the present thesis has been collected.

Activities promoting employment

One of the activities that is considered useful for the newly arrived migrant's *etablering* in the Swedish labour market is *internship (praktik)*, i.e. getting a trainee post. Another such activity is *Recognition of Prior Learning, RPL (validering)*, either vocational or educational, when the adult migrant's qualifications from the home country get assessed and evaluated, to find out what competence or skills they are equivalent to in Sweden, and what competence or skills the newly arrived adult needs to acquire, in the case that he or she wishes to work or study in the same field as in the home country. RPL, according to the policy document, "is defined as a process which amounts to a structured judgement, valuation, documentation, and recognition of knowledge and competence which a person possesses, independently of how they have been acquired.[...]For many newly arrived individuals, RPL can be a first step towards an employment in Sweden" (Prop. 2012/13:63, p.68).

For those newly arrived migrants with a university degree, the RPL is done through the Swedish Council for Higher Education (*Universitets- och högskolerådet*). For those migrants who have a special professional university degree, such as doctors, the RPL is done by the National Swedish Board of Health and Welfare (*Socialstyrelsen*) (Prop. 2012/13:63).

The internship can be arranged through the Public Employment Service, but the migrant him- or herself also have the opportunity to look for trainee posts, by visiting the company at which he or she is interested in interning. The length of the internship varies, due to individual needs and the form of the trainee post, but is of maximum six months (The website of *Arbetsförmedlingen*).

SFI

As concerns SFI, it is a "municipal adult education[...]a qualified language education, which aims at providing adult persons with another mother tongue than Swedish basic knowledge in the Swedish language. In the education, one gets to learn and develop a functional second language" (the website of the National Agency for Education, *Skolverket*). It is underscored that this language course is also for those migrant adults "who lack basic reading- and writing proficiency, and gives them the opportunity of acquiring such skills" (Ibid.). SFI is composed of three study paths, and four courses (A, B, C, and D), where the courses B and C can either be for beginners, or for those who continue their language course, depending on what study path they are included in. It is not possible to compare the courses of SFI with any linguistic level in the compulsory school's or the upper secondary school's courses in Swedish as a second language, because it is geared to an adult perspective, to meet the needs of the adult student. "The course plan is based on a joint European reference frame for languages (GERS): learning, teaching, and judgement, and can instead be compared with the levels of the reference frame" (Ibid.).

The CO course

Here, a background to and a detailed description of the contents of the civic orientation course will be given, as this is the introduction measure in which the state regulations (the policy documents' messages) are manifested in the most obvious way.

The civic orientation course is 60 hours, and involves approximately 8000-10000 persons annually (SOU 2010:16). It provides a non-formal learning setting, as it is not included in the

ordinary educational system, but is, nevertheless, organized by the municipalities, and must follow specific curriculum-like regulations. It is said that the course helps adults who are not acquainted with society's values, traditions, and everyday life etc. to understand these things, to be able to function and become established socially, for only when they have become established members of society will they be able to partake in shaping it (SOU 2010:16).

Until 2011, every municipality could decide the contents and structure of the CO course locally, something which later turned out to be resulting in substantial differences between the municipalities. Therefore, the governmental regulations as of the 1st of December 2010 aimed at ensuring that the civic orientation follows a certain national standard in the whole country, where the municipality is free "to decide the time, the order for the different subject areas, and what textbooks and teaching aids will be used" (SOU 2010:16, p.11). In other words, the themes and subject areas are mandatory, but not the course textbook. However, there is a course material with accompanying textbook (*About Sweden*, e.g. 2010)²⁴, which can be considered as standardized and "national", as it is shown on the joint website (informationsverige.se) of the County Administrative Boards (*Länsstyrelserna*) of Sweden. This material has been designed by the County Administrative Board of Västra Götaland, but it appears to be used by several municipalities. Also the municipality where my observational data were collected used this course textbook. In the preface of the textbook, it is said that there is hope that the book provides support to the Swedish municipalities' work with the CO course. (*About Sweden*, English version, 2010).

Earlier, information about Swedish society was included in the Swedish for immigrants course (SFI), but this was divided up in 2007, due to a revision of the SFI-curriculum, when the government decided that the newly arrived migrants should obtain civic information in their mother tongues. The reason was that this would aid in their understanding of society, and by that, they would establish themselves faster, both in society and in the working life (SOU 2010:16).

The contents of the CO course cover many different subjects and issues, such as Sweden's economy, geography, politics, "welfare institutions and culture[...]and can be summarized with the words values, welfare state and everyday life. These three recurrent aspects have to characterize" each subject area (SOU2010:16, p.13-14). The eight subject areas are Arriving in Sweden, Living in Sweden, Supporting yourself and developing in Sweden, The individual's rights and obligations, Building a family and living with children in Sweden, Having an influence in Sweden, Looking after your health in Sweden, and Ageing in Sweden (*About Sweden*, English version, 2010).

The "good" citizen

Through the introduction measures, the newly arrived adult migrants are to learn to become "good" citizens. This learning is achieved through a meaning which is given to the migrants during their introduction period. During the CO course, for example, a meaning is given of what a "good" citizen ought to do in society, and what characteristics he or she should have. The meaning is given of three main areas: employment and becoming self-supporting, the Swedish language, and democratic values. *Etablering* has been achieved – it is implied and

²⁴ Worth noting is that this course textbook has been published in several editions, where the most recent in English is from 2015, whereas in Arabic and Swedish from 2017. During the field observations, the textbook used was published in 2010.

sometimes also explicitly expressed in policy documents, CO course material, and by CO course tutors - when the newly arrived migrant has obtained employment which he or she can support him- or herself through, has learnt Swedish, and has adopted the democratic values which are prevalent in society. Thus, an established migrant individual is a “good” citizen, according to the policy documents’ meaning giving of the same.

Manifestation of the idea of *etablering* in practice – the example of the CO course

Here, there will be illustrations from the CO course of how the *etablering* notion of the policy documents can be manifested. This will be done by showing some of the power point slides, which are used in the course, and some statements made by tutors in the course, and relating them to the policy documents’ formulations. The results will then be analysed and discussed in the last section of the chapter.

Besides information and facts about society - about the Swedish labour market, and the Swedish educational system, for instance - the CO course presents the democratic values which are prevalent in society. Thus, the “acquisition” of values may be achieved through the CO course. Therefore, the CO course is also analysed in the light of how values are presented to the newly arrived migrants.

Self-support, and learning the Swedish language

Having an employment and being self-supporting seems to be a central part of the idea of becoming established. The migrants are encouraged to find employment in any line of business, as long as it can enable them to become self-supporting:

At this Thursday session, the course theme being “To look out for work and start one’s own business”, the tutor says that it is possible to work from home, and that nowadays there is a flexibility if you, for instance, start your own business. She then says “there are jobs if you really want a job, and if you’re persistent and active”. She brings up her own children in their 20’s as an example, and means that there are jobs which many people do not want, such as, for instance, berry picking in the summer, and “Here in Sweden they’re more flexible, you can work also in other lines of business than the ones you’re educated for. In our countries we’re not like that, we’re less flexible and only want work within our educational field” (Field note, 10-02-2011).

This can be interpreted as that the message is that, despite high unemployment, and the few work openings, there are jobs which can be obtained if the newly arrived individual is persistent enough and accepts work that is not equivalent to the work he or she has had before. There is also a hint that one should, or is even expected to, work with anything one can get hold of, even if it does not fulfill one’s expectations. The so called “flexibility” is encouraged. Thus, an individual’s own needs, interests, and professional dreams seem to be put in second place. In addition, there is no consideration taken to the possible negative mental consequences of not having a job which suits one’s qualifications.²⁵

²⁵ Sometimes, when a person’s job is not equivalent to his or her educational level, the person might become depressed to the extent that he or she becomes suicidal. Al-Baldawi (2014) brings up an example of a 50-year-old man who came to Sweden as an Iraqi lawyer who had his own law-firm. After living in Sweden for a while, he obtained work as a garage guard, a very monotonous task, and something the man could not stand, which made him try to commit suicide twice.

Although there is no specific statement about forcing the migrant to accept any employment he or she can come across, it is implied in policy texts that the most important thing is that the migrant gets a regular occupation as soon as possible (e.g. SOU 2008:58). This can be understood as that it is more important to find any work quickly, rather than finding an occupation which suits one's former occupation or education, or one's dreams. However, in some passages of the policy texts, it is asserted that the individual perspective is taken into consideration. For instance, it is stated that

instead of seeing the newly arrived migrant as an Iraqi or Somali who demands a lot of efforts from civil servants, we should change the perspective and regard the newly arrived migrants as individuals with individual resources and needs, including individual work experiences, such as, for instance, carpentry and nursing. The focus is shifted to the newly arrived migrant, who is met by demands for activity in order to make a future for him- or herself in Sweden.[...]every newly arrived migrant, every individual, will get support from his or her own prerequisites (SOU 2008:58, p.65).

It is also pointed out that one should view a migrant's situation from the long run, and that, if an individual wishes to pursue university studies to be able to obtain qualified employment in the future, he or she should get the opportunity to do so, as long as he or she can support him- or herself financially in the meantime, for instance by working part-time with less qualified jobs, or making sure to get a study loan while studying at university. This way, the migrant individual would be considered to support him- or herself, and not be dependent on social allowance. Nevertheless, "the teaching of Swedish and planning for the future, should be carried through at the same time as the individual is working" (Ibid., p.63).

At another session of the course, illegal work is brought up and discussed:

Later on during the session dealing with "The employment market", the tutor brings up the differences between illegal and legal work. He points out that it is illegal to work in the black market, and can lead to two years' imprisonment. Two participants say that, despite this, it is pretty common, and that they are astonished about that. The tutor lines the different disadvantages of illegal work up from a list in the power point slide (Picture 1a and 1b). Then the participants are asked to discuss what effects illegal work can have on society. The tutor himself brings up the effect on welfare [...] (Field note, 06-12-2010).



Picture 1a – Black work

Black Economy Effects for you	
-	+
No employment agreement	The salary?
Lower basic salary	
No overtime pay	
No holiday pay	
No sick pay	
Uncontrolled working hours	
No work certificate	
The company's insurances	
Unemployment benefit	



Black Economy Effects for you	
-	+
No pension based salary	The salary?
Early retirement pension	
Sick leave	
Parental benefits	
No credit	
Difficult to get a telephone	
Difficult to rent a flat	
Risk of a fine/prison	

Picture 1b – Black work

The power-point slides above show the two lists of the disadvantages of “black economy”, i.e. perform illegal work, for the individual. Among the disadvantages are *uncontrolled working hours*, and *Difficulty to rent a flat*. Through the power point slides, the meaning is given that there are many disadvantages with illegal work, and hardly any advantages, and that it is obvious that the newly arrived migrants ought to accept legal work only. The tutor’s focus could be regarded as an expression of the idea that it is wrong to perform illegal work, something that is also stated in the policy texts. Although illegal work is seldom explicitly mentioned in the policy texts, in SOU 2008:58, it is said that the system of the introduction work enables “a control of that the newly arrived individual, during the introduction period, is active in the right way during normal working hours. The risk of the newly arrived individual to prioritise black work gets considerably less” (Ibid., p.63). Thus, there is a hint that one purpose of the introduction measures is to control that the newly arrived individual obeys the laws. For, according to SOU 2010:16, *etablering* in the new society has to include knowledge about one’s rights and duties, and to know about existing laws and rules. Therefore, “it is important that the participants (of the CO course) receive information about what is within the limits of the law, and what is not” (Ibid., p.68).

The importance of learning the Swedish language is emphasized several times during the CO course. For instance, during one of the course sessions, the participants get a compulsory study visit from the SPES, where the agency’s representative speaks Arabic. During the study visit, the representative points out twice that “language is the key to society” (Field note, 18-10-2010).

In Government Bill Prop.2009/10:60, there is a proposal for letting the teaching of Swedish start as early as within one month after the newly arrived migrant has applied for an SFI course in the municipality, something that indicates the importance, according to the policy documents, of learning Swedish. There are also other formulations that show how valuable SFI is. For example, “there are also efforts being made to improve the quality of SFI. National final tests have been initiated to secure a high quality in the teaching on an equal level in the whole country” (Ibid., p.72). These statements imply that there are much resources laid on the SFI course, since it is regarded as one of the most important things for migrants to take part of, to be able to get established in society.

Even during other themes than those dealing with education in Sweden, the tutors emphasize the importance of learning Swedish as soon as possible:

The parental role is discussed during the theme with this name, and one of the tutors emphasizes the importance for a parent to learn Swedish as soon as possible, so that the child does not lose respect for him or her, among other things (Field note, 31-01-2011).

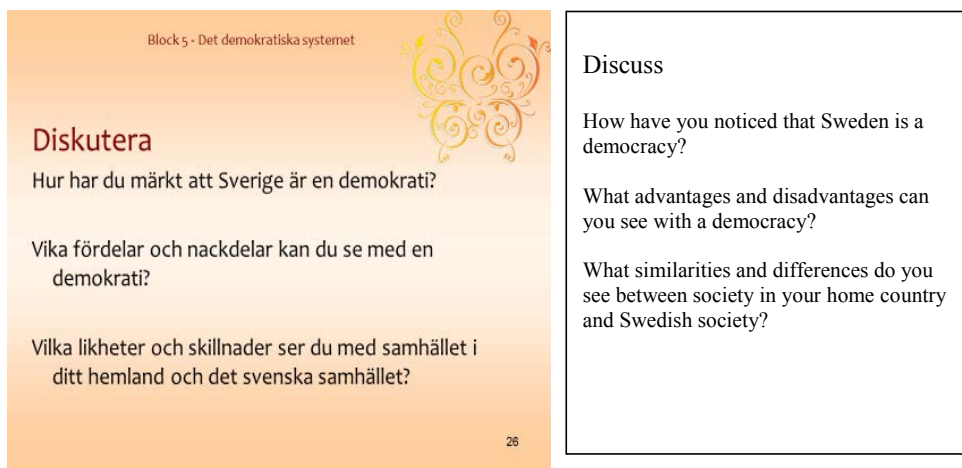
During the session “The Swedish labour market”, the tutor starts by pointing out the necessity of education and learning, in order to understand the world and the world around us (Field note, 03-02-2011).

During the theme “To search for employment and start a business”, the tutor starts the lesson by stressing the importance of learning Swedish, and brings up her own example approximately 30 years ago[...].” (Field note, 10-02-2011).

All the above statements illustrate how the adult migrants are given a meaning of the Swedish language, which could be presumed to be given in the SFI course as well, since it is a language course. The examples from the CO course above show the manifestation of the policy documents’ ideas, as concerns employment and learning the Swedish language.

Learning democratic values

In the CO course, the meaning is presented of an established member of society as a democratically thinking human being, who shares certain values with the Swedes, such as those expressing independency and freedom. One of the power point slides (picture 2) contains three questions, which the participants are asked to discuss with each other.



Block 5 - Det demokratiska systemet

Diskutera

Hur har du märkt att Sverige är en demokrati?

Vika fördelar och nackdelar kan du se med en demokrati?

Vilka likheter och skillnader ser du med samhället i ditt hemland och det svenska samhället?

28

Discuss

How have you noticed that Sweden is a democracy?

What advantages and disadvantages can you see with a democracy?

What similarities and differences do you see between society in your home country and Swedish society?

Picture 2 – The democratic system

These questions aim at making the participants aware of Sweden’s democratic values and comparing them with their former societies. Democratic values, from what is shown in the course material (and tutorial) include many different values, which are described below. What they have in common is that they are considered crucial for citizens of Sweden, and as such, they are, more or less, non-negotiable.

Independent, responsible and free individual

There is a view of the “good” citizen as independent, free, and at the same time responsible for his or her own life and future. These characteristics are included in the democratically thinking individual described in the course, since, when one is a democratically thinking person him- or herself, it can be assumed that one also allows everybody else to be independent and free. The message conveyed is that a violation of these rights of humans makes the individual undemocratic. This is expressed in different themes of the CO course, where one is called “Life knowledge”. Below, there is a power-point slide, which illustrates the contents of the session in question. In this content is different views of the individual and the group, the view of marriage and family in Sweden, arranged marriage and forced marriage, and female circumcision.

Block 17 - Livskunskap



Innehåll

- Olika familjestrukturer och syn på individ och grupp
- Synen på äktenskap och familj i Sverige
- Arrangerade äktenskap och tvångsäktenskap
- Sveriges arbete för kvinnofrid
 - Hedersrelaterat våld
 - Kvinnlig könsstympning
- Sweden's work for women's integrity
 - Honour related violence
 - Female circumcision

Contents

- * Different family structures and views on the individual and the group
- * The view of marriage and family in Sweden
- * Arranged marriages and forced marriages
- * Sweden's work for women's integrity
 - Honour related violence
 - Female circumcision

Picture 3 – Life knowledge

This content is well in line with the policy documents' regulations concerning specific values that the newly arrived adults have to know about and, as is implicitly expressed, adjust to (e.g. SOU 2010:16; SOU 2008:58). It is said that

In Sweden our laws are permeated with respect for the individual, for democratic values and fundamental human rights. We cannot renounce on this.[...]we have developed a culture which includes the principle that individuals can choose to live in different ways. This we are proud of. However, it does not mean that we should refrain from trying to affect individuals, as regards, for instance, the view on children's rights, equality and the like. We have to protect the right for youth to choose their own way of life. To respect human beings' differences is natural. Here, there can be big culture clashes. In the introduction work, cultural matters have to be handled, as well as within the organization as in the contents of what concerns, for example, civic information (SOU 2008:58, p.64).

In addition, in SOU 2010:16, it is clearly stated that one central part of the course contents is that dealing with equality from a family perspective. What should be brought up, among other things, is “equality in fundamental law, international conventions, legislation and practice. Family counselling. Women's refuge” (Ibid., p.20). It is clear that there is supposed to be a meaning given to the newly arrived adults of what values are acceptable or unacceptable in a Swedish context. When saying that “cultural matters have to be handled”, the policy documents imply that it is the values and cultural matters of the newly arrived migrants that


have to be dealt with and “adjusted” to “fit” the Swedish society, and not the other way around.

A good parent

There is an idea that a good parent should be a democratically thinking individual. In the course, there is meaning given of independency, and the phenomenon is seen as something that the child needs to be brought up with already when he or she is small. It is emphasized by the tutor as being crucial to the Swedish way of bringing up children:

At this Monday session, which is about parents and children in the Swedish society, the tutor begins with telling the participants that parents play an important role for children, and that children play an important role in their parents’ lives and for society, even if the parents happen to be divorced. Then he says that “A proper and good upbringing is very important”, and “It is a big difference between our view (in the Middle East) on childrearing, and the Swedish view. Even if it seems to us that Swedes are too easy-going when raising children, it is not like that – it is only a matter of different ways of bringing up children”. He continues by adding that here in Sweden, children are brought up to be independent, and that in the Middle East one is brought up according to what is best for the collective (the group), for example because children have to take care of their parents when they become old (Field note, 24-01-2011).

The meaning of independency which is given in the CO course can also be interpreted as an expression of the established person as being a “good” parent. In several of the power point slides, it is implied that those parents who foster independency and freedom in their children are “good” parents. Being a “good” parent should also include giving children a democratic upbringing, which, among other things, means giving them space to decide on their own, space for them to negotiate and question things, space for them to take responsibility, and space for their integrity. All these enumerated conceptions are written in power point picture 4, the title of which is *Child rearing in Sweden – today*:



Block 15 - Föräldrarollen

Barnuppfostran i Sverige – idag

Demokratisk uppfostran – barns rätt till integritet och medbestämmande

Barn uppmuntras till att förhandla och ifrågasätta

Barn fostras att ta eget ansvar för sin egen skull

Målet är att barn ska förstå varför de ska handla på ett visst sätt – inte för att de annars riskerar straff

Child rearing in Sweden – today

A democratic upbringing – children’s right to integrity and participation in decision-making

Children are encouraged to negotiate and question

Children are brought up to take responsibility for their own sake

The aim is to make children understand *why* they should act in a certain way – not because they otherwise risk punishment

11

Picture 4 – The parental role

According to SOU 2010:16, the CO course should bring up children’s rights, according to both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and Swedish legislation. Further, information will be given to the newly arrived adults about child ombudsman (*Barnombudsmannen*), the Social Services Act (*socialtjänstlagen*), and the Care of Young Persons Act (*LVU*). Stressing these components of the course contents may mean marking

how important it is for migrant parents to incorporate the democratic values of childrearing into their own thinking, in order to be considered “good” parents, and thus “good” citizens. Here, the meaning of democratic children’s upbringing is given as something indisputable.

Equality awareness


The importance of equality thinking or equality awareness is also presented in the course, as characteristics of a democratically thinking individual. In one of the power point slides of the theme “Parents and children in the Swedish society” (picture 7), it says that there are two maternity wards in the city, and that it is usual for the father to be present during the childbirth:

Block 14 – Föräldrar och barn i det svenska samhället

Förlossningsvård

Två förlossningsavdelningar i

Det är vanligt att pappan är med under förlossningen



5

Maternity care

Two maternity wards in city X

It is common that the father is present during childbirth

Picture 5 – Childbirth

The tutor shows the power point slide and says that it is common that the father is present at the childbirth, and asserts that it is different in the Arabic countries, where this is regarded as improper.[...] (Field note, 24-01-2011).

Again, the tutor expresses his own opinion of the Arabic countries, when he asserts that there is a difference between Sweden and the Arabic countries. He makes a hint that Swedes are different when it comes to allowing fathers to be at the childbirth, and that this stand of the Swedes is desirable. Reading between the lines of this power point slide, there is a message conveyed to the course participants of the Swedish fathers as being involved in their child’s life from the very beginning, and thus, both the father and mother share the responsibilities for their child equally. Someone who is established as a member of Swedish society, therefore, should be thinking about equality and acting out equality, as is also implied in several policy documents (e.g. SOU 2010:16; SOU 2008:58).

Active [and participating] individual

To be an established and a democratically thinking individual in Sweden is also described as presupposing that the citizen actively participates in society, such as by becoming engaged in associations. This view of the individual includes not being idle, but always having things to do and occupy oneself with, even if one has an employment during daytime:

At this Monday session, the theme is “An active and rich leisure time and activities in associations in Sweden”. The tutor points out several times that Swedes generally have a very rich association life (*föreningsliv*) and an active leisure time, and that it is important to engage oneself in different associations, since one can get the opportunity to meet different kinds of people, both Swedes and others. He asserts that Swedes generally always come up with things and activities during their leisure time – “they don’t stay at home”.[...] (Field note, 21-02-2011).

The meaning which is given to the newly arrived adults is that Swedes’ leisure time is full of useful activities, and that the migrants may get a better life if they too engage themselves in different activities or associations. There is a view of the migrants as being idle and sitting at home most of their leisure time, and this is not regarded with approval from the tutor’s point of view.

In conjunction with this, there are government documents stating the benefits of engagement in associations for migrants in Sweden. For instance, in one of the Ministry Publications Series (*Ds*), it is said that “popular movements and an association’s work and activities play an important role in the Swedish society. Getting involved in associations together with like-minded people is both a way for different groups to work for their interests, and a way for the individual to obtain that knowledge and those experiences which are needed in order to participate successfully in the political life” (*Ds* 2004:49, Foreword). Political participation is not only about participation in an election, but, above all, it is about trying to influence society at different levels. This may be done by taking contact with authorities or politicians, and by participating in or directing demonstrations, boycotts and petitions, either individually or in group (*Ds* 2004:49). Thus, the established member of society, which is conveyed in the CO course, includes a politically engaged and participating member of society.

Participation in society is also emphasized during another course session:

During the session about “Educational opportunities for adults”, one of the participants asks the tutor if everything that concern the higher education also counts for migrants, and the tutor answers that here in Sweden, all people are treated as Swedes, after you have received your residence permit. Then he says that “we” migrants should act accordingly, and try to participate in society as much as possible, and be good citizens (Field note, 29-11-2010).


Here, the opinion appears to be that migrants should be obliged and grateful to the Swedish society, since it has been fair and good to them. Therefore, the meaning is given that if the migrant wants to be a “good” citizen, he or she should repay the Swedish society for having been treated well. There is a formulation in *SOU* 2008:58, which implies that the Swedish government and society makes an investment in the newly arrived migrants. The formulation reads

Since the humanitarian and financial consequences of a prolonged *etablering* are big, the state and the municipalities invest extensive economic resources on introduction measures for newly arrived migrants in the form of, among other things, teaching in Swedish, and individual introduction programmes.[...] Naturally, it is in the interest of both the individual and the public to secure that the measures give a suitable support for the *etablering* (*SOU* 2008:58, p.165).

Even if it is not expressed in the policy documents that there is a wish to make the newly arrived individuals obliged to “repay” the state’s investment in them, it can be understood that the adult migrants should be aware of the huge investment which has been made in them, and act accordingly, by becoming established in society.

The secularized and law-abiding individual

When it comes to religious beliefs, the notion of secularity is given to the newly arrived migrants, which conveys how Swedes stand. What is understood in this account of Swedes' positions towards religion, is that the democratic citizen is secularized, and does not let any religious views get in the way for his or her life in general. Below, the power point slide shows what secularization is. Among other things, the slide says that many Swedes state that they do not believe in God, and that for most Swedes, religion is something private:



Block 20 – Traditioner, vanor och värderingar i det svenska samhället

Den svenska kulturen – vad är typiskt svenskt?

Svenskars förhållande till kristendomen

Kyrkan är skild från staten

Ett sekulariserat land i relation till andra länder

Många religiösa högtider har blivit traditioner som många inte medvetet firar med koppling till kristendomen

För de flesta är religion något privat

Många säger sig inte tro på Gud

Få personer går regelbundet till kyrkan



11

The Swedish culture – what is typically Swedish?

Swedes' relationship to Christianity

The church is separated from the state. A secularized country in comparison to other countries. Many religious festivals have become traditions which many people do not consciously celebrate in connection with Christianity. For most people, religion is something private. Many say that they do not believe in God. Few persons go to church regularly.

Picture 6 – The Swedish culture

During this session about "Traditions, habits and values in the Swedish society", after having talked about differences between the Swedes' and the Arabs' ways of handling children or youth who misbehave, there is a question on the power point slide, which the tutors show, and which reads "The Swedish culture - what is typically Swedish?". One of the tutors says, among other things, that Swedes are not religious, whereby a male participant wonders what then directs their lives, how they should live and behave. Then the tutor answers that they follow the laws, and that it is the law that directs much of the Swedes' behaviour and points of view (Field note, 07-03-2011).

This goes in accordance with the policy documents, where it is said, for instance, that the CO course should give the participants practical knowledge, and that "examples of this is codes of etiquette in the work places, the role of religion in Sweden, or the celebration of traditions[...]to avoid or mitigate culture clashes" (SOU 2010:16, p.55). In the notion of the secularized Swede in the course context, there lies another meaning giving, namely that the laws of the country stand above everything else, and that religion therefore is not the main moral guide for people living in Sweden. Here, the laws are given a very high status, and it is implied that they direct the citizen in every issue of life. Thus, the meaning which is given of the established citizen is that he or she is law-abiding. This presupposes, among other things, a faith in Swedish politicians, on the one hand, as it is they who make sure the laws get instituted, and a faith in the Swedish state authorities, on the other hand, as it is there that the laws are implemented.

The emphasis on the Swedish society's secular permeation is not exclusive for the CO course, but exists also in other educational settings. In Kittelmann-Flensner (2015), the Swedish Religious Education classrooms at the studied upper secondary schools are permeated with a secularist discourse, which is the dominating and hegemonic discourse. Secularism was

regarded as the rational worldview, a perspective which thereby made, for example, Islamic worldviews seem irrational.

This section has illustrated how the policy documents' regulations and ideas concerning democratic values become manifested in the CO course. As shown above, the main ideas of what democratic values are given to the newly arrived participants as something which is expected of established, Swedish citizens.

The "good" citizen – analysis

This chapter's ambition has been to answer research questions "What is *etablering*, and how is it said to be achieved for newly arrived migrants, according to policy documents?", and "How is the *etablering* conception manifested and discussed in the classroom of the CO course?". The focus has been on the second question.

There is a meaning given to the newly arrived adults through the CO course of what a "good" citizen is. From the reading of the policy documents and analysis of the CO course material, it is evident that a "good" citizen is independent, responsible, free, active, secularized, and law-abiding. Further, he or she is a "good" parent, and an equality thinking individual. Below, these "qualities" or characteristics of the "good" citizen will be elaborated on.

The meaning giving is clear in some passages of the policy documents, for example when it is emphasized that there should be "attention given, not only to what 'goes out', i.e. the contents of the civic information, but above all, the attention should be given to what 'goes in', which means what the participants actually understand and take with them outside the course setting, and out to society" (SOU 2010:16, p.11). Thus, the meaning which is given of the "good" citizen seems to be aimed at influencing the migrants in a way that makes their *etablering* in society easier, in the policy documents' sense.

To be an independent, free and responsible individual includes, among other things, that one allows everybody to be independent, and that one does not object, for instance, when a female family member wants to marry whomever she wishes. It also means that one has to take responsibility for seeking and obtaining employment, and for learning the Swedish language. Thus, responsibility entails that the migrant individual sees to it that he or she gets a new life in Sweden which he or she can be satisfied with, and through which he or she can contribute to the Swedish society. Further, an active individual is someone who participates and involves him- or herself in different spheres of society, such as in work and activities of an association. And yet another characteristic of the "good" citizen is being a secularized person, which entails that, even if one is religious and has got a certain religious belief, one respects and is open towards others who do not, or who may have other beliefs than oneself. In addition, a secularized migrant does not let his or her religious thinking interfere with the political life, or the democratic values which are prevalent in society. Therefore, one should separate one's religious belief from other values which one should have as a democratic and "good" citizen. In addition, a "good" citizen has to follow the laws of the country, and fulfill his or her obligations, which means that he or she does not accept illegal work, even if there are not many job opportunities in the labour market. Such a citizen should also be equal, and value equality highly, for instance, by taking his responsibilities for his children, and by accepting and living up to that men and women are entirely equal in Sweden. Here, I only use the possessive pronoun of *his*, as the CO course material seems to be addressed to male migrants as regards the equality issue, and implies that men have to be aware of the equality thinking in Sweden. And, finally, the "good" and established citizen is a "good" parent, who, for

example, allows his or her children to have their freedom, and gives them space to be independent as regards certain issues. Also, the “good” parent should not beat his or her children, as a way of disciplining them. In addition, a “good” parent knows about his children’s rights, and seeks to protect and defend them.

Although the importance of self-support, and learning the Swedish language is emphasized during the course, the democratic values seem to be a salient feature throughout the whole course. The research of Sandberg et al. (2016) has shown that the Swedish adult education is much about shaping the adult learner into an employable and desirable citizen. As the CO course could be regarded as a kind of adult educational course, it is not surprising if it shares almost the same goal for the adult participants.

The phenomenon of *etablering* and “good” citizenship is an expression of the societal factors, which Sundgren (1986) means have a society preserving function, and which first and foremost aim at the reproduction of a historically given social order.²⁶ Thus, the introduction measures can be said to represent the societal regulations for the migrants, besides being a means to the migrants’ *etablering* in society. The utmost aim of, for example, state laws and regulations “is to secure the social, economic and cultural order’s survival by seeking to shape the citizens’ thoughts and actions” (Sundgren, 1986, p.141). As other researchers, such as Wallace Goodman (2010), underline, *civic integration*, seen as a new strategy of integration, which, besides including employment and political engagement, also requires migrants’ commitments to those typical characteristics which define national citizenship, such as, for instance, language proficiency, specific country knowledge, and social and liberal values. These requirements are new directives for a “successfully established” member of the nation-state, (Wallace Goodman, 2010), and thus contribute to construct the “established migrant”, which, as concerns Sweden, could be interpreted as another definition of the “good” citizen.

As the results show, *etablering* is described to be both a responsibility of the host society, through the provision of introduction measures, and the newly arrived individuals, but in reality, through the idea of the “good” citizen, which is included in the introduction measures, most of the responsibility lies on the latter. Consequently, the *etablering* idea, with the accompanying idea of the “good” citizen, means an interference in the life of the newly arrived individual. For, as Fog Olwig (2011) emphasizes, the Scandinavian countries seek to shape the newly arrived migrants “socially, culturally, physically and psychologically – according to Scandinavian norms” (Ibid., p.185). The author states that this is particularly clear in the introduction programme. Thus, one interpretation of the notion of the “good” citizen is that there are assimilation mechanisms existing in contemporary Swedish society. However, assimilation might not be a consciously intended purpose of the introduction measures, since, according to Fog Olwig (2011), the “good citizen” idea emanates from the equality thinking of the Scandinavian countries, even if these countries’ *etablering* policies differ from each other. With this in mind, the notion of the “good” citizen is built on good intentions, although it is problematic, mostly “because it entails active intervention in the private lives” (Ibid., p.185) of migrants, and aims at constructing their identity.

Considering the above, the *etablering* idea, i.e. the “good” citizen idea, seems to provide a central part of the context of migrants’ learning and life construction in their new society, and, therefore, it will be considered when looking at and analysing the empirical data further on in the thesis. In other words, since there appears to be a meaning given to the newly arrived

²⁶ Sundgren (1986) uses the concept “object forces” to describe this function in society.

adults of what kind of citizens they are expected to be in Sweden, it can be suggested that the newly arrived adults can be influenced by this meaning when they make their own meaning during their introduction period, and therefore react in different ways to this meaning giving. Their reaction, in turn, may affect their learning.

Chapter 6: The meaning of the Swedish Public Employment Service (*Arbetsförmedlingen*), work and internships

This chapter consists of two parts. One deals with how the newly arrived migrants react to the meaning giving of the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES), which is discerned through the meaning they express, in light of their contact with this state authority. The other part deals with how the migrants make meaning of work and internships, and includes a description of the migrants' motives for seeking and obtaining employment, since these motives are an important part of the adult migrants' meaning making. Although Mezirow (e.g. 2000), has not mentioned motives as a part of meaning making, the very concept of meaning making may include this phenomenon. Depending on one's motive when experiencing something new, one's meaning of the new experience can be made differently. For instance, if a newly arrived female individual's motive is to obtain work as soon as possible after her arrival in Sweden, and finds out that her former professional skills will not be recognized in the Swedish society, she may make the meaning that it does not matter whether her professional skills will be recognized, as long as she obtains any kind of employment she can support herself on.

By its direction, this chapter tries to answer the research questions "What in the newly arrived migrants' present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants' meaning making in Swedish society, as concerns employment?", and "How is the newly arrived migrants' meaning making expressed, in light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives?". Thus, these questions include what experiences affect the migrants' meaning making of and learning about the SPES, and of/about work and internship in Sweden.

The first section of this chapter gives an account of the migrants' experiences from and meaning of the SPES, in their own words, and the second focuses on what meaning the adult migrants have made of work and internship in Sweden, including their meaning of the Swedish labour market. And finally, the last section brings up what motives are expressed in the participants' interview statements. Moreover, this chapter embeds what qualitatively different variations in meaning there are between the adult migrants, as concerns the Public Employment Service, and work and internship.

The meaning of the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES)

In this section, the newly arrived migrants' meaning of their experiences with the SPES will be shown, as this authority is responsible for the newly arrived adults' *etablering*, and is also involved in the state-funded introduction measures. Thus, it is the SPES that is supposed to provide the support the newly arrived migrants need. The interview excerpts show how the migrants mostly make the meaning that the SPES hinders them in their attempt to achieve their occupational or educational goals, even though the newly arrived individuals need assistance in the beginning of their life in Sweden, to be able to stand on their own feet. According to what the adult migrants imply, this hindrance is often manifested in a lack of support for the newly arrived individuals. And it appears that this lack of support is understood, in turn, through two other meanings – "prepackaged boxes", and lack of financial

resources. These meanings will be accounted for below, starting with the meaning of “prepackaged boxes”.

“Prepackaged boxes”

Some respondents are of the opinion that, even if the newly arrived individual struggles hard to succeed in his or her new life, he or she needs assistance from society, through the authorities:

I don't let anything go by, I can do my best, but I still don't feel that anybody has taken me by the hand[...]I'm trying to melt in, I'm trying to learn, but the wave is high high high, and I need someone to support me (R1)

The migrants' need of support does not only concern those adults who have a low degree of education, but also those with a university diploma:

I told them today that sure we have a university education and have studied in our home countries, but here we're like children, we need someone to help us, to tell me for example today I met you and you tell me that 'you've studied libraries, but I've seen', not seen, you go on the internet, 'during this period Sweden is not in need of your speciality'[...]the fact that you have *etablering* (introduction period), choose another speciality', so then you help me, at least you've pointed me toward where I should head[...]it's not only me, anyone who's come here recently to Sweden needs someone to help him (R7)

Here, the respondent thinks that newly arrived migrants need someone to guide them in the right direction, as concerns educational or occupational aims, since they have not been in Sweden for long, and therefore do not know about the future needs of the Swedish labour market.

As the excerpts above show, according to the newly arrived migrants, there is a lack of support for them. In addition, a lack of encouragement of the migrants' own ideas or suggestions may hinder the adult individual's ambition to achieve his or her goal as concerns employment:

As an authority staff at the Public Employment Service has to treat every person according to his potential and his goals[...]and see, try to help him[...]in reality the work of the Public Employment Service is not at the level required, and sometimes hinders, eeh, makes you abandon the thing, so as to say[...]I got several problems for me, eeh, at the Public Employment Service (RP)

The lack of support may be connected with that the migrants think that the authorities fob “prepackaged boxes” off on them. These “prepackaged boxes” can be described as package offers which the migrants are supposed to adjust to, whether these offers suit the migrants' needs and goals or not. In addition, the package offers are given to any migrant, whether he or she has high skills or competence from before or not. Thus, the newly arrived migrants have understood it as that the Swedes do not want to use the migrants' former skills, but instead want to go by their own plans for the migrant individuals:

A: Maybe you'll get use of your diplomas and your experiences here

R1: that's difficult, that's difficult, here they don't try to use..., even if I'm not a doctor or something like that

A: did you discover this yourself?

R1: I've noticed that, there're lots of discussions about this issue, even in the civic orientation course we had such discussions

A: but in what way do you feel that they don't try to use?

R1: they (Swedes) have this preconceived view that, I guess, that the less developed countries, this view shouldn't be about the human beings from those countries, they should think about other things from these countries, there are lots of qualified persons from these countries, who have a high competence, they don't try to use these competencies so strongly, eeh, to integrate them in society, they (Swedes) should try to see the influence from this person (on society), so that they can decide whether their ways or methods are successful or not.

[...]the migrant who's come here from there is not someone who doesn't understand anything, or doesn't have any knowledge, of course not. There're lots of people who have many great ideas, and are educated, so you can help these by using, they (Swedes) don't use their (the migrants') skills or competence, they get prepackaged boxes and put them down[...]

Here, R1 implies that if the Swedes make use of the migrant's skills, they will help the migrant in building up his or her life in the new society. The respondent thinks that the Arabic speaking migrants' diplomas from their home countries are regarded as inferior to, and of less value than the Swedish diplomas, which is wrong, according to him. He talks about recognizing the diplomas and skills of the Arabic speaking migrants, since there are many highly skilled individuals in this group, and that, even if there are negative things in the Arab countries, the Swedes should also try to look at the positive things of these countries. The studies of several social researchers have pointed out that migrants' educational or occupational experiences from their countries of origin are often not recognized in Sweden (Kemuma, 2000; Osman, 1999; Dahlstedt & Bevelander, 2010), or are "devalued" (Andersson & Fejes, 2010).

Another newly arrived respondent expresses his view on the package offers for the migrants:

The person who comes here is directed towards the direction of practical work, as to what he can work with, or the direction of kassa (counter, i.e. that the migrant is referred to counter work)[...]most, even the, what's it called, eeh, *handläggare* (employment officer) at the Public Employment Service told me about the conditions for kassa (checkout counter), I said that I can't sit at a chair for long periods[...]it's not my conviction, my conviction is to get into my occupation (R9)

According to R9's point of view, the "prepackaged boxes" contain almost the same things for all newly arrived adults, and are thus not individualized.

The interview excerpts above indicate that there is a distrust of the SPES, expressed through several migrants' dissatisfaction with the agency's efforts to help them obtain employment. Thus, another foundation for the migrants' distrust in this context, in addition to the distrust that seems to emanate from the interpretation of lack of support, appears to be that they do not think there is any effort, from the authority's side, of making use of the migrants' competencies and skills for the development of the Swedish society. As an adult individual's occupation becomes a part of his or her identity, as several participants in this study have implied, it is not far-fetched to suggest that also the recognition of a migrant's occupational background might be compared with the recognition he or she should receive of his or her cultural and linguistic background, which Bellis and Morrice (2003) talk about. The authors mean that valuing migrants' occupational background highly makes the newly arrived adults feel a sense of belonging to society, something which is also important from an *etablering* perspective.

Generalization of newly arrived migrants

Another respondent's opinion of the measures for the migrants is that the authorities should not treat every migrant the same, but rather make individual judgements when trying to help

the newly arrived migrants. Otherwise, he implies, the suggestions or advice from e.g. the SPES, for example, will come out wrong, and will not be applicable on every individual's occupational plans:

RP: [...]the problem is that, eeh, is in some, not all of course, the problem that's with some authority representatives is that when I suggest something, you should consider what I've suggested, or within that frame which I've drawn,

A: aa

RP: he could make some suggestions, for example, when I for instance told him that I've planned to start my own company, so he advises me that "no, I don't advise you to do that, the laws of the country are complicated, so I advise you to...", but brother I have already experience from running my own business, for eight years, and I have *betyg* (certificate) and I have documents

A: right

RP: of experience, I'm a person who've studied economics, and am an accountant, and so on, and I have an ability to learn about the laws and get acquainted with them, but to hear from a Swedish authority representative that the laws of the country are complicated, this thing is depressing,

A: naturally, it's depressing, eeh, you mean instead of him opening doors for you, he so to say closes them a bit, or shuts the doors

RP: let's say he talks in a negative way, in his own personal view, I understand that he advises me, but he advises me from his own point of view

A: ya

RP: one's point of view may for some persons be correct, I tell you this, this kind of talk is correct, why, because the person who wants to start his own business quickly and doesn't have any experience and no, may make *konkurs* (go bankrupt) after six months or a year

A: right

RP: he fails, I mean, so this advice will be right, so my suggestion is that he shouldn't treat people in the same way

A: individually, it's supposed to be like that, that's how I understood it, they are supposed to make individual plans and individual activities

RP: if, eeh, honestly if someone doesn't know by himself what he should do during these two years of *etablering*, he may lose a LOT OF time

Here, the respondent thinks that the SPES will not help the newly arrived migrant, but may instead make him or her lose time. Thus, the hindrance, according to RP, lies in the generalization of and the package offers for the target group. One of the examples of the misleading effect of the generalization is that the same piece of advice of not starting one's own business, since the Swedish laws are complicated and it takes time to know them, could suit one migrant, but not another. The reason for this, according to RP, is that there are migrants who already have a long experience of running their own business in their countries of origin, and who, therefore, can overcome the "complicated" laws, whereas other migrants who do not have any previous experience of running their own business, may be helped by the warning about "complicated" laws, and of thinking twice before embarking on such difficult undertakings.

In addition, in the last interview excerpt, an opinion can be discerned of the employment officer's subjectivity, as the respondent thinks that the former gives advice which is only based on his own personal points of view. This opinion may also contribute to the migrant's distrust, since one can read between the lines that authority staff are supposed to be professional and offer their professional views.

Construction of the newly arrived individuals' working life

According to my interpretation, the migrants might have understood the authorities as trying to construct their professional identity, and thus not leave anything for them as individuals to decide on. This understanding might explain migrants' dissatisfaction with and resistance to the construction of their working life, which could be considered as covering a big part of the rest of their life. There are migrants who emphasize the importance of the individual's choice to construct his or her own professional identity:

I went to the study counsellor at school, talked to my *handläggare* (employment officer) at the Public Employment Service, and talked to fellow migrants about how to reach them (the Swedish authorities) with my thoughts, it's like they (at the Public Employment Service) have the way staked out for you, blindfold you[...] "*undersköterska* (assistant nurse), now I don't want this, I tell you about my dream"[...] I've started to take driving lessons, and I let my *handläggare* (employment officer) know this and asked her to be so kind to assist me in finding a course for driving bus or lorry, I want to work[...] I abandoned my dream[...]

A: but it's something good of you, because you present suggestions for yourself to them

R1: of course, because it's me, it's me who want to become something, I don't want anybody else to make me, I'm not working for somebody else, I'm working for myself

A: of course

R1: I want to become something again, before I had already become, down there (in the home country) we were already become[...]

Here, R1 means that he had already made a career in his country of origin, and had already "become" a professional person. Also another participant underlines the importance of an individual's own construction, as concerns him- or herself:

The human being develops himself by himself (R2).

According to these two migrants (R1 and R2), the human being should construct him- or herself, and his or her own life by him- or herself, and not let anybody else interfere in this. The human being is regarded as someone who should take and be given the responsibility of building his or her own life up. R1 believes that, in order to live a good life in Sweden, he has to abandon his dream, and instead work with something which gives him a salary. This goes in line with the policymakers' aim of making newly arrived migrants self-supporting as soon as possible after their arrival. In a way, R1 contradicts himself, as he has emphasized, somewhere else during the interview, that it is not good of Swedes to think of matter in the first place, but to primarily think of a human's soul. However, he seems to regard a job that makes him earn money as a necessary evil, and therefore, he has abandoned his dream, the fulfilment of which would have nurtured his soul.

As can be seen, the way several migrants have understood it, the Public Employment Service's work aims at suggesting employment or activities that may suit society, but which

do not meet the individual's own needs. There is research which accords with the newly arrived migrants' point of view that the state-funded introduction measures do not fit the migrants' needs, but are instead primarily designed to fit the (welfare) system (Fog Olwig, 2011; Eastmond, 2011).

Nevertheless, there are migrants who think that there are individuals who need a push in the right direction, to be able to construct their own life, and that the authorities, therefore, have a responsibility of offering support for, and interfering in this:

A: so you mean that the biggest responsibility lies on the individual?

R6: of course, of course, but in the end I as a country, as authority, that this person for whom I pay so much, I don't deny that they (Swedes) pay lots of things for us, the housing, pay for school, introduction salary[...]they invest in me, right?[...] for what? Isn't it for the future, that I'll become a son of this society, and work and, so, if they didn't draw the right way for me, will I work right? No, because the wrong introduction leads to the wrong results,

A: right

R6: [...]I'm convinced that most of the migrants, if you draw the right and honest way for them they'll go by it, this is my conviction,

A: and by way, I'm sorry, do you mean a way which suits them, which they can go by?

R6: of course, which suits them[...]An important issue is the Public Employment Service, I have a feeling that the Public Employment Service, the staff there aren't the ones who [inaudible], those in search of work, the staff fill their time, I mean 'you have two years' introduction, you have to work during this period, eight hours', how, what's best for him (the migrant), what does he think, they don't care.

A: do you mean that they don't fully care about finding an employment for you?

R6: an employment that suits (the migrant)[...]for example one person who's studied electronics was put at a mechanics course, I don't know why[...]they put him on the car mechanics, do you know why? Because what happens is that they want to fill his 40 hours[...]most of them don't try, I don't want to generalize about all the staff at the Public Employment Service, but most of them cover the 40 hours just to give them (the migrants) salaries, how and in what way, no[...]

Here, when R6 says that "you have to work during this period, eight hours", he refers to the regulation which the so called "Introduction plan" (*Etableringsplan*)²⁷ is based on. According to the SPES, the starting point for the introduction plan is that the activities which are included in the plan should mean that a migrant works fulltime, i.e. 40 hours per week (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). In the view of R6, the SPES can assist the newly arrived adult in his or her future plans, by drawing an individual plan, which is "honest". He seems to have understood the measures of SPES as dishonest, and not starting with the individual needs and wishes of the migrants. Again, migrants' distrust in the authority is shown, when R6 says that he thinks that most of the newly arrived migrants will go by the plan drawn for them, if it is an honest plan from the authority's side. He implies that it is the package offer itself that may cause the newly arrived individuals' distrust, as they may think that the authority neglects their needs, and does not take them seriously. According to the respondent's point of view, it is also the Swedish society that loses on not drawing well thought-out and detailed plans for

²⁷ An introduction plan is drawn up at the SPES, together with the newly arrived migrant, as soon as the migrant has received the residence permit. Besides showing what activities the migrant is to partake in during the introduction period, the plan forms the basis of the migrant's introduction benefit (*Arbetsförmedlingen*).

the migrants, since society has made an investment in every newly arrived individual, and pays lots of money for their support during the first period of their new lives. This reasoning that also the Swedish society loses when the SPES does not support the newly arrived individuals in finding employment in their former professions is also found in other respondents:

RP: honestly, there are many newly arrived migrants, whom I've got to know, if they get help and encouragement, they can make something great for this society, this is real. When it comes to the young persons from Syria, due to the conditions of the country, many youth struggled and made things for their country. Like my own personal experience, my family didn't have any means, their condition, I studied, began from scratch, I had a business plan, and praised be God, I realized my plan, and my friends, the same for them. So I think that when there's encouragement and help, then we could do the same for Sweden, something beautiful. If, for example, there is a flexibility of the laws, or, eeh, give people opportunities, those who have energy. There are architects, who have building experiences, there are businessmen and manufacturers, farmers, teachers, highly educated. When the person gets an opportunity here, naturally he'll develop the country.

Here, the support for the highly educated newly arrived migrants seems to be a matter of recognition as well, namely the recognition of their skills and qualifications. RP implies that there would be many gains for both society and the individuals if there was proper support from the authorities, especially from the SPES.

R6's interpretation is that the reason for the SPES's lack of support to the newly arrived migrants is that this authority's work gets both easier, and less complicated when all the newly arrived adults can be put within the same frame. The problem, according to him, is that this way of working neglects the individual's own needs and wishes concerning studies or employment, and thus cannot offer the kind of support that the individual migrants need, to be able to establish in their new society. Instead, the support that is offered is understood as merely a way of giving the newly arrived adults something to do, and "filling up their time", regardless of what things they are occupied with. The respondent's view of the SPES's reasoning appears to be that, so long as the migrants are occupied with something, it does not matter what it is.

Lack of financial resources

According to some migrants, the SPES's aspiration for keeping their costs down can be interpreted as one reason for the authority's package offers. This financial aspect seems to contribute to the migrants' distrust, as they understand it as that their need of assistance and support is put aside, due to the lack of financial resources, and the migrants think that they do not receive enough help. R7, who is a university educated librarian, explains that she got an opportunity to seek a special vacancy at the main library in the city where she lives, because they needed someone who was specialized in the Arabic language, but that she was not able to attend the compulsory 15 days' course for this purpose, due to financial matters, and that she, therefore, lost the opportunity:

So if they (at the Public Employment Service) had given me this course, I would've got a *fast* (permanent) job, and would've been able to plan my life, and they (society) would've got use of me (R7)

Also when the migrant wishes to start his or her own business, there is a view that there is not enough support or assistance from the SPES:

He (at the Public Employment Service) told me that they're afraid of someone who starts his own business, and then after a while he has to make *konkurs* (go bankrupt), or who has problems with others. He said 'ya, it's possible', but I found his ways negative, there was no encouragement[...] I'm supposed to have more right than

others to get assistance, especially in the beginning[...]it's like they say that the only way is to apply for a job from an employer, to be an employee, it's better for you to work, but what about those who don't have an idea about this, what will they do? The person who has a business idea, to develop, for me [...]I'm sorry to say that the Public Employment Service doesn't have this, they work more by routine[...]I may discuss about my business idea, and maybe present it to others, and if I have the ambition, then I have the right to get financial assistance. Then I get the opportunity to be an employer and employ people, *arbetslösa* (unemployed), there'll be maybe two or three persons whom I employ (RP).

RP informs the researcher that he has got eight years of experience from running his own business in his country of origin.

Again, the newly arrived individuals wish to be of use to society, by, for example, working at a library, or by taking on people who are unemployed. Their opinion is formed that this goal of theirs is hindered by the SPES's tendency to discourage them from carrying out their plans, due to the authority's limited financial resources. RP's statement that the SPES works more "by routine" shows his view of the agency's work as one-sided, which can also be connected with the view of the SPES's package offers. The statements of both R7 and RP can also be interpreted as expressing their wish of belonging to the Swedish society, by realizing their work plans.

Neglect

There are other examples of the migrants' distrust which is caused by their idea of the Public Employment Service's neglect of protecting those newly arrived migrants who are enrolled in internship from employers' exploitation:

[...]what I want Sweden, the Public Employment Service to do is to control that the work places which offer internship do it right, so that they don't exploit people, because that's a sin²⁸. They really use us in an abnormal way when it comes to internship[...]we also have a problem with the old migrants (those who are among the employers who offer internship), the ones who've lived here long, they use us (R2)

R2 is upset by many employers' exploitation of newly arrived trainees, and expresses his disappointment at the SPES's, according to his view, passive position on this kind of employers. It is clear that he thinks that the SPES neglects the newly arrived migrants in such situations, and that this authority can do much more to protect them from being used at their work places.

The interesting issue here is that the Swedish policy for newly arrived adults contains introduction measures which are aimed at material targets, which are facilitating employment, so that the migrant can be self-supporting in the shortest time possible upon his or her arrival. Although employment can improve one's mental health, as several participants of this study have said, according to them, there should be consideration taken concerning what the migrants feel or think about their new life situation, and all the new things they encounter in society.

[...]and there're people like me, I like to work, and like to depend on myself, these they have to support and stand behind[...]my *handläggare* (employment officer) didn't do anything, didn't give me *praktik* (internship), didn't anything[...]they (the Swedes) have to have different options (for the newly arrived individual), and alternatives for these options (R7).

²⁸ The Arabic word *sin* has two linguistic meanings; it can either stand for the religious concept of *sin*, or for the word *pity*. Here, the respondent uses the word in the latter sense, i.e. *pity*.

R7 sees a passivity in the SPES's work for the newly arrived migrants, and a neglect of offering migrants options as regards internship. In her statement, she implies that the migrant would be gained by being offered options, since that would make it easier for him or her to decide what professional training suits him or her best.

As this section has shown, as concerns the SPES, there is almost an unanimous meaning made, namely that the SPES does not provide enough support for the newly arrived migrants. Therefore, one cannot say that there are any meaning variations among the newly arrived adults, regarding the SPES. However, the migrants' meaning is made through different experiences of the authority, and is thus based on different grounds, which all will be brought up and discussed in the conclusion's section.

The meaning of work and internships

There are newly arrived respondents who make their meaning of the Swedish labour market, work and internship in Sweden from what other migrants say or advise them to do. This influence from others may be either direct or indirect, as the quotations below show. Many respondents have also implied what strategies they use for obtaining employment in the new society, and what obstacles there seem to be to this feat. Further, when the respondents talk about their motives for obtaining work and internship, they also expose their meanings concerning these things.

Influence from other migrants

There appears to be an influence from other migrants who have been in the country for a long time on the newly arrived migrants' meaning making of work and internship in Sweden. This influence, which could be seen as a meaning giving, may, in turn, give rise to different meaning variations in the newly arrived migrants.

The meaning variations accounted for below should, as explained earlier in this thesis, be regarded as meaning variations in relation to the idea of the "good" citizen, which is given to the newly arrived adults during their introduction period. Thus, e.g. easiness is not easiness in a daily sense, but rather easiness towards achieving the ideal of the "good" citizen notion.

Easiness

The importance of having other people's support in one's search for employment is shown in the following excerpt:

A: [...]the things that make it easier in Sweden, of course you, we talked about work and that kind of things, are there any other things that you feel make matters easier, eeh, in this new life of yours?

R7: I in my view the thing that mostly makes it easier for you is that you have relations, in this country, even if it comes to getting a job, if you have relations you'll get a job, I mean number one is relation, the more relations you have, the faster you'll get to where you want to get[...].I mean "*ingen chans när du inte har relation*" (Swedish for "No chance when you do not have a relation").[...]

R7 thinks that relations with other people would help the newly arrived individual reach his or her professional goal. For instance, having a social network makes it easier to find employment, whereas not having this network makes the ambition almost impossible.

The circumstance of having social relationships with other migrants may also give a newly arrived individual encouragement as concerns his or her career, in that the acquaintance who has tried a certain profession can provide one with encouraging information:

A: [...]but here, eeh, would you like to, have you planned to complete something?

R10: the same work?

A: ya, or

R10: the first time I felt eeh I looked at the way of construction here, I mean it was very strange, and then we were living in an area a bit far from here, there was a building project and I noticed that they use lots of wood, so the [inaudible], it's a strange thing for me, but one of my friends made *praktik* (internship) at an architecture company, he says that "it's much easier than you can imagine, much, you may be able to work in your own field,[...]but you need a little *praktik* and such things", so he encouraged me.

This respondent is a civil engineer, who feels a bit unsure about whether she should go in for engineering here in Sweden, or change her career, as she is not acquainted with this field in Sweden, and thinks that it is different from engineering in Syria. However, her friend has told her that it is not at all difficult to work as an engineer here, and that it would help her form her own idea of the field if she makes an internship. Therefore, she feels encouraged to try herself.

There can also be an indirect encouragement of finding an employment and becoming self-supporting as soon as possible, offered from other or "old" migrants, i.e. those who have lived in Sweden longer. For example, when it comes to the social services, what a newly arrived migrant hears from other migrants affects how he or she understands the importance of becoming self-supporting:

R11:[...] I haven't dealt with the social personally, but I hear from all the people (migrants) that it's better to have a private job and not depend on the social, because the social, the dealing with them is difficult. But I haven't tried, it's not from my experience, because till now I haven't tried, thank God, so that's why I wish I'll find any job[...].

This respondent even uses the expression "thank God" when describing her present financial state, which can be interpreted as that she is really relieved about having been able to avoid the social services so far (thanks to her receipt of introduction benefit). She has heard from many other migrants that the social services are hard to deal with, and that it is best for her to find an employment and become self-supporting as soon as possible.

The indirect encouragement which the newly arrived adults may get may also be about the Swedish labour market in general, and one's chances of working with anything one likes, which means turning one's passion into something to live on:

R10: [...]I wish we'd come (to Sweden) long time ago

A: if you compare, even before the war, before the problems in Syria, would you have wished that you, I mean is it better here than in Syria?

R10: better, better, I don't want to talk about myself personally, but I'm one of the persons who's for instance very social, I like to always have activities, I mean those activities and work I did there, of course it's not a waste for my country, they deserve it there, but as a person if I'd been here, I would've done something very very big

A: I got you

R10: for example, the simplest thing the handicraft, I mean I taught many girls handicraft, sewing for example or, you feel that it's over, they've learnt and it's over, whereas here when you teach someone something, maybe he'll get it as a profession and live on it, all these things you feel that they stay as passions, that it's not more than that, but here it's that someone who knows how to sew that you work in a factory and have a salary and[...]I mean it's possible here to make a business out of something simple and realize your dreams[...]of course this is my view, there's a little freedom of thinking, there's a limit for everything (in Syria).

This respondent has told the interviewer that she once, at a public assembly, met a migrant who had accomplished, according to her meaning, something simple for the municipality she lived in, but who had been given a lot of credit for his accomplishment by representatives of the municipality. Among other things, this experience makes her believe that an individual can work with anything he or she likes, and earn money for it.

Difficulties

However, despite the encouragement that other migrants can offer, the newly arrived migrant might make meaning which is grounded on other migrants' discouraging views on employment, or their focus on, as they regard it, differences that might exist between Arabs and Swedes. For instance, there are adults who have lived in the country for a while who warn the newly arrived migrants of the problems that will strike them. This might make the latter dispirited, and, as a consequence, get pessimistic about the future in Sweden:

R9: our expectations were much higher, so and above all this, you faced the difficulties,

A: and, eeh, do you think that this is general? I mean for many of the Syrians or many of, you're from Syria, right?

R9: I'm from Syria, but I honestly saw that, regarding the society, I've seen several citizenships, and all of them have the same suffering, even those who're older than us (have lived here longer) talk in the same way, that "you who're here will get shocked, shocked about reality", "brother we're prepared to work, there's no work in the country, eeh, prepared to, eeh, there're many difficulties"

A: right

R9: [...]there're job opportunities for some, but not for all,

A: eeh, pardon me, what did you do to find a job? I mean do you feel that you did something...

R9: I'm still [inaudible], in the first phase, I'm in school.

When this respondent says that he has "seen several citizenships", he means that he has come in touch with people with different ethnical background. Further, he appears to have adopted "old" migrants' view, without considering it critically. When he hears about the scarcity of work opportunities or the like, he takes the talk seriously, even before he himself has tried to obtain work. This becomes obvious when he is asked if he has done anything to obtain employment, whereby he replies in the negative, and excuses it by saying that he is still attending school, i.e. learning Swedish. This, according to my interpretation, uncritical reception of others' opinions may be a stopping block for the newly arrived adults' *etablering*, in that, in case their only acquaintances in Sweden are "old" migrants with discouraging views, it risks of making them preserve the meaning they have made, even if it tends to be limited. Further, there are newly arrived adults who strengthen each other's dark pictures which they have got from "old" migrants, concerning the labour market:

At this occasion, when the SPES has been invited to present its work, one participant brings up the unemployment in Sweden, and a short discussion arises about this. The representative from the Public

Employment Service says that, even if there is a high unemployment, one has to make him- or herself prepared for employment, and use the time well by studying while one waits. One of the participants thinks that the most important thing now is to study Swedish, and says that she does not think there are any jobs, because she has many friends who have been searching for work a long time, without success. A co-participant points out that she has a brother who has lived in Sweden for 15 years, and who has long swung to and fro different jobs and internships, without obtaining any permanent job. She then says that she herself gets affected when she meets people who have lived in the country long without employment (Field note, 18-10-2010).

The respondents above imply that their situation seems hopeless, and that they do not expect to get any permanent employment in Sweden, no matter how long they will live in the country. According to Zachrisson (2014), many newly arrived migrants get “a rather dark picture of the future with regard to employment achievements and satisfaction. This perception is, mostly, based on what other migrants say. The stories told by other migrants are sometimes of a negative nature[...] This reliance on *what has happened to my countrymen in Sweden* becomes a frame of reference” (Ibid., p.257).

Slight difficulties

However, there are newly arrived adults who turn the dark picture into something positive for themselves, as R2 and R6 make:

R2: I know a person who had one and a half year of internship, without getting any job, didn't receive any job

A: do you know if they had promised him to get a job after...

R2: ya, that was the plan[...] and this is not any example from my imagination, this person exists, eeh, every shop gives him two or so months of internship, and then (discharge him).[...] you can't be idle[...] I'm almost 44 years and can work better than an 18 year old youth[...] I've met people at school who're 42 or 40 “oh, we've gone old”[...] the coming years are better than the past years, the past has died, it's died and is finished, you still have a future, I don't know but that's how I see it.

R6:[...] so you have to decide your way from the beginning, I mean I saw many people today, economists, without employment[...] so either you can take a job at a restaurant or a factory, to manufacture car seats for Volvo, this is IF I got the chance for Volvo, because this job requires youth[...] or to choose a different way, then he'll be open, if one gets tired four five years, six, there's no problem, but everything gets compensated, it's an investment I mean[...]

Although other migrants have not expressly conveyed their opinion of the unemployment in Sweden to the newly arrived individuals, it could be suggested that the last two respondents have been indirectly “guided” by other migrants' experiences. In the case of R2, he has met a person who still does not have any permanent job, even if he has made internship several times. However, this does not make the respondent lose hope for himself, but rather he still thinks it is better to get engaged in internship than staying idle and not doing anything. This opinion of his remains intact, even if he has met other newly arrived migrants who think that their age does not suit for work. Thus, by the experiences of others, the respondent forms his own idea of what to do in Sweden. As concerns R6, he is guided by the unemployment of fellow-countrymen who have the same educational background as him. Through their experiences on the labour market, he has discovered that his chances of employment as an economist in Sweden are very small, and this view has led him to retrain himself to become an engineer instead, in spite of the fact that he has to study anew at university for several years. The latter is considered a good and profitable investment for the future.

Strategies for obtaining work

From what the adult migrants say, they have different strategies for obtaining work, where one of these is to make internship. In this context, two different variations of meaning are found, where these meanings stand in relation to whether it is easy or difficult to reach the goal of obtaining employment, which is included in the meaning giving of the “good” citizen idea.

Easiness

The migrants’ efforts to obtain employment includes engagement and participation in activities which promote it, as, for instance, internship (*praktik*). The migrants’ view of internship and studies is that they are important, since they may lead to work, or contribute to the entrance into the Swedish labour market:

R2:[...]because if you succeed at the internship in Sweden, you’ll step into the labour market.

Also R7 reasons in a similar way, when she says that internship is very useful:

R7: I asked for internship, because I want to work, but unfortunately they don’t need people to work there

A: oh, so you’ve already made the internship?

R7: five months, I was at a library in (says the name of the suburb), not always, I was there only Thursdays and Fridays, because I was studying, and at the same time I had training

A: but was it nice in your view?

R7: in my view it’s very important, and very useful.

This respondent also says that if the internship not only develops one’s language, but also one’s skills in the profession, then it is good. Here, the internship is understood as a gateway to work. Especially that kind of internship which both develops one’s Swedish language skills and professional skills is understood as a profit for one’s new life. Therefore, even if R7’s five month long internship at a local library has not led to employment, as the library is not in need of more staff, it has at least been advantageous linguistically. Some newly arrived adults try to find other strategies to facilitate their chances of work:

R4: I planned to take a course for a truck driving license, so if I don’t find any job I’ll work with this, I’ve seen that it might be good to have the truck driving license to make it easier to get a job.

This participant has heard that one could increase one’s chances of obtaining work through taking a truck driving license. He has taken this initiative by himself, as it is important for him to have employment. Several of the participants emphasize that the migrant him- or herself has to be active and search for an employment by his or her own, i.e. take the initiative and responsibility for finding employment. Even if the internship does not directly lead to work, it could be worthwhile, as it could fill out the individual’s CV, and by that attract future employers:

R2: Here I’ve made three internships, if I hadn’t made these things, my CV would be empty. The Public Employment Service said that they’d look for it, but I waited and then I went and found these places myself. If the human doesn’t search, we have a nice saying in Arabic ‘Try, my worshipper, and I’ll try with you’ (referring to what God says to his worshippers), not stay at home and wait, the Public Employment Service doesn’t come knocking at your door and say that “come here, here’s work for you”. They won’t search for you. If I don’t

present myself[...] If I go and present my CV, you as an employer, if you need labour and you see my empty CV, and you see another person's CV, that he's made internship here and there, which one of us would you pick?

R2 has obviously thought critically about how a migrant could increase his or her chances on the Swedish labour market. He thinks that the more internships and activities one has on one's CV, the bigger the chances of obtaining work are. He implies that an employer thinks that someone who has got experience from several work places as a trainee, has got a higher competence than someone who lacks such experience. Thus, R2 "fills up" his professional competence by engaging himself in different internships.

There are also other ways of increasing one's chances of employment, one of which is to apply for courses which are aimed at training a special kind of profession:

R10: and now with the help of my *handläggare* (employment officer), I applied for the CFL²⁹, that I might work as *modersmålslärare* (mother tongue teacher), eller *förskollärare* (preschool teacher),

A: ok, you made the validation, you mean

R10: now I just that I have experience, *men utan examen* (but without a degree), *lärarexamen* (teachers' certificate), as they say in Swedish, so if God wants[...] I mean I don't like to be without a job, if it'll be in the engineering field, *det är jättebra* (that is very good), if it'll be in the teaching field, *det är också bra* (that is also good) [laughter]

A: [laughter] it's very nice to teach too, and they need many preschool teachers in Sweden now.

R10: ya, many, every time I look at the website of the Public Employment Service, there're four or five advertisements for *förskollärare*

In R10's opinion, it is better to have an employment than being without, even if that employment is not equivalent to one's previous profession. She has searched for work on the internet, and has found that there is a huge need of preschool teachers in Sweden. The good prospects of obtaining work within this profession has made her consider it, instead of only focusing on her former, which is an engineer. She is thus prepared to retrain, for the sake of obtaining employment.

Difficulties

Unfortunately, according to some migrants, internship also makes a difficulty of obtaining a permanent employment, since there are "old", dishonest migrants who take advantage of the "new" migrants in need:

R2: The problem is that we see a difficulty concerning work, when it comes to internship[...]

R2 continues to talk about how many employers, to avoid paying salaries, prolong the internship, instead of employing the migrants after a short period of internship, even if they realize that the migrant trainee works well and is suitable for the work.

²⁹ Stands for *Centrum för flerspråkigt lärande*, which may be translated to "Centre for multilingual learning", and which is a school organization in the city where R10 lives. Among other things, this organization trains mother tongue teachers, according to the respondent.

In times when jobs are scarce, there are people who can accept to work illegally, and to get very low wages, in conditions which they usually regard as unfavourable, according to what R8 implies:

R8: before I got my residence permit, I was working black (illegally) in several shops

A: the work opportunities are few, unfortunately

R8: ya, there're few work opportunities and [...]but people are greedy for the little, and therefore they accept to work black[...]even the employee himself, he renounces his rights, just to get 300, 400 crowns a day.

This respondent says that people who accept to work illegally are greedy, because they do not fight for their right, just because they are afraid of losing the job, and thus the low salary, to someone else who can accept the conditions of illegal work.

Obstacles to obtaining work

In the adult migrants' view, there are some obstacles for migrants to obtain work, due to the new society's unwillingness to recognize their former skills and competence. The newly arrived migrants have different meanings of the obstacles, as will be shown below.

Difficulties

R6, for instance, says that he does not think there are opportunities to get a job as an economist in Sweden, which was his job in his home country:

R6: [...]and now we've started a new life, have to begin anew. I feel there're not many opportunities for us who're economists, in the end, for them (the Swedes) I'm new here, we've discussed several issues and I've met with several persons, I mean our job opportunities to work in the same career as before is very difficult, we have to start from scratch, *från början* (Swedish for *from the start*)

A: oh, why do you feel like this?

R6: it's not a feeling, it's for sure

A: for what reasons I mean do you...

R6: I'll tell you the reasons, firstly the language, we try to succeed, and secondly the, eeh, the Europeans have an idea that education outside Europe is entirely different from the European education and when it comes to science and experiences, especially if it's from the Middle East, even if my assignments at my post before as manager was by an American system, there're things I know that are maybe at the same level as, I don't want to say more than, but the same level, eeh, as in Sweden

A: I'm sure

R6: eeh, but they always have this feeling, not us, because I've talked about this issue more than once, and then there's a point today that's very important when you seek employment at a Swedish company, a Swedish degree, and beside it an evaluated degree (recognition of your original degree from your home country), I haven't tried it here.

R6 says that he has to start a new career in Sweden, since he, apparently, cannot obtain work in his former career. As he has understood it, there are two reasons for this, the first being the migrants' insufficient Swedish language skills, and the second is the Europeans' view and preconceived idea of education conducted outside Europe and the Western countries. The respondent implies that there is a view that a Swedish or a European university degree is

much better than a degree held in the Middle East. Therefore, he says, when a newly arrived individual seeks employment at a Swedish company, he or she is expected to have a Swedish degree, or else he or she will not obtain the post. As Ekberg (2012) asserts, in times when there are few vacant jobs³⁰, there is a risk for a so called “statistical discrimination”, which means that companies may tend to concentrate on employing native born Swedes, of whose competence they have good information. This also appears to be the case in Norway, according to Djuve (2016), where the Norwegian employers tend to choose native Norwegians, since they regard their qualifications as clear. Furthermore, despite the Swedish egalitarian purposes, “migrants from West Asia and the Middle East are particularly slow to enter the labour market, thus confirming earlier findings that[...]a specific ethnic hierarchy operates in the Swedish labour market, which is at least partly due to discrimination by employers against non-Western immigrants” (Hedberg & Tammaru, 2013, p.1178). Also in a report from The National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen, 2010), it is stated that individuals from the Middle East and North Africa have the least opportunities in the labour market, compared with other citizens in Sweden. However, there can also be another explanation why certain migrants experience difficulties of obtaining employment in Sweden, namely that those who have come to Sweden in recent years have not come due to a labour shortage, and therefore, there has been a low demand of their vocational knowledge in the Swedish labour market (Andersson & Fejes, 2010).

The respondent below adds that not even the certificate she has received from her five months’ internship at a library is taken into consideration when she applies for library jobs. This makes her pessimistic about obtaining employment in Sweden:

R7: I mean there’re ways,[...], and of course I received a *intyg* (certificate) from the library which says that I’ve made *praktik* (internship) there, and I have nine years’ experience from working at a university library, [...]the problem is that our diplomas are put aside, *praktik* they don’t take it into consideration, so for what reason should I be optimistic that I’ll get a job?

Slight difficulties

Another participant is more optimistic, and says that he will probably get the opportunity to work with the same thing in Sweden as he did in Syria. However, he says that he will lose time, due to the long time it takes to learn Swedish, and, by that, lose employment opportunities:

A: Do you think that you’ll get opportunity here in Sweden to work with this? After learning the language

R9: by God, if God wants it’ll be an opportunity, but the problem here is that I lose more than I gain, sure I gain the language, but I lose my opportunity, the (vocational) knowledge gets developed, the new apparatus are modern (and works differently)[...]I mean the more I get delayed with its (the occupation’s) practice, the more I lose, and the same thing gets developed, so every day is a distance between me and my opportunity

A: oh

R9: this is for me, of course I don’t know how it is for others, so, eeh, every time we get delayed with language, and delayed with getting a job, we lose our occupation

³⁰ In the spring of 2015, when the individual interviews were conducted, the labour market looked differently than in today’s Sweden, where there are more job opportunities.

Here, the respondent describes that his profession is service and maintenance of computers, and to be able to keep up with the development of the computer service field, he has to work with it regularly. This is, however, not possible if the language takes time to learn, and, therefore, since he cannot obtain employment in his occupation field until he has acquired Swedish, according to him, there is a dilemma lying in his situation, the contents of which makes him completely unable to act.

As has been illustrated in this section, there are three broad kind of variations concerning the newly arrived migrants' meaning of work and internship in Sweden. The meanings which are represented the most are difficulties and easiness, even though there is an expression of the meaning of slight difficulties. Starting with the meaning of difficulties, it is obvious that several participants have, more or less, adopted the dark picture of their professional future from other migrants, who have lived in Sweden longer. These "old" migrants have given their pessimistic view of the future to the newly arrived individuals, for instance by showing them that it is very difficult, not to say almost impossible, to obtain employment in Sweden. Thus, the "old" migrants' meaning can either contribute to face the newly arrived adults towards easiness in certain situations, or towards difficulties in certain situations, meaning variations which, in the long run, may affect their *etablering* in society. Even if these points of view of the "old" migrants can be obstructive to a newly arrived individual's *etablering*, the "old" migrants may have good intentions by offering their ideas and viewpoints to the newly arrived migrants. For, as Zachrisson (Ibid.) underlines, other migrants wish to protect their new countrymen from future disappointments. Therefore, the meaning these other migrants give to the newly arrived adults may not be intended to affect them negatively.

However, there are newly arrived adults who make their own meaning by taking a critical stand to "old" migrants' meaning, which could be seen as either readiness or resistance towards the meaning giving. In this thesis, readiness and resistance are seen as reactions, which occur during migrants' meaning making, and are connected with the meaning variations, in that the two phenomena seem to be at interplay. If one reacts with readiness, for instance, when experiencing a new thing in Swedish society, there is a high probability that one makes the meaning of easiness, and vice versa, towards a certain aspect of the "good" citizen idea and its goals. The reactions of readiness and resistance will be further explained and discussed in Chapter Nine.

As an example of readiness towards the "good" citizen notion, R2 implies that, even if he has met other migrants who complain about their age and work, and knows someone who has made internship several times without obtaining employment, he thinks that one has to stay active and not be idle. This implies that R2 has thought critically about the situation of other migrants, and has made his own meaning of their situation, by resisting their meaning.

Further, as concerns internship, participants say that there are employers who take advantage of newly arrived individuals, by letting them work as trainees for a long time, without employing them, even if the newly arrived individual has shown enough competence for working at the work place where he or she has been a trainee. Moreover, the meaning of difficulties is made, since one has understood it as difficult to obtain work, because Swedes generally do not recognize the migrant's degree or skills obtained in the country of origin, and because of the limited Swedish language proficiency. As a consequence of not being able to learn Swedish well in a short time, one risks of losing opportunities in the Swedish labour market.

Regarding the meaning variation of easiness, there are “old” migrants who encourage the newly arrived individual to, for instance, make an internship in his or her former professional field. Also there are migrants who warn the newly arrived individual against being dependent on the social services. “Old” migrants may also function as role models, in that they have accomplished something, which the newly arrived individual understands as being important for the new society. There are respondents who imply that internship is positive for them, even if it does not lead to employment, as one acquires useful knowledge, and may develop one’s Swedish language skills through the internship. In addition, the individual fills his or her CV with new skills, which may be advantageous for future employment applications. The easiness in one’s new life situation is also due to the migrant’s thought that there are courses to apply for, which aim at a specific profession, for which there is a great demand in society, such as preschool teacher.

And finally, the meaning of slight difficulties is made when the adult migrant sees the obstacles in his or her life in Sweden, as concerns employment, but, at the same time, sees how he or she can get about overcoming these obstacles. As an example, one may make a new plan for one’s future work, by studying anew, to be able to get a new career which will be more needed in the Swedish society.

Motives for obtaining work

The newly arrived adults assert that employment is among the life necessities, and that it takes time to go in for and obtain it. The emphasis on employment is both made by all the participants in the present study and in policy documents. However, although several participants express the same motives for their work searching as those expressed in the policy documents, i.e. to facilitate *etablering* in society, and make the individual self-supporting, as this section will prove, there might be somewhat different motives for the employment- and self-supporting goal between the studied adults and the policy documents, and also among the newly arrived migrants.

Being self-supporting

The newly arrived individuals’ wish to work is grounded on a wish of being self-supporting, which, in turn, is connected with different reasons. First, migrants say that they want to be able to live a comfortable life. As the excerpts show, many migrants wish to become self-supporting, in order to avoid the social allowances, because these allowances are low, so, from the individuals’ angle, achieving a comfortable life is impossible when receiving social allowances (*ekonomiskt bistånd*):

[...]working opportunities, there are not many of us who like to get money from the social welfare, for me personally, if I didn’t find any work here, I would’ve returned to Syria, I don’t want any help from the social welfare (R5)

I wish I could work with anything, so that I won’t be on the *social* (social allowances)[...] I don’t want to feel that I’m[...]a person who wants them (society) to provide for me, no (R11)

[...]or it would rather be both working (both husband and wife), so that you can enjoy yourself in this country, I mean there’re lots of activities and opportunities to make you live pleased, but you have to have *inkomst* (salary), as they say, to be able to (R10)

Another respondent, R7, says that she does not want to live on only 4000kronor per month, and explains that, before she came to Sweden, she had a good financial situation and could

travel to places as a tourist. In these respondents' point of view, living a "good" life cannot be achieved by receiving social allowance, since this is only supposed to cover the necessities, such as food, housing (paying the rent), and clothes. According to Bergnehr (2015), many newly arrived individuals are used to lives in prosperity in their home countries, and find their new life in Sweden as different and limited materially. Therefore, they believe that their only opportunity for living a good material life is to obtain employment in Sweden as well (Bergnehr, *Ibid.*).

Second, for some migrants, work and being self-supporting is described as necessary for being able to help one's family and relatives who are left in the country of origin, such as one's elder parents, by supporting them financially:

R1: Every one of us needs to work, there's talk that "I want to work to be useful for this country", this kind of poetic talk doesn't bite on me, but I need to work, why?, because I have many people down there who rely on my help, in Syria, I mean, my father is old and can't work[...]*so I'm in need for work. There're things called the primary things for humans, and there're secondary things, the dream's maybe included in the secondary things.*

R5: I have to be active in society, and make something for society, not just for Sweden, but I have a family whom I want to help, my mother in Syria, with my sisters[...]and thank God I've found a job here now, so maybe, if God wants.

From the statements of the participants, one can gather that it is common among them to support those family members who are not able to support themselves, such as old parents or relatives who are ill and cannot work to earn their living. The idea of helping one's family in the home country is natural for many of the Arabic speaking adults, as many of them have lived in the so called extended families, where relatives share the same household or live in the same house, and provide different kinds of support to each other (cp. Gregg, 2005). The background to this extended family is said to be that the countries they live in are not the kind of states that provide, for example, financial support to its citizens (Fog Olwig, 2011). Further, the migrants do not want to feel that they are dependent on society's charity, as they obviously have understood the social allowances as. In addition, there are newly arrived migrants who think that the social welfare office treats them with too little respect, and, therefore, they do not want to deal with this authority. In addition, according to the migrants, there are high demands from the social welfare office and secretaries on the newly arrived individuals' following procedures and rules, in order for the latter to receive allowance. These high demands are confirmed by Bergnehr (2015), a childhood researcher, where she, among other things, explains that the families who receive social allowance do not even have the right to go on a summer vacation, to avoid the risk of missing any possible chance for employment which may turn up in the summer.

One of the participants wishes to get into his former occupation again, and becoming active and self-supporting by that. His picture of a secure self-supporting life in Sweden is to get hold of a permanent job:

A: and if you can choose, that is to say...the first goal which you had when you first came to Sweden

RP: eh, I've always been anxious about being active, eh, so the first goal was, honestly, that I would be active and obtain a good work, a permanent job, and which naturally corresponds to the experiences I have, corresponds to my former employment, corresponds to my ambition,

A: ya, that's right

RP: which, one way or another, corresponds to the education and competence I had earlier

Neither RP wants to be dependent on other people's financial help, as he is clear about his view that one of the means of happiness is earning one's own money. Another respondent believes that even if one wants to work in one's previous occupation, if one does not get such an opportunity in the Swedish society directly, one should take other job offers, since these can lead to something else in the future:

A: I only wanted to know that if this period is over and then you got the chance to work, would you take it or would you wait for (obtaining library work)?

R7: of course if it's a *fast* (permanent) job, I'll take it, even if it's not in my occupation, because I'm a person who don't like to live on the social welfare, I mean if I finish *etablering*, I'll finish the first two years in August, ok?, and after that there's one year they call *aktivitet* (activity) plus studies

A: ok

R7: I'll get use of this year too, but of course if during these three years, if I don't find anything in my profession, I'll take any job[...]but the opportunity at Lidl (name of a supermarket) will open up other options for me

A: right

R7: but if I say that "I don't want this", "I don't want this", then I won't get use of anything.

During the interview, R7 says that there is work that she has a difficulty to take, such as cleaning work. However, the respondent says that if she declines certain job offers, only because she does not like the work, she will end up with nothing, and will thus waste her time. She also points out that she cannot live the life she has now, which only consists of eating, drinking and doing domestic work. Further, she makes it clear that the money she receives from the introduction benefit is very little. This respondent's motive for work is, in the first place, to improve her financial situation, and reach the same financial situation she had in her home country. The only way to do this is to obtain work as soon as possible. In her point of view, any kind of work would do, except such physical jobs as cleaning jobs, since she is not used to this kind of work from before. R11, on the other hand, does not have any difficulty accepting such work, because, according to her interpretation, nothing is considered improper to work with in Sweden:

R11: I don't have any problem, no, I don't have any problem (with that), I mean what could I work with, *städa* (cleaning)? I don't have any problem with that. Here, what I've noticed in them (Swedes) is that there's nothing that's improper, I mean there's nothing that's improper concerning employment of course[...]in our countries you may find this point, that "I'm the son of X (a certain person) and I don't want to work with", but here no, I it's one thing I've noticed, that's why I tell you that the people (the Swedes) are a very excellent people, why would I say no, no, I don't want, for example restaurant, I don't have any problem, ya, I don't have any problem, I'll learn, I don't have any problem, even if I don't know, I'll learn [...]

A: [...]you want to be able to earn your own living, you mean

R11: ya, of course, it's a very nice thing[...]like, that I've got much ambition for the future, I mean just eat and drink and sleep, this isn't ambition in life, right [laughter]

A: no, of course not [laughter]

R11: I have, even if I'd be old, it's not a point that'll stop me, in my home country I didn't work because I didn't have the need for work[...]so I don't have any obstacle not to work, if God wants, but pray for me that I'll acquire the language[...]

A: oh, of course, poor you, it's stage by stage. [...]you said that you could work with anything, but have you applied for *praktik* (internship) now?

R11: ya, naturally, I've told them that instead of the second lesson (second part of the day), but I haven't told them, haven't specified the place.

R11 explains that she did not have any need for work in her home country, since she got financial support from others in her extended family. Both R7 and R11 say that they cannot live life only by eating, drinking, and sleeping, since an individual has to have an ambition in life. They imply that a human being has to be useful in society, and, therefore, has to work. R11 regards internship as one step towards getting hold of an employment, and has suggested her school to replace the second part of the school day by this activity. One of the things that are good with the new society, in R11's opinion, is that people do not get ashamed of their work, whatever that work is. The respondent thinks that this is positive, compared to the common view that exists in her country of origin, and which signals that one's family background and thus one's family's reputation is important, before accepting or working in a certain kind of profession.

An improved mental health

The self-supporting wish is suggested to be connected with one's wish of improving one's mental health, as "research brings out the stress that may be involved if it turns out that a person's goals and ambitions of a new start with *etablering* and support (financial, the author's comment) in the new country turns out to be difficult to realize" (Socialstyrelsen, 2013). A strong motive for the participating migrants' need to work is their mental health, according to themselves, which they believe can be improved by activating oneself, through, for instance, studies or work. The migrants believe that if someone stays idle, he or she will be mentally negatively affected:

You have to study, the idleness is lethal (R1)

[...]even if I would get the same money from work as from the social welfare, I would choose work, because work makes you feel mentally well, and I want to feel pleased (R5)

My mental health will be improved too, because work makes you forget (your old memories). I mean when you go to work from eight in the morning till four o'clock in the afternoon, and participating with your colleagues, and discussing things, and get tired, then the TV, and then you find it's time for sleep.[...]I'd like to work, why?, because I want to get out of this mental situation (R3)

From the excerpts above, the respondents have made meaning of work as something that is necessary for their mental stability. R3, for example, says that, through work, one gets so occupied that he or she would not have time to remember how life was in the home country, and therefore would appreciate the new life in Sweden more, which would improve one's mental condition. R8 describes how depressed he was before he got work, and how work made him feel good, even if it was temporary:

R8: [...]so of course first is housing and then job, work too, it has energy, it's the life's energy, "the fuel of life", and the relationships, the human's relationships, around him, with his neighbours, with his acquaintances, of course this helps the person very much, the relationships, when someone is single or alone, he feels, like, he feels depression,

A: of course, of course

R8: so then the human gets negative

A: right

R8: but if the human keeps in touch with humans and keeps talking, goes and comes, and, then matters will be different, I talk from personal experience, I went through the period while I was waiting for the residence permit, didn't get out from home, isolated, I mean, nobody was talking to us, to the point that I got to know why people commit suicide, I understood, I really understood, we can't say that people commit suicide because of abundance, no, it's not out of abundance, it's when a human feels he doesn't have any use in this world, fed up with life, eeh, after a while, eeh, when I got the illegal job, and I went and started talking with people, even life got different, I mean mentally I felt good mentally

A: even if you didn't have the residence permit, you felt that you were comfortable?

R8: even if I didn't have the residence permit, even then, ya, I mean I got more optimism

A: I got you

R8: so, eeh, these relationships are very important, the connection with others, it's crucial too.

Among other things, by working illegally, R8 met other migrants, and stopped feeling alone in Sweden. Like many newly arrived respondents in the present study, he values social relationships highly, and asserts that being with other people is an important part of life, especially if one is new in a country, and does not have any family here. According to R8, an individual gets depressed if he or she does not meet other human beings, something which can be enabled by work. He relates that during the long, hard period of waiting for receiving a residence permit, he became aware of why there are people who see suicide as the only way out of their misery. In the above excerpt, his view of illegal work is not the same as is expressed in the policy documents, as he thinks that the work he had before was beneficial for him. Nevertheless, in a different excerpt, R8 describes illegal work as something migrants should avoid, for their own good. This contradiction may be interpreted as implying that the meaning of illegal work can have different variations. For example, illegal work may either be understood as mentally advantageous for the newly arrived adults, or as something which is economically or legally disadvantageous.

According to R7, employment is a part of an individual's self, and defines who the individual is:

R7: I [...]your work is you, without work I'm not worth anything

This point of view is a serious issue of consideration, since the present labour market does not offer many job opportunities, as most newly arrived respondents have said. It implies that there are migrants who live in a state of feeling worthless, as they do not have an employment. Something that confirms R7's view is the feeling which is expressed in the statement of an elder male participant during this study's field work, where he expresses his frustration over his new life situation of not knowing any Swedish, and not having any employment, something which, according to his view, makes him unable to be of use to anyone. Also in Kemuma's study (2000), there are participants who experience a killing of their pride, because they do not control or influence anything in the new society, and because they receive social allowances, as a consequence of not having any employment.

Promoting etablering and language

According to the migrants' point of view, employment may also result in *etablering* in the new society, for instance by facilitating language learning, or by building contacts:

Also work will develop language (R5)

The language promoting effect of work is also commented on by another respondent:

R3: I, I came with my residence permit, and approximately after 1,5 months I started school, eeh, my conditions are all well, thank God, except for the mental state, even a few days ago I took my driving license

A: oh, that's good of you, congratulations!

R3: thank you! It's very useful here in Sweden, useful for getting a job

A: that's right

R3: I liked to take it fast, even if it cost me lots, but thank God

A: ya, it's worth it

R3: [...]as I told you before, studying will give me maybe 20% of the language, so for me when I melt with others, and talk [...]I made my military duty for 2,5 years, participation, that's why I talk to you about participation [...] If you're pleased at work[...]you by yourself will have a curiosity to learn the language, because you'll find someone in front of you whom you want to describe something to in Swedish.

R3 brings up an example from Syria, where he first spoke lots of Kurdish (his mother tongue) at home and among relatives and friends, and his Arabic was weak, but says that when he started working, the Arab colleagues were a majority, something which made him learn Arabic well.

The last respondents believe that their language proficiency will get developed when they start working in Sweden. They make it clear that learning Swedish at school will not be sufficient, but should be completed with work. R3 brings up two reasons for the improvement of one's second language by work. First, when there are many people speaking the second language at work, the migrant gets forced to speak it with them, to be able to communicate with his or her colleagues. This leads to the second reason, namely that by communicating with one's Swedish colleagues, one's motive for learning the language increases, and one starts wanting to learn oneself.

R3 says that he has already taken his driving license, after living in Sweden for six months, as he believes that the chances of obtaining employment will increase when one has a driving license. This costly investment indicates that the respondent aims at being self-supporting.

There is also an idea of getting established in society through one's employment. R11 does not think that one gets to know one's new society by only attending school:

R11: I have to get into society, because whatever your attendance in school and your contact with students and[...], it'll be limited, but if it's outside, the area will be bigger, bigger society (network), another society, the dealing with it will be different.

This respondent says that the contacts with other people is limited at school, and that migrants should enlarge their social network by stepping outside the limited school arena. She implies that there are differences between school and the larger society, in that dealings with non-students, which, in her case, means citizens with Swedish background, will be different, and, therefore, the newly arrived migrants should get involved in this part of society too. This respondent's opinion is formed on the background that, since many of the newly arrived migrants, due to their need of learning Swedish as a second language, attend classes and schools where the majority of students are born outside Sweden, it becomes important to make contacts outside the school environment as well.

As this section has shown, the migrants' motives play an important role for their meaning making, in that their motives for finding work, for instance, is to support themselves and their families. The migrants wish to be able to reach their goals in society, such as buying a flat, or house, in order to obtain a good housing, which, in turn, makes a foundation for living a good life. Another connection between the individuals' motives and their meaning making is that many of the migrants say that the social services are very hard to deal with, that their introduction benefit and later the benefit they receive from the social services is not enough for living a comfortable life, and that they need to send money to other family members who are left in the home country. Thus, one could assert that motives are a part of the individuals' meaning making.

Concluding analysis

In this chapter, the purpose has been to show what in the newly arrived migrants' present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants' meaning making in Swedish society, as concerns employment, and how the newly arrived migrants' meaning making is expressed, in the light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives. More precisely, there has been a focus on what qualitatively different variations in meaning there exist between adult migrants, as concerns the Swedish Public Employment Service (SPES), and work and internship. Regarding the variations, there are no sharp dividing lines as to whether some of the migrants only see difficulties and others only see easiness as concerns reaching the goal of e.g. obtaining employment. Further, the empirical data have made it clear that there are more meaning variations when it comes to work and internship than concerning the SPES, where almost all respondents have learnt that the SPES pose difficulties for them. However, there are different foundations for the meaning of difficulties, which the migrants make of this authority's work with them. Whereas some individuals make a resistance to the SPES's ignorance of one's professional needs or wishes, others make a resistance to the non-recognition of their former qualifications. For the reason of the unanimous meaning of the SPES's measures, in this concluding section, the focus lies on migrants' meaning of this authority.

Much of the newly arrived individuals' meaning of the SPES appears to be grounded on a resistance towards what could be interpreted as the meaning giving of this authority, a consequence of which is that most of the respondents are negative towards the SPES. This meaning is given through, for instance, the "package offers" to the adult migrants, which the migrants imply that they, more or less, have to accept and adjust to, and which, in practice, means that the migrants are directed towards activities, internship or work which does not suit their needs and competence. According to the newly arrived individuals, a concrete manifestation of the "package offer" is that a person gets the advice to apply for, for instance, a situation as a cashier when he or she has got back problems, or to attend a mechanics course when the individual in question is an electrician. In fact, there are newly arrived migrants who have made the meaning that the SPES only "fills out" their introduction plans, so that the 40 hours per week get covered. This meaning goes against what is expressed in policy documents, for instance in SOU 2008:58, where there is talk about a connection between the work of the SPES in practice and the goals of the SPES in theory. The idea of the "package offers" is one concrete reason for the migrants' meaning of the SPES's neglect of their competence, needs and wishes, which is said to result in a loss both for the individual and the Swedish society.

The strategy of the SPES, as understood by the newly arrived respondents, could be connected with the notion of the “good” citizen, which is described more thoroughly in Chapter Five, as the notion includes a specific frame for the “good” citizen to act and make his or her meaning within. However, in a way, the SPES seems to go against one of its main aims, which is to facilitate migrants’ *etablering* in the labour market, as the authority constructs the migrants’ needs and professional identity for them, and does not individualize its measures, according to the participants. As underlined by several researchers, *etablering* should also signify that employment measures be individualized, to better suit the individual migrant’s competency and needs, which requires that the migrant’s experiences are taken into consideration (Scuzzarello, 2010; Al-Baldawi, 2014). Otherwise, authorities risk of casting the newly arrived migrants in the same stereotypical mould (Scuzzarello, 2010).

A consequence of the newly arrived adults’ meaning of the SPES is that they distrust this authority and its purposes, as they have made the meaning that they do not get the support or assistance they need, in order to carry out their plans, and to establish in the labour market and society. For example, there is no backing up when one suggests a business idea, even if he or she has already gained experience from the line of business in his or her country of origin. The lack of support makes the migrants feel neglected, something which might augment their distrust. The matter of migrants’ distrust should be considered, as *etablering* in the labour market paves the way for the adult migrants’ *etablering* in society as a whole (Commission Report SOU 2010:16). Dissatisfaction with the SPES is also related by migrant participants in another empirical study, made by Bergnehr (2016), where the participants refer to feelings of being used during their internship, and say that the SPES does not do anything to stop the exploiting employers’ negative behaviour. Further, there is a frustration which emanates from migrants’ experience that the SPES does not consider their thoughts and ideas (Ibid.). This confirms the findings of the present study.

The fact that the SPES got the major responsibility for newly arrived migrants’ *etablering* in December 2010, makes the findings of this study interesting. Among other things, the notion of the “good” citizen in the policy documents includes “fostering” independent human beings who participate in their own future (e.g. SOU2008:58). What happens when the migrants make the meaning that their needs are overlooked, and that they cannot make choices for their future, according to their individual needs? Rather than tailoring introduction measures which meet the migrants’ individual needs, which, according to the information on the SPES’s official website (Arbetsförmedlingen^a), is one of the aims of the measures for newly arrived adults, and, by that, encouraging them to work in the fields that interest them, the migrants’ meaning is that this authority offers prepackaged solutions. Thus, the principle of individuality, which is one of the important characteristics of the notion of the “good” citizen, appears to be completely absent in the migrants’ meaning of their experiences from the SPES.

Nevertheless, the findings have shown adult migrants’ own willingness to work, and, in the case of several respondents, even if the work does not correspond with one’s former occupation. Further, there is an implication that, since one is working for one’s own sake, one should decide for oneself what to work with. Here, the thinking concerning the individual’s independency and freedom of choice is clear, and goes in line with the notion of the “good” citizen. Thus, An interesting point is that, irrespective of their meaning of the SPES, many of the respondents’ motives for obtaining work and becoming self-supporting indicate that they have a readiness towards the central thought of the idea of the “good” citizen which is

expressed in the policy documents, as concerns the aspects of work and self-support, even if the readiness might not be a conscious reaction from the newly arrived migrants' part.

Chapter 7: Meaning of the Swedish language

This chapter's context lies in an area which the newly arrived individuals express a need to conquer, namely the Swedish language, and which is a part of the "good" citizen idea. This idea is thus included in the meaning giving the newly arrived migrants have to consider, and appears to indirectly influence the migrants' meaning of the necessity to obtain Swedish language skills. As has been shown in Chapter Five, the "good" citizen notion includes a citizen who knows the Swedish language well, is self-supporting, and knows the democratic values.

The research questions which will be attempted to get answered here are "What in the newly arrived migrants' present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants' meaning making in Swedish society, as concerns employment, language and values?", and "How is the newly arrived migrants' meaning making expressed, in the light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives?". Here, the focus lies on the experiences of the Swedish language. The analysed empirical data here consist mainly of individual interviews.

The newly arrived adults' experiences of the Swedish language have led them to different meanings of it. These different meanings have been divided into three variations, where the variation of difficulties will be shown and analysed in the first section of this chapter. The analysis will then move on to the meaning variation of slight difficulties, and last to the variation which is referred to as easiness. After this is done, the respondents' motives will be described, since these are a part of the respondents' meaning making. In the conclusions' section, experiences and meanings of the Swedish language will be discussed in the light of, and related to the notion of the "good" citizen.

Learning Swedish takes time, and is influenced by several factors

The respondents say that learning Swedish takes time for most migrants, and it is established that learning a second language is time-consuming (e.g. Henry, 2014; Zachrisson, 2014; Lindberg, 2008). The respondents also assert that it takes even more time for elder migrants to learn Swedish. Besides this time aspect, learning Swedish is affected by other factors, such as the age of the migrant individual, the SFI instruction and the housing situation, according to the respondents. Below, these factors will be accounted for, as they are embedded in the meaning variation of difficulties.

Difficulties

From what the adult participants express, they have understood their new language learning situation as one bordered with obstacles.

Time aspect and age as obstacles for learning Swedish

Two of the obstacles to learning Swedish is the time aspect, and the age of the newly arrived migrant:

I know English, but it takes longer time for us to speak Swedish [a smile] (R5)

A: ya, I understand you, I think they've thought that the person needs more information in the beginning of course, *baskunskaper*, basics, and then they expect, eeh, that the person can manage by himself or herself, *uppdatera sig* (update him- or herself), eeh

R7: I'm with you (agree with you) here, and respect this thing, but there's a difference between people who come here, I mean I as an individual came here in my thirties, there's a difference compared to someone coming here in one's sixties,

A: of course

R7: the person who's sixty needs more time to learn the language, it takes time for him only to learn how are you and what's your name

A: aah,

R7: so these persons, I don't only talk about myself, because I may [inaudible], and I have the ability to use the internet, I don't have any problem with this, but there are people who're dissimilar, not the same thinking

A: no

R7: they (the authorities) have to think about that this person might finish the language course in one year, or two years, but there are others who might need four years[...]

This respondent continues her statement with saying that Sweden is an organized country, and that Swedes are very competent in planning and carrying out surveys, before launching anything, and that they, therefore, should consider the differences between the newly arrived individuals in the introduction measures. Here, R7 believes that the Swedish authorities need to individualize their measures for newly arrived adults, so that the pressure will not be too high for, for example, elder individuals, who cannot be blamed for not learning Swedish fast, since they are old and, therefore, need more time than the younger individuals. The demand for individualized introduction measures are raised by social researchers as well (e.g. Kongshøj Madsen, 2016). Lindberg (2008) points out that age is of great importance for an individual's language acquisition. She says that the person who starts learning a language early generally reaches longer in his or her language acquisition. There are several reasons why elder learners learn slower than younger, one of which are fewer possibilities of a social and active life for the elder, something which, in turn, may mean a reduced contact with the second language, for instance on one's leisure time (Ibid.). Another reason is biological, and concerns an elder human's weakened memory, sight, and hearing. Further, a human's cognitive capacity for second language learning becomes worse after 40 years of age, as statistics has shown (Lindberg, 2008). Also another respondent expresses the age factor as an obstacle to learning Swedish:

At this occasion, when I was heading to town, and was walking towards the bus stop, I ran into one of the elder participants, and after we had said hello, I asked her how everything was going, on which she said "In Iraq (her home country) I was an accountant, and I was working in a big office. Now I'll never get any such job again here, and they (the Swedes) expect me to go to school every morning, like a child, and learn Swedish. It's not that easy, especially not in my age" (Personal note, May/June 2011).

The last respondent touches on one of the reasons why second language learning takes time for elder migrants. It is not merely about the language itself, but also has to do with the adult migrant's feelings about his or her former occupation in the country of origin. The migrant might feel that he or she has already done what is required of him or her to make a career, and that there is no motive for learning something anew, especially not something as difficult and time-consuming as a second language. In addition, when a person knows that he or she will not be able to work with his or her former profession in Sweden, negative expectations of the future will arise, making the motive to learn Swedish low, since most adult migrants' main purpose of learning Swedish is to obtain employment (Zachrisson, 2014). Furthermore, in Zachrisson's study (Ibid.), many of the migrants "express a loss of pride and the feeling that at

their age they should have a proper life and not sit in a classroom”, (Ibid., p.249), something which further reduces the motive to learn the second language.

Adult migrants may regard the demands from society as high, for instance the demand to learn Swedish fast, as they have a difficulty living up to it. Elder individuals get frustrated about this, and look upon their situation as a deadlock, which can be mentally exhausting:

On my way to the CO course building, I met one of the elder male migrants and we talked about his new life here in Sweden. He looked a little sad and worn out, and told me that “I’m tired. Here in Sweden, you can neither do anything good and useful for yourself, nor for others, since you can’t speak the language and you can’t get a job[...]” (Field note, 21-02-2011).

Acquisition of the new language is understood, by respondents, as the foundation for the acquisition of other useful things, such as employment. Without a sufficient language proficiency, the goal of obtaining employment and becoming useful for oneself and for others seems distant. Though not verbally expressed, this feeling of powerlessness, due to lack of language, is implied by several of the newly arrived migrants in this study. For instance, they say that, without the language, it feels like being “invisible” (R8), “distant from society” (R10), or “handicapped” (R1). The connection between newly arrived migrants’ language skills and job opportunities is also related by social researchers in Sweden and Europe (e.g. Haas, 2016; Ekberg, 2012). Ekberg (2012) writes that, “in the long run, migrants’ career opportunities are dependent on their knowledge in the Swedish language. Research shows that good knowledge in the Swedish language clearly improves migrants’ opportunities on the labour market” (Ibid., p.50).

Mental stress as obstacle for learning Swedish

Besides age, there are other non-linguistic reasons for not learning Swedish as fast as one should, something which the following respondent brings up:

R11: but maybe I’ve reached an age so I can’t reach language [laughter]

A: [laughter] no, I don’t think so

R11: seriously, I really try, even my teacher I tell him that I don’t want anything else than being able to open my mouth and he laughs, says that it’ll come

A: ya, it’ll come, if God wants, because now for sure your thoughts aren’t

R11: but ya, this is a problem, that there’s no, there’s no...

A: focus

R11: ya, lack of concentration, now I get home and for example I make my lunch and eat something, and sleep a little, and then I wake up for studying, but there isn’t, I mean when I make my phone calls to get the news (about the family in the home country) here and here, it’ll be 11 o’clock (in the evening), so I need to sleep to wake up at six o’clock

This excerpt comes after R11 has told the interviewer about her difficulties of focusing on the new life in Sweden, and about her mental stress over, among other things, having two children left in her home country. She brings up the lack of concentration which is affecting her language acquisition. In addition, she mentions time as one dimension of the problem of not being able to learn Swedish well. As her situation seems now, her days are full of

activities that require time, and thus it is not possible, in her view, to practice Swedish at home, after school has finished.

Administrative obstacles of the SFI instruction

According to some respondents, the language course, SFI, might also pose an obstacle for the acquisition of Swedish, in that there might be students with very different language levels mixed together in the same instruction group at school. This, the migrant says, is hindering for one's language development.

R5: [...]The Sfi, unfortunately it's not of much use to us

A: why?

R5: eeh, there's no clear structure, it should be from A to [inaudible], the language is new for us here, they're supposed to teach us, they treat us by what we all have studied in our home countries, I studied college, another studied at university, we get in the same group, the old student with the new (different levels), there's a student who's studied Sfi for three years in the same group as me, I feel a lack, there has to be the same level [...]

In addition, the fact that there are many students who share the same ethnic and language background in the same group, makes it almost impossible to practice Swedish in school, for the reasons explained by RP:

RP: [...]the thing I'd just like to comment to you is that, really in such a big city as X, that most migrants like to settle down in the central cities,

A: right

RP: so sometimes there's, one finds speakers of his own language, neighbours or relatives or...

A: or at school...

RP: or at school, even fellow students in the same class, i.e. when we get divided into small groups sometimes, then you'll find the Arabs in the same groups, helping each other in the Arabic language

A: ya

RP: this thing procrastinates the integration, and affects learning and integration negatively, learning the Swedish language

Conducting group work in the mother tongue at school is, according to the last respondent's point of view, disadvantageous for one's language acquisition, as it hinders practicing Swedish. At the same time as the SFI classroom can be linguistically homogenous, as concerns the adult students' mother tongues, Zachrisson (2014), touching the issue of SFI in more depth, says that it is a complex situation, for the reason that the students come to this course with diverse social backgrounds, which thus makes the SFI classroom a very heterogeneous one as well. Therefore, there are often diverse prerequisites represented among the students in the same class, which means, among other things, that students at different levels of their language proficiency may be present in the same class (Zachrisson, 2014; Carlson, 2002).

Obstacles of the housing situation

The lack of tolerable housing is another non-linguistic factor that is said to affect the acquisition of Swedish. There are migrants who have grown up children with families in

Sweden, who, unlike themselves, may have got hold of their own flats. One respondent says that her son has offered her to live with him and his family, but that this is not any ideal housing situation for her either, for the reason expressed here:

R11: [...]he (respondent's son) asked me to go there and live with him, but the problem is that I don't know the language, don't get stability with the way of teaching (the SFI course), and I, the frequent moves makes me lose many opportunities

R11 thinks that, in order not to get delayed with important things, such as concentrating on learning Swedish, and obtaining a stable life situation in the new society, she cannot first stay at her son's flat for a period, and then, when she gets her own flat, risk moving to another city and school as well, something which would be even more disadvantageous for acquiring Swedish. R11 has also told the interviewer that she has moved between five different cities in Sweden since she arrived, before she finally got a small flat in the present small town. The advantages and disadvantages of a newly arrived individual's housing situation for his or her acquisition of Swedish may also manifest themselves in another way, as R6 relates below. The latter has felt that living in a small town is very advantageous, because it gives one more opportunities to meet Swedes as neighbours, and thus more opportunities for speaking and communicating in Swedish:

A: now in X (a very small city), do you feel it's better?

R6: ya, I don't have any problem, they talk to me, I mean my neighbours I talk to them, they say hi to me, I say hi to them, eeh, and sometimes we meet on the street and they initiate discussions with me, ya it's in English because my Swedish isn't enough, but they let you feel that they care about the situation in our countries[...]I have one neighbour, he's really concerned that I learn the details, eeh, he sits and wants to make me understand the difference between *allt* (all) and *allting* (everything)

A: oj! private teacher [laughter]

R6: ya ya [laughter]in city XX (the big city) I'm forced to go to someone I know if I need help, but in city X (the small city where R6 lives now), I ask others for help and get to know them.

R6 continues by talking about his fast linguistic progress, and says that he is now at *SASG* and *Korta Vägen*³¹. He thinks that his progress is thanks to the fact that he did not live in a migrant dominated area for long, because otherwise he would not have come so far with the language in such a short time. The respondent asserts that, before moving to this small town, he lived in a so called "segregated", area, and that he experienced how little Swedish is spoken and how little contact one has with Swedes in such an area. Now when he lives in the small city, he regularly talks to his neighbours, and even gets language "lessons" from one of the elder neighbours. One difference between living in this small city and the big city he lived in before is that now he is, more or less, compelled to ask a Swede for assistance whenever he needs it, and that he, therefore, gets a natural opportunity to make the Swedes' acquaintance.

Opportunities for facilitating language acquisition

Here, from what the migrants say, they can see opportunities for facilitating their language acquisition. Thus, they do not only think of the obstacles to learning Swedish, but instead find

³¹ *SASG* is an abbreviation of *Svenska som Andraspråk Grund*, which means "Swedish as a second language, basic level", and is the language course which follows the SFI course. *Korta vägen* means "The short way", and is an intensive course programme for academic migrants who wish to continue studying at a Swedish university, after acquiring Swedish.

solutions or options, for making their acquisition of Swedish easier. These solutions are found outside the language instruction at school, since this is not thought of as being sufficient or efficient.

Slight difficulties

The meaning variation of slight difficulties here implies that adult migrants, despite their hardships of learning Swedish, can see how they may handle the hardships, and mitigate them, at the same time as they can see how the acquisition of Swedish facilitates other important things for them in their new life situation.

Enlarging the social network

That migrants should enlarge their social network by stepping outside their Arabic groups is one meaning which is made:

RP: ya, these are examples of advice I got part of from people who have a point of view that I liked, that “brother, don’t depend on that you, especially the first or the second year of your life in Sweden, found in the big cities, or [inaudible] with the Arabic groups, go and get familiar with other places, it’s ok, be patient and try to get to know Swedish people more, learn the language faster, integrate more, that is to say”, when will the individual get a bigger opportunity? When he’s forced to this thing.[...]for example, I know a person who stayed in the northern Sweden for two years, and then returned, who, honestly, he was very good, his fast learning, he spoke Swedish in a very nice manner, even *betoning* (accent) was excellent[...]it’s the same thing if he lives among, are you familiar with the housing areas, now there are even whole families living in the same area, I mean who are very near each other,

A: aa...

RP: they go together to the supermarket, you’ll find that maybe one person among them who have lived here for long or has learnt the Swedish language

A: oh...

RP: he’ll be, “*alltid ledare*” (always leader), he’ll always lead them, if he’s (the newly arrived individual) not a person who’s eager to develop himself, he may lose years depending on others.

RP asserts that he has got some good advice from an “old” migrant who moved to northern Sweden for a while, during his introduction period, and who, as a result, acquired Swedish fast and speaks it very well. Therefore, this person’s advice for RP is that one should leave one’s familiar settings where one’s acquaintances only consist of other Arabs, and move to another geographic area, where one gets forced to communicate with native Swedes, both in order to obtain a good Swedish proficiency and to get established. RP also makes the meaning that as long as one does not know Swedish well, he or she will be dependent on other individuals, and thus lose time. Similarly, another respondent implies that the dependence on other migrants’ assistance is negative for one’s language acquisition as well:

A: especially when you live in city X (the small city), here there’re not as many Arabs as in the big city (mentions the city name), and therefore you can practice Swedish more.

R11: here are lots of Arabs too, many Arabs, even our teacher told us that all our meetings is in Arabic, so this is the problem, maybe we don’t have the courage to mix with the Swedish people, I mean even when we ask something, we wait till we can ask someone Arab, not, if there’s a Swede standing we don’t ask him. REALLY, that’s what happens to us.

Here, R11 informs me that there are many Arabic speaking migrants living in the small city, and that one therefore does not feel forced to take contact with Swedes whenever one needs assistance with anything. The respondent implies that, under these circumstances, practicing Swedish gets harder, as one continues speaking Arabic, and using it in the communication with others. Therefore, she thinks that the Arab newly arrived adults' avoidance or cautiousness concerning contact with Swedes poses a problem for the first-named, because it affects their language acquisition.

Easiness

The reason why the following meaning variation is considered as easiness is that the newly arrived individual has made experiences in the new society which he or she thinks prepare the ground for acquiring Swedish.

Encouragement

According to some respondents, there are things in the new society that promote the newly arrived individual's language learning, one of which is encouragement from Swedes of the individual's proficiency in Swedish. This plays a big role in how the migrant regards his or her own linguistic proficiency:

RP: [...]and honestly, most people, most Swedish people, in my view, they have a way of encouragement, a way of encouragement I like this lots, the way of [inaudible], even when it comes to children, an encouragement, that "it's really excellent that you learnt so fast!" "it's nice that you talk much",

A: aa

RP: maybe he (the migrant) makes mistakes, I mean, but "please tell...", they try to reach to the shortest border possible with you, try to help you, to understand from you and get your idea

A: encourage you, i.e., eeh, encouragement and...

RP: ya, ya, this phenomenon may not exist among other people, for example, in another country, but as concerns Swedes, you'll find there is [inaudible], you don't ever find [inaudible], or feelings of dissatisfaction, when you make linguistic mistakes, that depends on who the person is, that, you have to have courage to discuss, even if you have linguistic mistakes, each time you get better and better, as they say in Swedish "*bli bättre och bättre*" (become better and better)

A: [laughter] *bättre och bättre*, that's right, eeh, do you feel that this is only at school, the encouragement and that Swedes...

RP: no, with all people, with all people,

A: you mean in the treatment when people

RP: ya, of course, when you for instance have, meet a Swedish doctor, at a care centre[...] ya, then he tries that, it's not always possible to get an interpreter, during my first period in Sweden, there are not always in every situation Arabic interpreters available, eeh, then he asks me to either speak English or Swedish, and I say that I can speak Swedish, so there'll be a huge lack, but "*jättebra!*" ("great!") and encouragement, and "I understood you"

A: good

RP: and when he asks "*hur länge har du varit i Sverige?*" ("how long have you been in Sweden?") and when I say six months, he says "mashallah (an Arabic/a Muslim word which is used when praising somebody), that's great" etc.[...]so this gives you more self-confidence.

The respondent implies that, as most Swedes encourage one, one gets more courage to speak Swedish, since one's self-confidence increases. This is advantageous for the migrant's language learning. RP asserts that he experiences Swedes' encouragement also outside the school context, for instance when he has an appointment with a doctor or the like. Further, he underlines that this encouragement is quite unique for Swedes, because he does not think that "other people" (of other nationalities) encourage migrants in the same way as Swedes do. According to Lindberg (2008), the majority citizens' will to communicate with newly arrived individuals plays a very important role for the latter's "actual possibilities to use and learn the language, as well as for their motivation to learn Swedish" (Ibid., p.22). Therefore, it seems that the encouragement the respondent talks about may make a difference for migrants' Swedish language skills.

Motives for learning Swedish

The newly arrived migrants think that learning Swedish is crucial, in order to establish in the Swedish society. Nevertheless, it is evident that they have different goals with their language learning. Whereas some plan to go on with university studies, and therefore need the foundation of Swedish, others think it necessary to learn Swedish, to be able to convey and inform Swedes about their thoughts and cultures, in order to be correctly understood by Swedes. Below, participants' motives will be described, as these are a part of the participants' meaning making.

A foundation for future studies and employment

Depending on their motives, which are a part of their meaning perspectives, some migrants think it important to acquire Swedish slowly, to learn it gradually and properly, whereas others wish to acquire Swedish fast, to be able to present their thoughts etc.:

I have to acquire the language slowly, because it's like building your house, to set the grounds for if you want to continue to university[...]it's better to get the language properly (R4).

The individual has to learn the Swedish language in a way, eeh, let's say in the right way, in a kind, as fast as possible, eeh[...]to try and discuss with others[...]since I live in Sweden, the right integration is to learn the language quickly, quickly, in the quickest way possible, this thing makes the individual represent his culture, his thoughts, in the right way (RP).

In R4's point of view, acquiring a new language is like building a foundation for a house, and that it is, therefore, better to make it slowly, in order to get as good a foundation as possible, so that one can continue to university later. Unlike him, RP thinks that a newly arrived individual has to learn Swedish as quickly as possible, so that his or her *etablering* gets facilitated, and to be able to communicate with Swedes in the right way. These two respondents express two kinds of meanings as concerns the Swedish language.

RP's motive with acquiring Swedish fast is also to head for employment as soon as possible. He thinks that one cannot reach one's goals without having acquired language first:

RP: [...]let us say the way to reach our aims is the learning of the Swedish language, the learning of the Swedish language in the shortest time possible.

In the study of Zachrisson's (2014), the participants have similar kind of motives for wanting to learn Swedish, which are, for example, to enable an employment, to communicate their thoughts, and to express their opinions.

Communication

Another kind of meaning is that learning Swedish sets the ground for almost everything in the new society, such as the ability to communicate with others in a suitable way, and that, therefore, the first thing the migrant should do is to learn Swedish:

R8: I've planned to learn the language in the first place, because the language is the key to this country, I mean, the language opens up, your view of the country gets changed if you have a language or if you don't have it.

A: in what way, I mean

R8: in every way, if someone comes and don't have any language, he'll feel himself a human, eeh, how should I explain it, an invisible human, a human who can't really reach people, who can't take or give or understand anything without language

A: right

R8: and he can't ask questions either, because he doesn't know, can't, eeh, it's like a person who doesn't exist, absent so to say, because he's not there, and there's not influence, he can neither affect nor be affected by anyone, but when he learns the language, then his knowledge will increase, of course, I mean looks at the world around him, opens to him, connection, the key to the country, the language

A: right

R8: even if people here speak English, but people like to hear, eeh, the, for example, the migrant to speak their (the Swedes') language, I mean they'll feel that this person has initiative, that he likes to melt in with society, they'll help him, I feel that when he speaks Swedish, (they think) he likes this language, he likes to understand, the Swedish life[...]

R8 brings up the communication motive for learning Swedish, and says that one feels invisible without the linguistic competence. According to him, the individual can neither contribute to nor gain anything in society, unless he or she knows the language. The respondent points out that even if most Swedes know English, and therefore the migrant can make him- or herself understood in this language, it makes a big difference if the migrant speaks Swedish. By hearing the migrant speak their native language, the Swedes think the migrant likes "their" language and is eager to understand the Swedish life. Here, from what R8 expresses, a wish to please the Swedes can be discerned.

There are migrants who regard the Swedish language as a must, to be able to express what they really want. The following respondent talks about how hard it is to leave one's home country and live elsewhere, because of the new language one does not know or understand. She believes that her Swedish proficiency is insufficient to communicate what she wants, and also points out that when she speaks Swedish, she feels like another person:

R7: even if you study and learn the language, but your language won't help you say what you want to, can you imagine even my way of speaking Arabic has changed since I came here, even my voice maybe is different, even the way I talk, because I speak Swedish [inaudible], because my voice I feel there's pretending in it, because I don't feel that I speak for me

A: oh

R7: the difference of the language, difference of the society, difference of the people around you, they make you behave in a different way

A: of course, so you feel already now that you've changed, eeh, I mean when it comes to for instance the language, or any other thing, any other difference I mean, not only the language, eeh, is there any other difference that you feel...?

R7: I'm the kind of person who's very very optimistic, I mean I don't like to say that I have a reservation for language, but always you, the most thing you think about you always talk about it, because I as a newly arrived person, how can I present about myself? I do it in my language, do you know, so I if the language, the language of this country, if I'm not perfect in it, then I won't be able to present myself as the real X (says her name), maybe I'll present myself that "my name is this, I come from here, my age is" and that's it, when I don't have any problem with the words, with the abbreviations, then I'll be very free, able to make myself understood,

R7 says that her way of talking is different now when she has begun speaking Swedish, and that she even does not recognize her own voice. It feels as if she pretends when speaking Swedish, and not as she speaks for herself. And this is one of the new things in the Swedish society that makes the respondent behave differently. Research has shown that learning a new language is not the same as learning something else, since the former influences the learner's identity (Henry, 2014; Hyltenstam & Wassén, 1984).

Another point that R7 makes is that, as long as the proficiency in Swedish is insufficient, the migrant cannot present the real him or her, but instead touches the surface of oneself, so to say. In other words, the conversation with Swedes will remain on the surface level. Once migrants have acquired a sufficient language proficiency, they will feel free, since they will be able to make themselves understood. As R7 has expressed her experience of losing a part of her identity (who she is) through speaking Swedish, undeniably, the situation is difficult for her. From what she expresses, on the one hand, acquiring Swedish is inevitable if the individual wants to feel free in the new society, and, on the other hand, there is a price the individual has to pay for acquiring Swedish, which is connected with identity.

Another respondent brings up the possible consequences of linguistic communication shortages, as concerns life in society as a whole. He makes this by presenting his interpretation of the motive behind many migrants' decision to reside in the same housing area as other migrants, or as their fellow-countrymen:

R1:[...]Here, there is a lack of knowledge in migrants about the manners and customs of Swedes, and there is a lack of knowledge in Swedes about the manners and customs of migrants, and the language is also something handicapping. I, when I, eeh, yesterday I was at the library and one of the staff came to me and asked "Can I help you?", I should've said "No thank you, it's all well", but I said "No"

A: oh

R1: this is probably harsh,

A: ya, a little harsh, [laughter]

R1: in our countries, we may say just "no", but here it's not nice. And here, I don't know, it seems that it's normal to hush people, when there's a discussion, but we consider it folly [laughter], so it's a problem here. So, did you see, I gave him (the Swede) something negative and took something negative from him. I mean, we won't be able to integrate and understand them (the Swedes). The time it takes to learn the language, two or three years, I would already have abandoned them, I would've found another group, my group may not be suitable for me, but I can at least communicate with and understand them, maybe this would cause reserve.

A: that's right, I'm sorry, have I understood you right, do you mean that during these three years, you'd be with your own group and then it would be too late to integrate with the Swedes later?

R1: ya, you won't integrate with them, you won't go back to them. The gatherings of migrants in (mentions several immigrant dominated suburbs), why have it been this way? Because you didn't understand the others, and then you stuck to your group[...]

Here, from what R1 relates, a small language mistake might lead to a misunderstanding between a migrant and a Swede, which influences both parties negatively to a great extent, i.e. make them regard each other negatively. In this library situation, R1 acted according to what

he had learnt in his home country, as it felt the most natural for him. However, the Swedish librarian interpreted his reaction through his or her meaning perspectives acquired in Sweden. The interesting thing here is that the respondent is aware, afterwards, of his action and its possible consequences. He seems to have reflected over the situation, and come to the conclusion that one's old ways of saying things may not be suitable in the Swedish society. Lindberg (2008) has given an account of several linguistic misunderstandings between migrants and Swedes that may lead to frustration between these parties, and contribute to strengthen the parties' prejudice against each other. For instance, she underlines that the imperative form of a verb (i.e. where one makes an exhortation) is used more often among certain language groups, whereas it is generally considered as rude by Swedes.

Also Wellros (2004) has brought up the issue of misunderstandings or shortcomings due to language barriers, and asserts that the migrant may feel a constant failure in the new society, and does not feel that he or she can do anything about it, and, therefore, there is a risk that his or her *etablering*, and active participation in society's development gets hindered or does not take place. Therefore, R1 points out, one consequence of not learning Swedish properly during the introduction period, and thereby getting into misunderstandings in the communication with Swedes, is that one will "get stuck to one's own group", and will not return to make new tries with Swedes. This state of things might affect *etablering* negatively, in that social cohesion, which is a part of the meaning giving expressed in the policy documents to newly arrived migrants, could be obstructed.

Understanding society, and participating in it

Similar to R8, R10 thinks that the most important thing to do in the new society, in order to establish in it, is to learn the language, so that one can know things that occur in the world around one:

A: you said before that integration, in your view, what makes matters easier for the newly arrived migrants here? What...

R10: there's, now the first thing and the most important thing is that you learn the language

A: ok

R10: I mean the biggest obstacle is the language, the second thing is that you have to try to, eeh, search for much information about Sweden so that you know that, I mean in any project I can get integrated with people here, so you get me?[...]I mean, eeh, I return and tell you that the language you can read any book or any newspaper, you know for instance that "ya, today there's a festival at *Stora torget* ("The big square", a place in the centre of the small city), because of this and that celebration", do you get me, you know little by little how they (Swedes) live, and you start little by little

A: and without the language, isn't there anything you feel important for, eeh, for when someone wants to integrate, to make things easier for himself, in Sweden, eeh, so the language is the most important?

R10: I consider it (the language) the most important, the most important, because without the language you'll be distant from society,

A: right

R10: for example when you listen to the TV, you understand, read a newspaper, you understand, [short pause] eeh, I mean [inaudible] *nummer ett* (number one).

According to the last respondent, the biggest obstacle in a migrant's new life is the language of the host country. Her point of view is that once the migrant has learnt Swedish, a whole

new world opens up for him or her, and he or she can partake in any activity which takes place, and understand anything he or she sees, reads or hears. This is depicted in Eriksson (2002) too, where most of the migrants in her study see Swedish as a central thing, since they think that language proficiency is important for their success in society as a whole, and as it “opens up for more contacts with Swedish-born[...]” (p.133). Similar to what R8 has emphasized, R10’s view is that the linguistic knowledge makes the newly arrived migrant understand how Swedes live, since the migrant gets the ability to read and communicate with others in Swedish. Also RP’s view of the Swedish language accords with the latter respondents’ in that he underlines the importance of it for understanding society:

A: eeh, are there other things, eeh, you said that the studies, that here you’ll focus on your studies and your work, God willing, eeh, are there other things that will be, that you feel will be good for, help you, your understanding of society?

RP: of course, the learning of the Swedish language, this is an essential thing and an important thing[...]

As RP has said earlier in this chapter, the Swedish language proficiency lays the ground for reaching one’s future goals, and therefore, it is important to learn Swedish fast.

Concluding analysis

The limelight in this chapter has been laid on the research questions “What in the newly arrived migrants’ present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants’ meaning making in Swedish society, as concerns employment, language and values?”, and “How is the newly arrived migrants’ meaning making expressed, in the light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives?”. Here, the experiences that have been connected with the Swedish language have been focused on. It can be concluded that the most obvious meaning variation among the participants is that of difficulties.

Migrants have made the meaning that it takes time to learn Swedish. This makes several migrants resist the demand of learning it, as they have already made a career in their country of origin, and do not feel enough motive for learning an entirely new thing anew. They feel that they have finished educating themselves, so to speak. Linked with this is the negative expectations of obtaining employment within their already acquired professional fields, which also lowers the motive for learning Swedish. At the same time, however, the acquisition of Swedish is seen as crucial for many things in the new society, for instance for communicative reasons. One negative consequence of not learning Swedish is said to be misunderstandings between the migrant and the Swedes, which affects both parties negatively to a great extent. It is shown that not only linguistic difficulties, but also one’s meaning perspectives, which are connected to one’s mother tongue, influence one’s second language use. For instance, the pragmatical sense of certain expressions or words in one’s mother tongue, when literally translated to Swedish, may be understood and interpreted entirely differently by a Swede than by speakers of the mother tongue in the home country, and may thus cause misunderstandings between the two parties.

The time aspect of learning Swedish, as migrants have expressed, hinders the contact with Swedes and thus *etablering*, in that during the time one tries to acquire Swedish, which is most individual, but might be several years, the migrant risks of getting stuck to his or her “own” ethnic group, as he or she has the linguistic freedom of communication within this kind of groups. A consequence of this attachment to one’s ethnic group, according to R1, is that it gets too late to get acquainted to Swedes later, even if one later has acquired the Swedish language. The cure for the problem of not getting acquainted with Swedes, according to some

respondents' meaning, is to learn Swedish fast, by moving out from the migrant dominated areas, and moving to Swedish dominated areas or small towns, where the majority of residents are native Swedes. This is implied to be the only way of acquiring Swedish quickly, and thus getting established. This line of thought shows that there is a critical reflection involved, since some respondents apparently have reflected over their new life situation, and what can be obstacles or opportunities in it.

As can be seen in the findings, none of the adult migrants questions or problematizes society's expectation on newly arrived individuals to learn and know Swedish. Rather, they all seem to take learning Swedish as a rule. This reasoning goes in line with what is written in the policy documents about the "good" citizen, as learning the Swedish language is one of the three most important and stressed things for *etablering*, as shown in Chapter Five. Thus, it can be suggested that there is an agreement between the migrants' meaning and the policy documents' meaning giving of the importance of learning Swedish. Nevertheless, the question arises whether this concordance is merely a result of the migrants' own meaning, as they themselves regard acquiring Swedish as crucial for managing well in the new society, or can be seen as a result of the policy documents' meaning giving, which is conveyed to the migrants through the measures of the introduction period. One thing that indicates the latter interpretation is that the Swedish language is described by several participants as the "key to the Swedish society", a phrase which is both expressed by CO course tutors, and is found in the CO course material. It can, therefore, be suggested that the phrase represents policy documents' meaning giving of the "good" newly arrived citizen. This citizen should learn the language fast and properly, in order to obtain work, and to be able to establish in society. For, as Wallace Goodman (2010) implies, language proficiency is one of the characteristics defining integration (which could be compatible to *etablering*, my remark) and national citizenship in a liberal Western country.

Chapter 8: Meaning making in relation to values

In this chapter, the focus lies on how the newly arrived adults react to meaning giving that is based on policy documents and how their meaning making is influenced by their values regarding childrearing and religion. This focus is chosen from the interview statements, and from some of the observational data, and is thus based on what values the migrants themselves express. It has been clear that these values play a big role for the migrants' meaning making of the values which are included in the "good" citizen notion, and which are given to them during the introduction period. Here, the migrants' values, in accordance with the TL theory (e.g. Mezirow, 2000), are considered as a part of their meaning perspectives, since they are founded on the same grounds, i.e. partly through the human being's socialization, and partly through the experiences which the human being makes throughout his or her life. Through this chapter, the ambition is to answer the research questions "What in the newly arrived migrants' present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants' meaning making in the Swedish society, as concerns employment, language and values?", and "How is the newly arrived migrants' meaning making expressed, in the light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives?".

There will be an account of the qualitatively different variations of meaning, as concerns values, among the respondents. What will be shown first is how some migrants make meaning of the meaning giving that concerns childrearing, and how, to a great extent, the values of the migrants' meaning perspectives become visible when they make this meaning. According to some participant migrant parents, a child needs to be brought up by strict disciplining, especially if he or she is used to it from the country of origin. Otherwise, the parents think, their children will be "lost" between two kinds of upbringing, something which will affect their life in a negative way.

The second kind of values that will be discussed as important for the individuals' meaning making of their new life, and of the meaning giving of the "good" citizen, are values connected with religion. As regards this second section of the chapter, there will be some difference, compared to the first section, in that it will show how the newly arrived migrants make meaning through their values concerning religion in relation to the whole idea of the "good" citizen, and thus not only in relation to the notion's parts of employment, language, or values. It should be pointed out that the connection between the respondents' values concerning religion and their reaction to the meaning giving is not always obvious, since the respondents often do not make it explicit, but the way the respondents make meaning in society through their values linked with religion, indicate that they relate to the meaning giving through their values. What can support this analysis is the fact that all the participants have attended or attend the CO course when they are observed or interviewed, something which can be suggested to make the participant migrants react to the "good" citizen notion, by relating their own values with the values that are included in the notion.

Childrearing

As regards childrearing values, all the three meaning variations of difficulties, slight difficulties and easiness are represented among the respondents. The first variation which will be analysed is the meaning of difficulties. Several newly arrived adult parents seem to react on the meaning giving of the "good" parent which is expressed in the "good" citizen idea. As

explained in Chapter Five, according to this idea, a “good” parent fosters independency and freedom in his or her child. Further, this parent exercises a democratic upbringing, which means giving the child space to decide on its own, space to negotiate and question different things in its life, space to take responsibility, and respecting the child’s integrity.

Difficulties

It can be suggested that the worst thing that can happen to a parent is losing one’s child. Yet this is the biggest fear of several of the newly arrived parents in the study. The background to these parents’ fear lies in their belief that there is a huge risk of losing one’s child, for instance if one’s ways of upbringing and parenting goes against those ways that are advocated for in, for instance, the CO course. Somehow, this view has been formed by their experiences from the Swedish society, including the Swedish school. The parents’ fear is so strong that they sometimes regret their moving to Sweden, in spite of the hardships and dangers they were subjected to in their countries of origin:

[...]The hardest (obstacle), [...]it’s the fear of the *social* (social services), especially for the families who have children[...]I’ve saved my child from there (Syria), to protect him, have I come here to let them take him away from me? The law is the law[...]but when he’s (the parent) got the fear, it’s affected him more, he hates, his hatred has increased, eeh, [...]my son, I’ve paid attention, he talks[...]I mean you find that it’s really, when I’ve come here it’s not because I’m convinced of life here, but I’m forced to live here[...]if they tell me that they’ll take my children from me, I’d return to Turkey even if I’d beg (to survive)[...]I’d rather live there with my family, and not here with fear[...]we were living in a life of fear there (in Syria), because of the regime, but here’s another kind of fear[...]if this problem would get solved, the entire (Swedish) society will get improved (R9)

This respondent implies that he, as a parent, has been influenced by his fear of losing his children to such an extent that has made him hate the new life situation in the Swedish society. This has led him to think that living in Sweden in physical security is not worth anything, if there is a risk of losing one’s children. Therefore, according to his point of view, it is better to live in poverty in Turkey, (since he cannot return to the war-struck Syria, his home country), where a family may raise their children as they wish, without any interference from the government. The respondent is afraid that his own son will report him, whenever he wishes to. By “an improved society”, the above respondent refers to the thousands of migrant families with children, who, instead of being destroyed and split up by the social services, in this authority’s attempt to “protect” the child from “abusing” parents, would get a good and happy life together, which would affect their attitudes towards the Swedish society, and thus promote their trust and participation in it, which, according to the respondent, would result in positive outcomes for the entire society.

Another background to some of the participant parents’ fear is their view of the Swedes’ ways of upbringing as giving the child who has grown up in the country of origin, with a strict disciplining, more power than what is suitable and best for it, since it cannot handle the power, but instead takes advantage of it:

[...]of course life here makes you (as a child) feel a power, a control[...]and the human, the child isn’t easy (is not a fool),[...]the child has a power, ability to boast, so if he felt that the power is in his hand, he’ll use it, he’ll try to use it for his purpose[...]ya, he’ll use the circumstances on his side, so in the end if my son gets angry with me, he wanted something that I didn’t give him, he goes to school and says ‘my father hits me’, an opportunity[...]if he (R9’s son) knows the laws, it affects his personality, his life[...]so why, because I’ve (society) given him power but not taken power from him, ‘the social (social services) protects me’, the social destroys the child’s needs[...]if he from the beginning of his life has been brought up in our societies and came

here to be brought up by the Swedish societies, it's impossible for him to live in the same mood, he'll lose, he'll lose and we as a family will lose[...] (R9)

Here, the respondent says that when his son knows about the prohibition against corporal punishment in Swedish law, he may even start lying to, for example, his teachers about his parents beating him, merely because he can use the lie against his parents for his own gain. According to this parent, the child's morality may get negatively affected by a changed way of upbringing in Sweden. According to the respondent, the new ways of bringing the child up are disadvantageous for the child as well, since he or she falls between two ways of treatment. Thus, the strict disciplining is constructed as even more important if the migrant families have children who are old enough to have been raised up in the home country prior to coming to Sweden, according to the parenting methods that are common in the home country. Here, R9 refers to the methods which some researchers name *authoritarian/ traditional parenting attitudes*, which are characterized by an aim of making children obedient and respectful (Gurdal, 2015, citing Chen et al., 2002). These parenting methods make a contrast to *progressive attitudes*, which aim to raise children in a democratic way, and encourage them to think independently, which is a general characteristic of Swedish parenting approaches (Gurdal, 2015).

In addition, R9 thinks that the Swedish authorities do not take the migrant parents' side when they hear about a child abuse, and that the authorities choose to trust the child in the first place, instead of trusting his or her parents. Several migrant parents of this study believe that the Swedish perspectives concerning children are inappropriate for the newly arrived migrant children, and think that the Swedish school or authorities overturn rather than help the migrant youth. In Johnsdotter's (2007) study, there is a similar fear in Somali migrant parents, where they assert that "teenagers use threats of report of their parents to the social services, as a kind of means of bringing pressure at conflicts within the family" (Ibid., p.125). The author underlines that this problem makes the parent generation feel a powerlessness, as they are afraid of the social services' interference in their childrearing. As a consequence, many Somali migrants choose to leave Sweden for e.g. the USA, Canada or England (Johnsdotter, 2007).

Consequences of migrant parents' fear

There are migrant parents who are prepared to change their ways of parenting, because they feel forced to change these, only for the sake of keeping their child:

Now I want to change many things in me, because I have to, and because I'm afraid, if I say the wrong word to my daughter, for instance[...] (R3)

This parent implies that he has to take care not to verbally threaten his daughter, as a way of disciplining her, to avoid the risk of losing her. He feels that he is, more or less, forced to change things in his ways of upbringing. Here, it is obvious how the migrant parents' feeling of fear of their children's and family's future in Sweden affect their meaning making and learning. Thus, it can be suggested that, for some newly arrived parents, a disorienting dilemma occurs when they are faced with other meaning perspectives regarding childrearing than they are used to from their countries of origin, and even from their own socialization since they were children themselves.

According to R9, another consequence of the migrant families' fear is that many families settle down in migrant dominated areas, which become "closed" areas, where the contact with

Swedes is minimal. The migrants keep as long a distance as possible between themselves and the Swedes, to prevent the risk of losing their children to the social services, due to their different ways of upbringing:

A: but do you think there is a way, I mean can the Swedes help with this?

R9: ya, there is, there is a way[...]in the end it'll, I'm sorry, but maybe I'll talk from my personal dreams, but there'll be closed societies in Sweden, closed societies, eeh, which have their special rules, eeh, which can't be controlled, this will happen at our, why? Because the explosion that'll be from this family will get bigger,

A: you mean the generation that'll grow up

R9: ya, we, we consider that the family is the foundation for society, here the individual above the family, but for us to be able to control the individual we have to [inaudible] the family, the rules[...] but our rules are still family rules (laws), so our child when he takes the initiative for something, he knows how to play, he'll split the family in the end[...]

Not all newly arrived parents are willing to sacrifice their ways of bringing up their children, according to R9's view. Rather, he says that there is a huge risk of "closed" communities inside the Swedish society, where the migrant parents can feel a freedom and space to raise their children according to the ways they are used to and prefer. Here, there is an implication for another issue at stake, namely that it is not only the fear of losing their children, but also a will to preserve and transfer to their children their "family oriented" values. This preservation of the present values make it possible to "control the individual", to be able to uphold the family. Obviously, the respondent has made meaning of these values as going against the Swedish idea of the "good" citizen, in that Swedes prefer to build society up by values that put the individual first. Further, R9 puts his finger on his opinion of the vulnerable fix which migrant parents have, due to that society takes children very seriously. Again, he points on the parents' powerlessness in the context, and implies that this leads to migrant parents' distrust in the Swedish society, and therefore makes them build "closed societies". This powerlessness can be related with not being able to participate in dialogue, and may thus be connected with a lack of recognition. The "closed societies" may be compared with Lindström's (2004) and Fukuyama's (1999) *miniaturized communities*, which, briefly, means that small group membership increases trust in the group members, but might result in distrust in people outside the small group and larger organizations of people, or society. Although Lindström's and Fukuyama's idea deals with small group membership, it may also be applied to the shut-in state of the migrant parents, in that it has to do with distrust of the larger community outside one's "own".

Fear of a negative influence on the children

There is also another dimension of the participant migrants' fear, as they express that there are certain aspects of the new society which have a negative influence on their children's behaviour. For instance, in the excerpt below, R3 brings up his experience of relatives' children who come home drunk in the middle of the night, and says that this is not a good lifestyle of a human being, and that his morals forbid it:

R3: I can see things in the children of my relatives here, and I'm not pleased with their behaviour, their life is like Swedes' life, of course it's not because the schools teach them this, but because the parents have forgot them, the father and mother have also got integrated and forgot their children

A: but is it a problem for you, this thing that they become like Swedes?

R3: I have a problem with, when it comes to morals, after all is said and done I'm a Muslim, I want to talk by religion, someone else might not talk by religion

A: is religion important for you?

R3: of course, for me religion is very important, because, my wife isn't veiled, but we are Muslims, I'm not renouncing my Muslim morals, I don't forget that there's a God, I don't forget that there's a prophet, these (the Swedes) don't have any of these things, I'm a Muslim and don't live my life in this anarchy. Because if I lived my life in anarchy, I'll have to allow my daughter to do whatever she wants, I mean this thing, it won't do. As morals, as Islam, first there's morals, (respondent brings up an example of if a son gets out with his girlfriend and then comes home in the middle of the night, drunk) this way of life is, I'm sorry to say, a life of an animal. [...]Not even Swedes behave like this, like certain Eastern people in Sweden do, the Swede goes out one day a week to disco, but the other weekdays he respects his job etc. We, as far as I've understood it, we take the bad things from Sweden and the good things we only talk about [...]everything you've learnt in Syria has to be put aside, but this doesn't prevent, I told you before that religion is something that makes easier, because there are religious guiding rules, secondly the morals, I mean from day to day you notice that there were things in Syria that got prevented by morals, religion. Here nobody cares about this issue, it's something normal, [...]for instance youth who use cigarettes, drugs, comes home late [...] it's hard with this thing here, if parents don't control their children already from the beginning

This can be interpreted as an expression of participants' fear of morally "losing" their children to Sweden, because of their view of the children's negative "swedification". The idea of "swedification", expressed by some migrant parents, means the children's turning into "bad" Swedes who drink much and have extramarital sexual relationships, as the excerpts have shown. The respondent implies that, unfortunately, instead of the children's adoption of the Swedes' "good" habits, they adopt the negative habits, something which migrant parents should oppose and struggle to prevent. According to R3's viewpoint, the Swedes are generally good at behaving in freedom, and can handle it in the right way, which means that they keep their drinking to the weekends, and continue doing their duties the rest of the week. The problem is that there are migrant youth, according to R3, who have only taken the "bad" parts of the Swedes' freedom, which has resulted in their lacking in morals and living in a complete "anarchy". From what R3 says, according to his point of view, in order to live a respectable life, and not live like an animal, the human being has to live by religious rules, which, in his case, is the Islamic rules. He seems to believe that a life without limits may cause a non-respectable life. The respondent has obviously formed his opinion about childrearing in Sweden through his values concerning religion, and seems to think that, when the migrant children come to Sweden, they lose their religious guide, for the reasons he has mentioned, and therefore lose their foothold. R3 blames the parents to those migrant children who have lost their values concerning religion, and says that the migrant parents have to control their children, in order for the latter to keep being respectable humans with morals. This control, according to the respondent, can be exerted by limiting the child's freedom, and not letting him or her do whatever he or she wants. This can be compared with R9's reasoning of above of individual versus family oriented meaning perspectives, i.e. that the Arabic migrant families have to take care not to let their children lose their focus on putting the family first, even when they come in touch with the Swedes' focus on individuality. It can be suggested that R3's and R9's reasoning might influence their meaning as concerns children's life in the new society. This meaning, in turn, guides their way of bringing up their own children in Sweden.

There are other migrant parents who express a fear of what they have experienced as an exaggerated freedom thinking and openness in Sweden, and especially the freedom which exists in the Swedish schools, which they think might pose a threat to the young migrant's meaning perspectives:

A: [...]you said that language makes matters easier[...], but are there things that make matters harder?

R10: ya, there're for instance, there're many customs, for instance that we got shocked by when we came here (to Sweden), for example those who colour their hair much or those who [inaudible], of course they're free, and you, I mean I respect the freedom of others, but you feel surprised for instance, there're lots, when you for example, the homosexuals, and even those they have the right for their freedom

A: of course

R10: but, eeh, I get astonished when for example there's a law that makes marriage easier for them, even the church, I really got very astonished, of course not all the churches[...] this I don't know, I didn't like it at all, I return and say that everyone has his freedom, but also I have my freedom, I feel that they (the homosexuals) feel that they live pleased, I feel that they [inaudible] for humanity, for example, because when God created us, he created us man and woman, they're supposed to live with each other, they may be very very good friends, but not have a sexual relationship. Friendship, and a close relationship and such things, but that should be it, I mean this, for example, I felt it wasn't nice[...]

[...]when they talk about the homosexuals in school, that it's an ordinary state, no, it's not an ordinary state, maybe it's ordinary for certain people, but it's not normal, it's outside the normal, right? [...]I go against the natural, it's wrong[...]and, eeh, for example when they teach about sex, we also had sex education in school (in the home country), but it was from the scientific perspective, here they teach from the perspective of the social, the [inaudible] from all the angles, it's also good, but I don't come and say to the girls in grade nine that you can take contraceptives, no[...]

I mean they (school) make all these matters easier for them (the youth), and then they wonder why society has turned, that it contains no morality or such things[...]they (Swedes) should be open, but not too open so that it becomes too much freedom.

Similar to R3, in R10's view, there is too much freedom in the Swedish ways of thinking and acting. Especially in a school context, according to the respondent's meaning, this limitless freedom may have caused the lack of morality that exists in today's Swedish society. First, the complete freedom of homosexual people is seen as unnecessary and depraving for society, in that, for example, the privilege of heterosexual couples to get married has also fallen upon the homosexual couples. This, in R10's view, has let the homosexual people feel they are normal humans, which, according to the respondent, is not the case. Homosexuality, according to her values connected with religion, is not normal, and therefore should not be presented as a normal state. In addition, the sexual freedom in general is also seen as something strange, and devastating to the young boys and girls, since it makes them believe that they can behave however they like, even if they are very young. It appears that R10 believes that the Swedish school encourages the young individuals to have sexual relationships, without showing the consequences and risks of such behaviour.

Further, the complete freedom as regards religious views is a foundation for some newly arrived parents' concern, as they think that it might have negative consequences for their children's meaning perspectives regarding religion. The following respondent says that her son had informed her about what his teacher had told his class about his atheistic conviction, and underscores that a teacher does not have the right to air his or her personal views in front of teenagers or children:

R10: for example the schools, the ways of teaching in schools, when the teacher doesn't have any problem coming and talking to you that "I don't believe in God". You're free, but you're not free to come and talk in front of teenagers, I talk about my children, or even young children for example, why do you come and talk, I'm a believer and I love God, I'm preserving my belief and my customs, you're free of your view, but you don't have the right to force your view on me,

A: of course

R10: I mean[...]I felt it was foolish

A: do you think that the students hadn't asked him? Because sometimes the teacher...

R10: it was a religion class, so here they study the history of religions, or the understanding of religions or such things, so maybe the discussion was about the Buddhism or, they're free as concerns what they believe in, even

R10 continues to say that a teacher has to be objective with all parties, and that she has considered talking to the headmaster about the incident. She points out that, even if she has a confidence in her son, it is not nice that one's teenager faces this kind of things at school. R10 is a Christian, who has a strong conviction of God's existence, and who wishes her children to keep their strong faith in God as well, as she and her husband have raised them to. In this case, the school makes a threat to the family's religious belief. As the respondent has two teenage children, a son and a daughter, she seems to be worried about a negative change in them, as concern sexual behaviour, love relationships, and religious views. She thinks that the teacher in her son's class has tried to force his or her view on the young students, something which is not acceptable. According to her, since school teaches young individuals, it should be careful not to make space for expressing views which should be kept personal, for instance teachers' own religious views. According to her, this kind of views do not belong in public schools, as they can affect those youth who have a different point of view of certain things in life. As recent research shows, the Swedish religious education has become more and more secularized, (Kittelman-Flensner, 2015), something which might make a big challenge to religious migrant families, i.e. to those families whose religious beliefs play a big role in their life.

The above concerns, which are connected to e.g. experiences from the Swedish school, are based on the migrant parents' values, which they wish their children to adopt. These values are embedded in the meaning perspectives of the individual, and are, therefore, a part of the individual's identity. The migrants' fear of the values which they consider as prevalent in the Swedish society can be explained by that these values may disturb the already adopted values that the migrants are pleased with, and thus do not wish to change. As Bourgeois (2002) and Cranton (1994) reason, adults have an important choice to make, which is either to preserve their identity, or to transform it. The learner aims at identity preservation when the current positive identity is being threatened (Bourgeois, 2002), such as when circumstances in the host society put the adult migrant's or his or her children's meaning perspectives at risk.

The fear of changing one's child's identity might also be grounded on other meanings, such as the impropriety of taking part of a Swedish tradition. This might be the reason for not wanting to involve one's child in it, and for wanting to avoid the Swedish traditions:

When a participant, on this Monday session, which concerns "Traditions, habits and values in the Swedish society", says that "we shouldn't forbid our children to partake in for example parties, they can be there without drinking. We have to be friends with our children", another participant comments that "yes, but it won't work in the long run, because then we might get drifted apart from our own traditions". The tutor comments this and says that if you forbid your child to do things like other friends are allowed to do, the child will do many things behind your back when he or she gets older. "It is better to become friends with the child, it is very important with trust between parents and children" (the tutor). The discussion continues for a while. One female participant says that also the Swedish parents set limits for their children – "my daughter's friend always obeys her parents when it comes to, for example, what time she has to be at home at the latest" (Field note, 07-03-2011).

Here, there are actually two meanings involved in the participants' verbal interaction, both of which can be said to affect how the participants regard their new parenting situation. One

meaning is that of difficulties with Swedish traditions, and the other is slight difficulties, where the participant who says that Swedes also set limits for their children implies that the Swedes' habits regarding childrearing may be the same as the Arabic parents', if one is prepared to compare the Swedes' habits of childrearing with the Arabic. In addition, another example of the fear of changing one's child's identity is expressed here:

One participant says that she actually wants to return to her country of origin, mostly because she is afraid that her eight-year-old daughter "will become like Swedes, since she'll get raised here, and then she won't want to go back to XX (the home country)" (07-03-2011).

The foundation of this fear seems to lie in the thinking that the child, when growing up in Sweden, will become so attached to Sweden and its cultures that he or she will not want to return to his or her parents' home country in the future. Thus, those individuals who express this fear appear to fear the gap which will arise between the parents and the child, due to the child's attachment to Sweden, and thus to the child's changed cultural identity.

Suggestion for removing or reducing the fear

One of the participants has a suggestion for solving the problem with the fear of and distrust in society's measures of taking care of children whom they regard as abused:

R9: if I walk on the street and pull my son's ear, they might take him away from me, "you (the Swedes) can tell me [inaudible], give me options", besides the language, teach me life itself, teach me to live in Sweden, teach me to live in Sweden and then teach me the language, you force the law on me, I respect it, but this law is the law of life, teach me how to live it and then force your laws on me[...]

A: how, pardon me, but how do you think that they can teach you how to live here? I mean now of course *Samhällsorientering* you've finished it,

R9: ya, almost the last phases left, four sessions

A: I mean didn't you feel any use for you?

R9: no, it's got a use, but it (the course) makes more (harder), not easier, it gave me what problems will occur for me, taught me what laws there are, on what I'll be responsible, but it didn't give me the nice,

A: but there's...

R9: it didn't give me, didn't give me the nice, it describes for me, but doesn't give me the solution

[...] A: you said before that for instance the government should teach you how to handle children, but do you think that you'll accept, suppose that I'm a Swede and tell you that you should do this

R9: no, there's no reason, no reason, the human there's more than one way of teaching, the direct teaching especially which concerns private matters, every human refuses it, when you[...]but as concerns the fear, eeh, tell me that hitting is forbidden, so I respect it, but what's the alternative for hitting? What are the alternatives?

A: ya, I understand you

R9: for example "you can turn the TV off early", but I'm not convinced that this is a punishment, but we can see how the son reacts if we turn the TV off early, "if you put it into practice that's your choice, but we've given you an idea"

A: right,

R9: [...]I mean first we (the Swedes) make the suggestions for alternatives, and then you can choose between the suggestions

This parent suggests that the Swedish social services should, when dealing with a child abuse case, where, for example, Arab migrants are involved, consider to solve the problem by having a dialogue with the parents about the alternatives for beating. This way, the child may stay with its family, instead of being removed to foster care. What this participant actually touches is that the newly arrived migrant parents from certain Arabic countries are used to the parenting method of beating. He implies that this method might be the only one known to them as an effective disciplining method. Thus, as R9 implies, the parents' meaning perspectives regarding raising children might only contain this or similar disciplining methods, and therefore, the social services should not judge the parents because of their views on raising children. Instead, according to the respondent, they should extend the parents' perspectives through offering them alternative disciplining methods. For example, he suggests that one alternative solution to the problem of corporal punishment is preventing TV watching for a specific period, or similar methods that parents in general resort to when their children have done something wrong or behaved badly. As Dumbrill (2008) shows from his empirical study of migrant parents in Canada, the parents wish for cooperation with the child welfare services, and emphasize that the child welfare workers should take as their starting point the migrant parents' strengths in parenting, and not only start out from their deficits. All parties involved – the child, the family, and society – would gain from this. There are several researchers who underline that child protection systems in the Western countries fail to meet the migrant parents' needs, and that there is also a risk of endangering the migrant children, (e.g. Dumbrill, 2008), and also undermining parental authority (Pine & Drachman, 2005), since the migrant parents are already dealing with youth who are exposed to a society which encourages individual autonomy.

Slight difficulties

Not all migrants fear their children's future well-being and identity in Sweden. Taking a further look at migrant parents' meaning as regards their upbringing, there are also voices heard of the readiness to combine their own cultural views with the Swedish ones, as illustrated in the field note below:

The tutor brings up a conflict scenario between a child and its parents, during this Monday course session. The scenario is that a friend of the tutor's daughter is afraid of her parents, and takes off her veil as soon as she has left home, and before she enters school. She does not dare to tell her parents that she does not want any veil on her head, because she knows that they would not accept it. The tutor asks the participants about their view of the matter. One participant says that, as a parent, you have to respect both what the school mediates to the child, and what you yourself think is good. "You have to stand above school, and show that you have opinions that are also good, complete school". Another participant agrees to this completely, and thinks further that you should not forbid the child from doing something, without giving an explanation to why you forbid it, with which a third participant agrees. Yet another participant says that it is very important to trust your children and to show it, something which several co-participants agree with. "Then it makes it easier for the child to tell things to his or her parents" (Field note, 31-01-2011).

Here, there is an idea that considers both the migrants' own meaning perspectives and the Swedish meaning giving. The adult migrants' readiness to new meaning giving may be discerned, as they imply that they are ready to take both their own viewpoint as regard childrearing, and the ones that could be said to be general Swedish ones into consideration. Through this example, a flexibility of the "good" parent may be discerned in some of the studied migrant parents, which means that the "good" parent cannot only perceive things from only one angle, but instead have to consider something from different angles. This appears to go in line with what is implied in the policy documents (e.g. SOU 2010:16) about a democratic upbringing, which makes space for openness and tolerance towards other kind of

views than one's own. However, an extension of this interpretation of the field note can indicate that there is a resistance to the CO course view of a "good" parent as someone who gives his or her child full freedom to decide things for his or her own, something which appears to be the meaning giving of the tutors to the newly arrived migrants. Instead of giving full freedom to the child, the "flexible" parent seems to try to find ways of meeting the child's wishes by a middle way, for instance by giving him or her limited freedom, combined with an explanation of the limit, and with things (which do not violate Arabic meaning perspectives) that can "compensate for" full freedom, according to the parents' view.

Easiness

From what some respondents say, there are further expressions of similarities between Swedes and Arabs concerning the upbringing of children, for example as regards the openness of Swedish parents. There are migrants who believe that Swedes are more open with their children than Arabic persons, in that the former may discuss topics that may even be seen as delicate or precarious. One participant means that Swedes do not feel embarrassed in doing so, and asserts that it could be good for the children, as such discussions could widen their view of important things in life:

During a Monday class, when the theme is "The parental role", after the tutors have gone through the United Nations Children's convention (from the power point picture), among other things, there is a discussion about children's rights, and one of the migrants points out that it is good with Swedes' openness sometimes: "Many adults in the Arab countries don't let the child get necessary life knowledge, because they think it embarrassing and inappropriate – for example knowledge about the period, sex, and life together etc. It's much better to inform your children about things in the surrounding world, so that they know". No one of the other participants objected to this (Field note, 31-01-2011).

This could be seen as newly arrived migrants' readiness to what meaning perspectives the new society has to offer, and their thinking about the consequences of these meaning perspectives for their own life situation. Thus, the view of openness towards children is received positively, at least by some participants. In addition, the readiness may manifest itself as a desire to letting one's children participate in the new society as soon as possible after their arrival in it:

A: you told me before that it was you who chose to live here,

R6: I chose to live outside city X (the big city), ya

A: eeh, did you think that it would be better for your children too?

R6: I firstly thought that, eeh, the reason was, eeh, I want my children to integrate in society in a faster way, of course I, eeh, I never have the conviction like other people, that, eeh, if someone lived among foreigners then he'll lose his culture, in my view the culture will be based on home, and I know many people who came here to this country with their children and who preserved their culture, on the contrary

The above respondent has told me that he has voluntarily chosen to settle down in a Swedish dominated small town, for the sake of giving his children the opportunity of participating in their new home country as fast as possible. Unlike other migrant parents of whose points of view are described earlier in this chapter, R6 does not fear the new experiences or traditions that awaits his children, but asserts, instead, that his children will be able to preserve their culture, as he and his wife will provide for it at home. It can thus be suggested that his standpoint towards "Swedish cultures" is permeated with trust towards Swedes and the Swedish society.

Summary

This section has shown the participant parents' fear of different aspects of the Swedish society's interference in their children's lives and their upbringing. Several of the participants who have small children bring their fear and distrust up, since they have understood the Swedish ways of childrearing as being a threat to the well-being and future life of their children. The fear and distrust of Swedes' ways of childrearing and dealing with the migrant children are connected, because, among other things, the parents have interpreted the situation as that they are being steamrolled and ignored concerning their own views and ways of raising their children. They wish to have a say in the matter, as it, when all is said and done, is about their own children.

The participants mention different reasons for their fear. One of these is that the social services might take their children away from them, due to their authoritative upbringing, with streaks of corporal punishment. Similar to the findings in Chapter Five, another reason is a risk, from the parents' point of view, of the children's changed thinking and behaviour, as a consequence of the Swedish society's limitless freedom.

The fear has influenced the participant parents in different ways, such as making the parent hate his or her life situation, or feel forced to change certain things in his or her behaviour towards his or her child. Another outcome of the feelings of fear and distrust is that migrant parents may choose to settle in "closed" housing areas, where they can "hide" from Swedes' view (visual) and knowledge. Apart from the fear, there is also another kind of meaning made of the perceived Swedish ways of bringing up children, since there are migrant parents who express a thought of combining their views with the Swedes' views, and finding similarities in ways of thinking between Arabic parents and Swedish parents. There are also parents who do not fear living close to Swedes, and letting their children participate wholly in their new society. Therefore, there is also an implication of trust towards the Swedish society.

The findings show that the participant parents' feelings of fear, distrust and trust are mostly connected to values concerning childrearing. However, some respondents express that there are certain aspects of their understanding which are made through the values which are related to religion, such as that R3 thinks it to be violating his religious beliefs to let one's adolescent child get him- or herself drunk, since alcohol is forbidden in Islam. This kind of reasoning can result in fear, as the empirical data tell. Nevertheless, there is reason to suggest that it is not the values related to religion as such which give rise to the parents' fear and distrust in the first place, but rather, as the analysis shows, the parents' ways of child raising is understood, by the parents themselves, through values connected with religion. In other words, the participant parents seem to explain, and legitimate their perspectives of childrearing by those of their values which are linked with religion, more exactly by clothing their views of childrearing into religious expressions.

Values connected with religion

Several of the studied migrants say that they are religious, in the sense that they understand life, to a great extent, through values which they relate to religion, and say that a belief in God is important, if one wants to live a good life. This seems to be irrespective of their specific religious belonging. It seems that those who say that they have a strong faith in God, whether they are Muslim or Christian, (which are the only two religions represented among this study's participants), make meaning in the new society according to their values connected

with religion. For instance, if someone thinks that God wants a human being to be a builder, not a destroyer, wherever he or she lives, the migrant may think that he or she has to be someone useful for the Swedish society, even if this society is different from the one he or she comes from.

This section will show how the participants use their values concerning religion when making meaning of the values which are included in the “good” citizen idea. As could be seen in Chapter Five, this idea, which the meaning giving to the newly arrived adults is based on, embeds citizens that are self-supporting, secularized and law-abiding, equality-thinking, and respectful and open towards people with other convictions (which is connected with being tolerant and thus feeling social cohesion).

Slight difficulties

There are adult migrants who say that, even if their values connected with religion differ from many Swedes’ values, they feel that they have to accept the Swedish values, and the habits that follow with these, such as shaking hands with anyone one is introduced to, irrespective of that person’s gender:

R3: [...]but if I come here and want to transform the whole country, this can’t be right [...] I mean, you’re a woman, here all the Swedes like to shake hands, and there are many occasions I have to shake hands, and I’m sorry but I always leave home washed, in case I need to make a prayer, but I can’t tell them (Swedes) that I don’t want to shake hands with them, for example we had a study visit from the Police, at the civic orientation course, and there were several women who didn’t shake hands with the Policeman, this person understood it, but many Swedes do not, and they think that you have come here to my country, it’s you who have come here to my country. And when they (Swedes) shake hands with you, they do it for humanitarian reasons, because they want to be polite, [...]eeh, but we Syrians and Eastern people, we’re not the same as the European, when we shake hands we do it from another point of view, for another reason, eeh, for a devilish reason, but

A: oh, now I understand you

R3: but the European person shakes hands to show respect, now I’m visiting all sorts of places in Sweden, /.../medical appointments and the like, now I don’t want to be a deviant, when I meet a woman who wants to shake hands with me, I have to shake hands with her, because it was me who came here to this country, I can’t tell her that I don’t want to shake hands, what will she think of me? She’ll think that it’s me who have come here, and it’s their (the Swedes’) right to think like that, [...] it’s like their law, I have to respect it.

Here, the habit of handshaking with a person, irrespective of that person’s gender, can be seen as an expression of the meaning giving of equality between men and women. In the excerpt, it is obvious that R3 has reflected critically on his religious customs and compared them to the customs which he thinks exist in Sweden. When R3 says that he leaves home “washed”, he refers to a special washing ritual for Muslim men and women, before they make a prayer. He concludes that there are different purposes with the handshaking in the new society than in the society he has come from. According to the respondent’s meaning, which is shaped by his values connected with Islam, handshaking between men and women is forbidden in the home country, since there are men there who shake hands for the sake of feeling a certain physical pleasure from the physical contact with strange women, something which he refers to as being a “devilish” act. Here in Sweden, however, men’s intention of their handshaking should be viewed from the angle of showing respect to both strange men and women, as the two sexes are considered equal. R3 repeatedly says that it is he who has come to Sweden, and therefore it is he who has to accept the Swedes’ customs, and adjust himself to them, even if they are against his own religious habits. This statement implies that the gender equality aspect of the

policy documents' meaning giving is reacted on, by an acceptance of the value of gender equality, in that the respondent shows that, as concerns handshaking, it should not matter whether one meets a man or a woman. Also the freedom and tolerance aspect of the "good" citizen idea appears to be reacted on with readiness, as another participant talks about the respect for the different customs and habits that are prevalent in the Swedish society, and reasons in a similar way as R3:

A: and in your point of view, how is a good integration done?

R8: through respect, respect for others, respect for the country, respect for the customs, even if you don't agree with these customs, you respect them, and of course the person gets the respect back, in the same way[...]for example I go to the gym, there're people who don't have any dress, even if I don't like it, I respect it, I can't say that why don't they feel ashamed (when they're like that), no, this is their country and these are their customs, I mean I respect your freedom, and in return, I keep my clothes on me, and nobody will insult me, because you have your freedom and I have mine[...]here in Sweden the human is free, so it depends on whether the human has potential or not, [...]because if I don't accept, life will be hard, it'll be a *konflikt*,

Here, R8 refers to his dressing according to Islamic dressing codes, which, for instance, mean that neither men nor women should show those body parts that can attract the opposite of sex, such as one's breast. He underlines that he cannot think badly of a Swede who does not have much clothes on at the gym (something he refers to as "don't have any dress"), since both he and the Swede are equal in their freedom rights. And this gives rise to his meaning that he has to respect Swedes' customs of dressing, even though these are different than the dressing codes which are embedded in the values connected with Islam. Also another Muslim participant emphasizes Muslims' need of adjusting themselves to the new society, and its importance for *etablering*, which he calls "integration":

A: I'm sorry, but you talk much about integration, what is integration in your view? The picture of integration that you have[...]I mean if somebody wants to integrate, how?

R6: this depends on what the person's decision is from the beginning, whether he intends to live in this country all his life, or eeh, is the country just an only reason for flight from war, for me it was obvious, when I came I thought that I'd finish my life in it, so then I'd either be a part of society, or be outside, if you're not a part of society, you're outside, so how can someone be a part of society? Maybe all Sweden will accept me, *acceptera*? (says it in Swedish)

A: ya, *acceptera*

R6: but this is not always what's wanted, on the contrary, I always want to *respektera* (respect),

A: so you won't be convinced if they only accepted you, you'll be convinced if they respected you too?

R6: of course, I don't have any problem with their (Swedes') traditions, right, and eeh, you have to show them that you've come to this country, are the same as them, I want to work, eeh, sooner or later I'll obtain the citizenship, if I got this citizenship I have to respect the country that's given me this citizenship, the country has accepted me as a citizen here, so then I have to do all my rights and responsibilities, if I can't live up to my responsibilities, then eeh, I can't do all these thing without getting integrated, without becoming integrated[...]I won't get integrated if I didn't give myself the feeling, that I'm a son of this country,

A: oh, you mean, right, it has to be inside you

R6: ya, it has to be inside, that I'm a son of this country, not a stranger, as long as I feel myself being a stranger, they'll regard me as a stranger

A: ok

R6: when I behave as if I'm a son of the country, learn the language, eeh, work and pay the taxes that are on me, be a devoted inhabitant, eeh, there's something I want to tell you about, there're people here who're impossible to get integrated, because they always see the other as someone different. How can I expect him (the Swede) to accept me if I don't accept him or build nice relationships with him?

The equality aspect of the meaning giving of the "good" citizen is touched on again, since R6, in close connection with the excerpt above, continues to explain that Muslim migrants should see Swedes without considering their hair colour, religion or the like, and that they should treat Swedes like they want to be treated by Swedes. Once again, respondents make the meaning that one should adjust oneself to the new society, although there could be different religions and customs involved. It is implied that once the migrant has started to work, pay his or her taxes, and fulfill his or her duties, he or she will automatically get established. However, *etablering* depends on the migrant's intention of staying in Sweden, and therefore, R6 points out that those who have the intention of living all their lives in the new society, have to get established in it, since this is the only right way of living in the new society. And this, in turn, requires that one makes him- or herself feel like a "son of the country", i.e. like any other citizen, and dismisses the feeling of being a stranger. Here, there seems to be a readiness to the meaning giving which embeds newly arrived adults to feel social cohesion with Swedes and Sweden.

Easiness

The meaning of easiness is expressed differently by different migrants, and therefore, it will be described under several headlines, starting with "destiny and acceptance".

Destiny and acceptance

When the individual is convinced of his or her destiny, i.e. that everything that happens is already decided by God beforehand, he or she accepts what has happened, no matter if the situation is understood as positive or negative for oneself. In this way of reasoning, a feeling of gratitude arises, which makes it easier to accept aspects of the meaning giving of the "good" citizen idea:

R1: Religion means peace of mind, it's, eeh, when you're convinced of Islam, for instance, God says that you have to be convinced of the matter of destiny, and the thing that's been written.

A: right

R1: you have to do things, work, and build, eeh, but the results are on God. As soon as I hear of someone has died, my friend, for example, in one week I've lost four friends, three cousins, there are lot of things, but when you're convinced, destiny, then you give way, it's not just to say it, but it should be in you. That's why I say that I'm pleased here in Sweden, I'm not pleased for material reasons, I never thought of coming to Sweden, or to Europe or any other country in the world, but there were friends, it's a nice dream Europe, but I didn't think of it [...]. I was forced to migrate

Here, the respondent implies that his faith gives him a peace of mind, and that this is good for him, because he does not get disconsolate when he has lost so many dear ones, as he would have, had he not had his strong faith in God and destiny. R1 underlines that a human has to do his or her best to work, build or do any other thing, but that the outcome relies on what God has decided. By R1's talk, there appears to be a readiness to the meaning giving of being self-supporting. Further, since he believes that his life is out of control as concerns the result of things, it is no use to feel desperation. The respondent says that he is pleased in Sweden, even

if the migration and move was unplanned, since it was his destiny to come here. His contentment is a result of his strong faith, and he does not question the meaning giving.

Also R8 feels gratitude to God for his new life situation, when we talk about how lonely many elder people are in Sweden:

A: do you have a stable housing now, or do you live second hand?

R8: by God, no, not *andrahand* (second hand) or something, I live black (illegally), because I've registered (at the local housing authority), but there's a strong pressure, much pressure,

A: ya, there're many migrants who say that

R8: I've been registered at the housing authority for almost 590 days, approximately 1,5 years, and there's still 1,5 years left, so what can one do? But, thank God, I mean I feel the stability, school and come and go, it's anyway better than being alone.

R8 thinks that it is very hard with loneliness, and that, even if he lives in an illegal flat, and has waited very long for his own flat, he is satisfied with his present situation. He thanks God for his feeling of stability, and for being able to attend school. Even if he does not have any family in Sweden, school makes him feel less lonely, because there one can meet and talk to people. Here, there is an expression of the respondent's need of participating in the social life, and being active in society, something which goes in line with the meaning giving included in the "good" citizen idea.

The right path and being a good human

The meaning giving of the "good" citizen idea, which, among other things, includes a law-abiding and honest citizen, is reacted to through respondents' meaning perspectives concerning religion. There are newly arrived individuals who express their conviction of living by the right path, according to God's intention for the humans. This path includes choosing the right things and acting right, in every situation, and in all the things one sets about:

A: do you think that faith is important?

R2: of course, of course, it's very very important, (pause), I mean, I told you a while ago, God gave us two ways, one way that's right and one evil way, you know? If you have faith, you'll go by the right path, you'll get a great result, for you, for your children, even for the society that you live in. But the evil path, it'll destroy you, your children and your society.

R2, who is a Christian, thinks that it is only the right way which gives an individual, his or her family, and society the good outcome. According to him, someone who has a strong faith, knows about what is right and what is wrong. The view of the right way can also be based on the religious prominent figures, in that the things they have said is applied to one's own way of constructing life:

RP: when it comes to me, I don't have ambitions that I should become rich or on the top, but the essential thing is that you don't want to be in need for help, of course every human being needs help, but the financial help is harder than any other. So, eeh, when the human can earn his own money, this is a real happiness

A: ya, I understand you

RP: when the human is comfortable, able to support himself, to support his wife, his children, able to have a house, this is real happiness[...]

This, there's a hadith from the prophet Mohammed, "The human who's close to sleep (understood as having a clear conscience, my remark), has his or her food for the day, is safe in his or her place, and has a good health, then it's like he or she owns the world", these are the means of happiness, they are very simple

A: ya, they are simple

RP: but the meanings are great.

In the excerpt above, there is an expression of a readiness to the self-supporting idea of the "good" citizen notion, when the respondent expresses his view of happiness as something which could be obtained if one has an employment, so that one can support oneself and one's family. RP emphasizes that he only wishes to be able to afford the basic convenience for himself and his family, and does not strive for more. He says that it is very hard to be in need of others' financial assistance, and therefore, it is very important with earning one's own money. Here, RP implies that he does not want to be dependent on the social allowances when his introduction period is over, but that he wants to work as soon as possible. He brings up a *hadith*³² of the prophet Mohammed, and believes, according to his values concerning religion, that it could be one of the guiding rules for life. In this *hadith*, there are two values included, which the respondent appears to want to live by, namely acting with a clear conscience, and earning one's livelihood, which could be related to being a good human. And being a good human, in turn, may be connected to the notion of the "good" citizen, as the good human, according to the respondent, is someone who, among other things, follows what is right, i.e. who treats other people well and follows the laws. However, there is one thing which seems incompatible with the "good" citizen notion, and that is the respondent's hint of the opinion that it is the husband's duty to support his wife and children. This value appears to include that the wife should stay at home and take care of the children in the family, and not go out to work. This goes against what is written in the Swedish policy documents about citizens who are employed outside the home, and which the equality idea of the "good" citizen encourages all adults to be, irrespective of their gender.

Furthermore, the right path means, for instance, doing good deeds, a meaning which could be interpreted as a readiness towards the law-abiding and social cohesion aspect of the policy documents' meaning giving, which R6 expresses:

R6: because in all simplicity, I see all people as humans, I mean, I myself is a Muslim, I have the idea that everything everyone whom God created is a Muslim, do you understand me?

A: ya, I understand

R6: but he's a Muslim who's chosen his way[...]because I believe in the Quran 100%, all believe in God, "the one who believed in God and made good deeds" (refers to a verse in the Quran)

A: ya, you're right, by God that's nice talk

R6: then the person who believed in God and made good deeds is a Muslim, this is Quranic! [...]so these thoughts make me see people in a different way, I don't have any problem with any person, whomsoever, as a matter of fact I'm a Palestinian and I don't have any problems with the Jews, and this too has resulted in personal problems with my surroundings

A: that's for sure

³² A *hadith* is an Islamic term "of a short statement by or about Mohammed or any of his companions, and which aims at establishing what is normative in a certain issue" (www.ne.se, my translation).

R6: I have a problem with the Israelis but not with the Jews,

A: ya, that's a difference

Also another respondent compares Swedes with Muslims, and says that Swedes behave like Muslim people should do, i.e. they are honest in their behaviour:

R3:[...]we are Muslims, our Quran, it says that you shall not lie, eeh, I see it that the Swede is behaving like a Muslim should behave, but they don't have any religion, but the behaviour, as a behaviour, they're Muslim

In the point of view of R6, all the humans are Muslims, since they are created by the same God, and therefore he regards people "in a different way", i.e. differently than many other people do. He underlines that he does not have any problem with anyone, whether that person is a Muslim or not. In his meaning perspectives, those who are true Muslims should not hate Jews, for example, because it is not the Jews who pose a problem to the Palestinians, but it is the Israelis. It is obvious that R6 forms his opinion by his values concerning religion, based on the thoughts expressed in the Quran³³, and that he builds his views upon them. Also R8 seems to build his values upon Islam, which has, it appears, given him certain ideas of how a human being should behave in society:

R8: [...]the human being, any place he lives is like his country, no matter if he lives in the deserts or anywhere he lives is his country, so if a person doesn't take care of his country, then that means there's no [inaudible] [laughter] [...] it's a country, the human wherever, wherever his life is he should get stability

A: that's nice, that's a nice idea

R8: even if he lives in the desert, he has to build the desert up, because there's his place, his life, [...] a human must be a builder, not a destroyer, not consumer

Again, R2, R3, R6, and R8 give words to the notion of the "good" citizen, as they believe that a human being has to do good deeds and be honest. In addition to that, the human should be tolerant towards other people, even if they do not share the same religion, and "be a builder", i.e. develop the society he or she lives in. Thus, these participant migrants' views can be interpreted as compatible to those democratic views that are embedded in the "good" citizen idea. Among other things, law-abidingness (honesty) and equality are the values which seem to guide these adult migrants in their new life in Sweden.

Something else which can be assumed to fit with the notion of the "good" citizen is R8's meaning, which is grounded on his values connected with religion, and which encourages him to be open, and to treat other people well:

A: do you think that someone who's a fundamentalist makes integration more difficult?

R8: no, it doesn't have to do with this, because I myself am religious, I fast and pray, but without a beard, and I don't have any difficulty with life here[...]because a human has to, even religion itself, has to understand religion correctly, the "religion depends on inner will, not insistence", the most important part in religion is the relationships with people, religion is treatment, it's treatment, it's no use if I'm very religious and my neighbours hate me

A: [laughter]

³³ The Quran is the Muslims' holy book.

R8: ya, or a person who's isolated, away from people, this isn't religiousness, this is not religiousness, because nobody accepts it,

A: right, right

The respondent continues talking about the negative understanding of religion whom some people have, and says:

R8: there's no religion that accepts it, the human being, from the first time he begins with religion, religion is treatment, it doesn't matter what religion it is[...]The prophet (Mohammed), peace be upon him, said "Whenever religion stepped into something, it repaired it"[...]so friendship and religion and good talk can repair (solve) any problem in the world [...]

In this excerpt, the respondent has put his finger on several issues, but, first and foremost, he reasons by the values of tolerance and openness, which he implies are founded on his meaning perspectives. In his point of view, to be a true Muslim does not include to shut oneself in, just to avoid the risk of getting involved in problems in the outside world, which could pose a threat to one's faith. On the contrary, R8 says that the most important part of religion is the social relationships, and to treat others well. Otherwise, he implies, one is not a true Muslim. He also says that he does not have a difficulty with living in Sweden. This can be interpreted as that having values connected to Islam does not hinder one's *etablering* or engagement in society. Rather, according to the respondent, these values may promote *etablering*, in that they encourage the Muslim to be friendly, and solve conflicts that arise with "good talk". This, R8 asserts, is what the prophet Mohammed has said himself. Further, R8 implies that those who make trouble because of their religion, have understood it wrong. By religion not being dependent on insistence, the respondent presumably refers to the view that a human has to be convinced of what his or her values concerning religion stand for, not regard religion in a literal sense, and not follow it blindly. Otherwise, one's values concerning religion tend to become fundamentalistic, and thus hinder one's engagement in society. An illustration of not following religion blindly can be discerned in the following short excerpt, where the participant says that one cannot only rely on God, but that one has to be active oneself, if one wants to accomplish something:

R5: we have to try, not only rely on God, but also try to make us a good life etc. Prayer alone doesn't do anything, it says "try, my worshipper, and I'll try with you" (an Arabic saying). [laughter]

A: [laughter] that's right

R5: we have to be active too

To be active in, for example, one's search for an employment is highly valued in today's Swedish society, and therefore, being active is another thing that is preferred if a newly arrived migrant wants to fit in the idea of a "good" citizen. R5, who is a Christian, suggests that the individual follows God's advice to his worshippers that they should make their best and try. This, the respondent says, means being active, and not passively wait for God's help.

In all the above respondents' statements, there is an interpretation that their *etablering* may be facilitated by their values linked with religion, and the meanings they make through these, since these values encourage them to live up to the similar characteristics as the "good" citizen notion does. The adult migrants' reaction to the meaning giving that occurs during the introduction measures may also be based on their values connected with religion. The only exception from the agreement between several respondents' values connected with religion

and the characteristics of the “good” citizen notion is one of the respondent’s disregard of the gender equality value.

Summary

This section has shed light on the values which the participant newly arrived individuals connect to religion, which they have mostly gained from experiences prior to coming to Sweden, and how they react to the meaning giving of the “good” citizen by their values linked to religion. The mostly prevalent values among the migrants in this study, whether they are Muslim or Christian, are honesty, justness/righteousness, openness, equality, and tolerance. When someone accepts his or her destiny, and has fled from war in his or her country of origin, he or she is grateful to God that he or she has come to Sweden. Or, as is the case with R8, gratefulness to God may be a result of one’s present stable life situation.

As can be seen, most of the migrants’ values concerning religion make a promoting contribution to their *etablering*, and help them see things in a way that makes them optimistic about their future in Sweden. For instance, the view R6 has is that every human is a Muslim, and that he, therefore, should treat everybody the same, by e.g. showing them and their different values respect. This view seems to have influenced his meaning perspectives, and made them more open towards other people’s perspectives, something which may open up opportunities for him, both in the labour- and housing market, and thus promote his *etablering*.

Concluding analysis

The focus of this chapter has been to describe what in the newly arrived migrants’ present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants’ meaning making in the Swedish society, as concerns employment, language and values. More specifically, the meaning making which regards values has been studied and analysed. In addition, there has also been a focus of how the migrants’ meaning making is expressed, in the light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives. In the TL theory, values are included in the migrants’ meaning perspectives, which may, in turn, originate from previous and new experiences, where the previous are seen as those experiences which, for instance, may have derived from the individual’s socialization. Even if meaning perspectives of newly arrived adults have been touched in previous chapters, the discussion and analysis of them has been more developed in this chapter, through a detailed analysis of the respondents’ expressions of the values which concern childrearing and religion, which could be said to represent parts of the respondents’ meaning perspectives.

The values that have been most dominating in the respondents’ statements are those that concern childrearing, and religion. It can be concluded that values give rise to different levels of resistance and readiness towards the idea of the “good” citizen, although sometimes, the respondents’ statements imply that their values influence how they make a meaning which goes in line with the meaning giving of the policy documents. In this section, the ways resistance and readiness manifest themselves will be further discussed, as concerns childrearing, since this issue seems to be the most determining issue when it comes to being prepared to establish in the new society, according to the way policy documents aim at.

Regarding childrearing, the meaning variation of difficulties is dominating among the newly arrived individuals, which may be manifested in a resistance towards childrearing values that are considered as Swedish, and thus towards parts of the democratic values. One main conclusion that has been drawn is that the influence of the experiences which concern childrearing in Sweden have resulted in the migrant parents' fear as concerns their children's upbringing and future in the new society. This fear is based on the meaning they have made that the Swedish social services have a power to decide over their child's future and well-being. The consequence of migrants' fear of losing their children in different ways, from what the empirical data show, is distrust towards Swedes and the Swedish society. The fear is both based on the newly arrived individuals' meaning perspectives, which include their values, and their new experiences in Sweden.

As the empirical data show, several of the participant parents are strongly dissatisfied with the authorities' construction of their children's needs, and what is best for them, and therefore the parents tend to distrust the authorities. Further, according to most of the studied parents' meaning, they need to be given more space, and to take part in the solutions or decisions which concern their children. In other words, the social services (child welfare authorities) need to collaborate with the migrant parents, according to some respondent parents. Also teachers in the Swedish school, it is implied, need to take care not to "intrude" on young migrant students' meaning perspectives as regards, for instance, religion.

It is clear that the feelings of distrust and fear are interrelated, in that some participant parents imply that they would trust society more, if they got the opportunity to influence their children's upbringing the way they wish. Also previous research (e.g. Dumbrell, 2008), shows that the authorities should collaborate with the migrant parents, and that the latter need to be given space both to understand the unfamiliar values which differ from their own, and to partake in the measures regarding their children's well-being. In other words, there should be a dialogue between migrant parents and the child welfare authorities, before any decision is made about a child's life. Thus, if the migrant parent would be given more space to influence his or her child's life, there is reason to assume that his or her fear may be reduced or vanish, according to some participant parents, and, consequently, his or her trust in society would increase. According to the Act by which youth can be taken into custody (*Lagen om vård av unga*), 1§, "measurements within the social services for children and youth shall be done in agreement with the young and his or her custodial parents, according to the regulations in the Social Services Act (*Socialtjänstlagen*)" (The Swedish Government Offices, the Swedish statute book, SFS1990:52). Although there is a regulation which makes it possible for the Swedish social services to immediately take a child or a juvenile into custody, according to 6§ of the Act above, it is an exception which can only be realized if, for instance, "the court's decision about custody cannot be awaited, considering the risk of the young's health or development" (The Swedish Government Offices, *Ibid.*). Therefore, it could be presumed that the mentioned dialogue with the parents already occurs in reality, but, since there are newly arrived migrants who have obviously not made this meaning, the question arises of the reason for the absence of this meaning. What can the reason or reasons be for some migrant parents' fear that the Swedish social services will take their child away from them, as soon as they discover that the parent has hit his or her child? One supposition is that when the newly arrived migrants get informed at the CO course about the Swedish prohibition against corporal punishment, the course tutors might not have time or space to explain the details of this law, and therefore, the migrant adults might draw the conclusion that the social services act very quickly when it comes to a hit child. Another possible explanation to the fear is what can be defined as rumours from "old" migrants about hitting children in Sweden, and its

devastating consequences. A few of the studied migrant parents have brought up the “forewarning” they have got from “old” migrants.

From what the newly arrived individuals express, there is no doubt about whether one should follow the Swedish laws and respect the Swedish values³⁴ if one lives in Sweden. The problem arises, however, when certain laws or values, for instance as concern child welfare, are directly contrary to certain meaning perspectives of individuals. In such cases, the question of whose meaning perspectives, which contain that person’s values, should be regarded as more valid is not easy to decide. Even if it is clear to the respondents of this study that the law stands above everything, it is far from clear that the state authorities’ interference in family life of newly arrived migrants always brings outcomes which the families involved find suitable for them, as the empirical data give reason to suspect. The migrant parents think that one, obviously, must dissociate oneself from, for instance, corporal punishment, but they express that, when it comes to newly arrived parents’ style of parenting, the Swedish child welfare services should consider the parents’ motives and background, before they jump into hasty conclusions about a migrant’s suitability as parent.

The idea of the “good” parent coincides with the notion of the “good” citizen, in that a “good” parent allows and encourages his or her children’s individuality and freedom. As the empirical data has shown, some participant parents have made the meaning that their children, who are already brought up by a strict upbringing in the home country, will be lost between two kinds of upbringing in Sweden, and thus will not become “good” human beings. According to Garcia Coll and Pachter (2002), who get support from other researchers in the field of parenting, there are certain aspects of parenting behaviours, such as, for instance, the authoritative style of parents, which can have positive effects for some ethnic and minority groups, but not for others. Can this mean that there is a possibility that Swedish parenting styles³⁵ might not suit all children who are already brought up by another parenting style in their country of origin, prior to migration? A paradox in the childrearing context seems to be that some of the present study’s migrant parents’ meaning of the “good” human or citizen clashes with the meaning the Swedish *etablering* policy makes of the same, even if the migrant parents’ purpose is similar.

Viewing the matter from another angle, some migrant parents’ fear as concerns their children is not only the result of their meaning that the Swedish authorities ignore their needs and wishes, but can also stem from those of the parents’ meaning perspectives which are different from the ones prevalent in the new society. This reason for the fear, as has been clear in the findings, originates in that the parents wish to distant themselves from the Swedish traditions and customs which they fear will change their children’s meaning perspectives. Thus, the fear of Swedish traditions etc. might pose a threat to the idea of the “good” citizen, since it might

³⁴ Here, there is no problematization made on whether we could assert that there are, in fact, any values which could be defined as Swedish or not. Values should not be associated with a specific national group or the like, but since the CO course mediates such a picture, and since the newly arrived migrants themselves use this definition of values, it is not questioned in this chapter. The “Swedish” values, as is also shown in previous chapters, are perceived by the newly arrived migrants as being, for example, democracy, equality, freedom, and individuality.

³⁵ Here, the intention is not to say that all Swedish parents have the same parenting style, or that we could point out a specific parenting style and assert that it is Swedish. Rather, it is meant that the parenting in Sweden is based on the individualistic approach which is prevalent in many Western countries, and which, for instance, includes encouraging the child to be independent from the beginning of its life.

hinder, or at least affect, participation in society, the way the Swedish policy documents have advocated. It should be pointed out that there are also migrant parents who do not have the fear of Swedish traditions, or Swedish ways of raising children, but who, rather, make the meaning that it is good for their children to be among Swedes. One example of this readiness towards Swedish society is expressed by R6, who makes it clear that he has deliberately chosen to live in a Swedish dominated small town, to give his children the opportunity of participating in society.

As the analysis above has shown, when connected with childrearing, the values concerning religion tend to be a part of the meaning which may be interpreted as hindering for *etablering*. Nevertheless, those of the migrants' values linked with religion, which are not mentioned in connection with childrearing, tend to prepare for the meanings of slight difficulties or easiness, in relation to the meaning giving. Much of the respondents' meaning which is based on their values concerning religion appears to deal with being grateful of their new life situation, and can thus facilitate their *etablering* in the new society. Several of the values connected with religion could be regarded as democratic, or "Swedish" values, and thus parallel the policy documents' notion of the "good" citizen. As described above, examples of the values linked with religion are honesty (which could be related to law-abidingness), equality, and tolerance. These values may be important for the newly arrived individuals' *etablering* in society. Further, there are expressions of the wish to feel a belonging to the Swedish society, and devote oneself to it, something which can be linked to the *etablering* idea presented in policy documents, where, for instance, there is a wish that newly arrived adults experience a social cohesion with their new co-citizens. However, as concerns gender equality, there appears to be a displacement in some respondents' equality view, in that they think equality between individuals being very important, but give an expression of certain exceptions to this value, which could be interpreted as that they think it acceptable with gender inequality, as regards providing housing, or earning one's living, which could be shouldered by men. Therefore, there is a paradox here. The apparent disregard of the gender equality value of some newly arrived respondents might pose a problem for their *etablering*, as they might come in touch with circumstances in the Swedish society, when their disregard clashes with the prevalent aim of gender equality in every field of society, such as the labour market, where there is an aspiration for gender equality in Sweden. For instance, a situation might arise, where a husband does not think it necessary for his wife to work in Sweden, since he himself can work and earn his family's living.

The role of several respondents' values connected with religion for their meaning of slight difficulties and easiness in relation to the meaning giving of the "good" citizen idea can also be explained by the research that has shown that religion may ease the disorienting dilemma of being a migrant in a foreign society. For instance, Kivisto (2014) writes that "[...]the idea of religion as refuge is rooted in the view seen in Thomas, Handlin, Herberg, and others that immigration is an inherently disorienting, alienating experience. Religion, to the extent that it can provide refuge for immigrants, helps to overcome that experience" (p.54). One may suggest that the well-being that emanates from one's values concerning religion may indirectly facilitate the process of *etablering*.

Chapter 9: The experiences, meaning making and learning of adult migrants

In this chapter, I will show how the empirical results can be understood in light of the transformative learning process, as it is described in the theoretical models of Mezirow (e.g. 1991) and Merriam and Heuer (1996). The research question that will be answered is “What learning can be discerned in the newly arrived migrants, as a result of their meaning making?”. According to my interpretation, as regards the TL, meaning making plays a central role in learning. Thus, it is not only the outcome of the transformative learning process, but rather the meaning making which is important when looking at adult learning.

The chapter starts with a description of Mezirow’s 10-stage TL process, where there will be examples from the empirical data of some of the stages which are discerned there. After that, this 10-stage process will function as a foundation for looking more deeply into the meaning making phenomenon, to see what learning this meaning making may generate. For the purpose of this deep analysis of the meaning making phenomenon, I have compared Mezirow’s TL process (Ibid.) with the adult learning process of Merriam and Heuer (1996), and have then modified Merriam and Heuer’s learning model. The reason for this modification on my part was that the learning model was not enough to help explain my empirical findings. The modified model makes it clearer what kind of learning can be discerned in the adult migrants.

Mezirow’s TL process and its implementation on empirical data

As Mezirow (e.g.2007; 2000) has illustrated, the transformative learning process consists of several phases. However, in his later works, Mezirow has not stressed the importance of an individual’s experiencing all these phases to be able to reach a transformation of meaning perspective. The 10 stages of the transformation process are as follows:

1. a disorienting dilemma
2. self-examination with feelings of anger, guilt, fear or shame
3. a critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions
4. recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared, and that others have negotiated a similar change
5. exploration of options for new roles, relationships and action
6. planning a course of action
7. acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plans
8. provisional trying of new roles
9. building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships
10. a reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective (Mezirow, 2000, p.22; Kitchenham, 2008, p.105).

As concerns stage one (disorienting dilemma), it is rather obvious that many of the newly arrived adults experience it. For instance, regarding material things, the loss of an individual’s work or house can trigger the dilemma. When it comes to non-material things, the loss of one’s family members or network of friends in the country of origin can be very painful, as several of the participants have mentioned in earlier chapters. Often, it has turned out, newly arrived migrants who have been forced to migrate experience a loss of both material and non-material things, and this makes the dilemma clear. In addition, the disorienting dilemma comprises, among other things, the pressure of learning the Swedish language, and a fear of

the new values' and habits' influence on the children, which too could affect new meaning making. As seen from the findings in Chapter Eight, a disorienting dilemma might arise due to a clash between what is experienced as two kinds of child rearing approaches, where one is the "Arabic" and the other is the "Swedish" approaches.

In more recent research, it is found that the character of the disorienting dilemma is more like a cumulative process, than a singular significant experience. It could last up to five years (Taylor, 2000). Further, Magro and Polyzoi (2009) have found that adult migrants may experience multiple disorienting dilemmas due to their migration process, which they need time to deal with. In the case of the newly arrived adults of the present study, the disorienting dilemma seems to be prolonged, as, for instance, trust of Swedish authorities, such as the SPES, may take time to build up, and it can take time to overcome the fear that might exist.

When it comes to stage two (self-examination), according to participants' statements, there seems to be an anger about the changed life situation. For instance, one was optimistic in life prior to the migration, but has adopted a pessimistic view of life after arriving in Sweden. One reason for this change is said to be the migrant's shock over the way things really are in Sweden, regarding employment etc. Also fear can be discerned in many participants' statements. There are different reasons for this fear among the individuals, where some fear losing their identity, due to, for example, learning Swedish, and others fear losing their children, in various ways.

When it comes to stage three (critical assessment), some respondents express a critical assessment, i.e. a critical reflection on their sociocultural³⁶ meaning perspectives. These respondents tend to react to their new experiences in Swedish society with both readiness and resistance, and make the meaning of having slight difficulties in society. They may be ready to adopt egalitarian values or those affirming individual freedoms that are prevalent in the new society, while they at the same time may be cautious regarding views on childrearing which may exist.

Further, stages five (exploration of options for new roles) and six (planning a course of action) of the TL process can be discerned in some respondents, for example in R6, who has changed his thinking entirely regarding what career he should go for, and R10, who seriously considers studying to become a preschool teacher, after having worked as an engineer in her home country for more than 20 years. These two participants can be considered to have started heading for new roles and action. One can suppose that they have reached stage seven (acquisition of knowledge for implementing one's plans) as well, since they have both started specific studies to be able to acquire new knowledge which leads them to their new professional goals.

Adult individuals do not necessarily need to go through all the stages of the TL process to experience meaning perspective transformation (Mezirow 2007; Kitchenham, 2008), but it is rather clear from the empirical data that those adult migrants who go through several of the stages tend to be those who make the meaning of easiness³⁷ in their new life situation, or

³⁶ Here, neither Mezirow (e.g.1991) nor I refer to sociocultural theory when talking about sociocultural meaning perspectives or assumptions. Rather, Mezirow refers to all the assumptions that have to do with our social, cultural or religious norms, or philosophical reasoning (Ibid.)

³⁷ Here, as has been explained in Chapter Six, the names for the meaning variations are analytical categories, and should not be regarded in the traditional sense. When saying that a meaning variation is easiness, it means that

imply that there are only slight difficulties in Sweden, in relation to embracing the goals of the “good” citizen idea, if they themselves make some changes in their lives, and adjust themselves, and sometimes also their thinking to their new life situation. For instance, in Chapter Eight, there are several participants who express a will to adjust certain aspects of their meaning perspectives as concerns religion to certain Swedish habits, such as handshaking between men and women, and the kind of scanty clothing that may be a characteristic of Swedes’ dress, from a general point of view.

The criticism that could be levelled against Mezirows thoughts about “the democratic citizen”, which is one of the purposes of the TL theory, is that transformative learning may lead to normativity, and the reasoning that there is one “truth” out there to be grasped, by transforming one’s meaning perspectives. This reasoning goes against the social constructionist perspective, since, according to this perspective, it is not possible to say that there is one “truth” which is given for all humans, but rather that human beings construct their own “truths”. Therefore, one can maintain that Mezirow (e.g. 1991; 2000) contradicts himself when implying that the TL theory is based on social constructionism. In addition, the normativity of the TL theory, as shown earlier in this chapter, lies in that there is one kind of critical reflection which is assumed to be the “right” one, i.e. which leads to transformed meaning perspectives. This is the critical reflection which an individual directs at his or her own present meaning perspectives, and not the kind of critical reflection which one can direct at meaning perspectives that others or society try to force on the individual. Thus, there seems to be one kind of reflection which is regarded in the TL theory as the most acceptable.

Linked to this is the matter of meaning giving, which, as has been shown in the empirical material, has not been possible to explain using the TL theory, as the focus of the theory is the meaning making of individuals, and, therefore, the theory has had its limitations for the analysis as well. The TL theory focuses mostly on the individual’s “changed cognitive capacities” (Fejes, 2016, p.144), while the findings of the present study show that, since meaning giving occurs during the introduction period, one can suggest that the newly arrived adults’ transformation is not only individually determined, but is also a result of different meaning giving which the newly arrived adult might experience, for instance from policy documents, via the introduction measures, or from “old” migrants. Meaning giving also touches upon the issues of power and the democratic citizen, as it brings to the fore the question of whose views or meaning perspectives have preference over whose, and whose views should be regarded as democratic. Mezirow appears to avoid this controversy by pointing out that those meanings that are collectively made, through critical dialogue with others, and which have led to consensus, should be the ones to regard as democratic. This is implicitly understood by Mezirow’s reasoning (e.g. 1991).

In the next section, the 10-stage transformative learning process will be developed using a modified model of Merriam and Heuer (1996), since this modified model presents a more tangible picture of the meaning making and learning process, and makes the present study’s

the migrants have made the meaning that there are things and experiences in the new society which facilitate achieving the goals of the “good” citizen idea, which, as the data have shown, also may coincide with the migrant individual’s own goals or plans for the future. Further, when the migrants make the meaning of slight difficulties, they regard their new life situation as giving them both opportunities and obstacles to reach the goals of the “good” citizen notion. And finally, when the meaning of difficulties is made, the adults think that things or experiences in the new society obstruct reaching the “good” citizen goals, in different ways.

empirical findings more just. Further, it shows what processes might be considered when analysing and attempting to understand a central part of adult migrants’ learning.

A modified adult learning model and its implementation on empirical data

Below, the original meaning making and learning model of Merriam and Heuer’s (1996) is shown. The way I have interpreted it, Merriam and Heuer’s model takes up the same transformative learning as Mezirow showed in his 10-stage process, and separates it from other kinds of learning, which does not lead to TL. The only obvious difference is that Merriam and Heuer (1996) do not mention many stages in the meaning making and learning process.

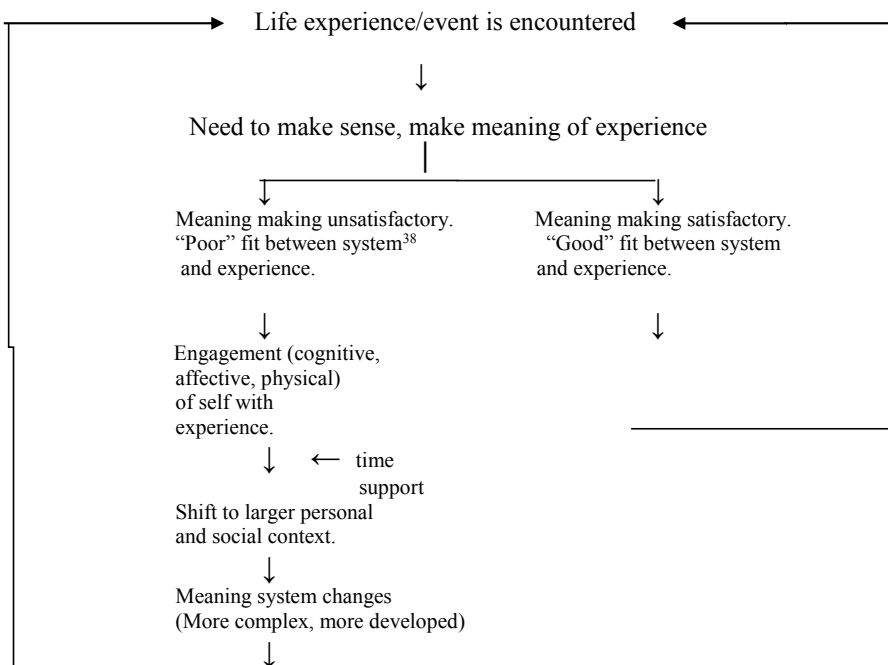


Figure 2 – the original model of the meaning making and learning process (Merriam & Heuer, 1996).

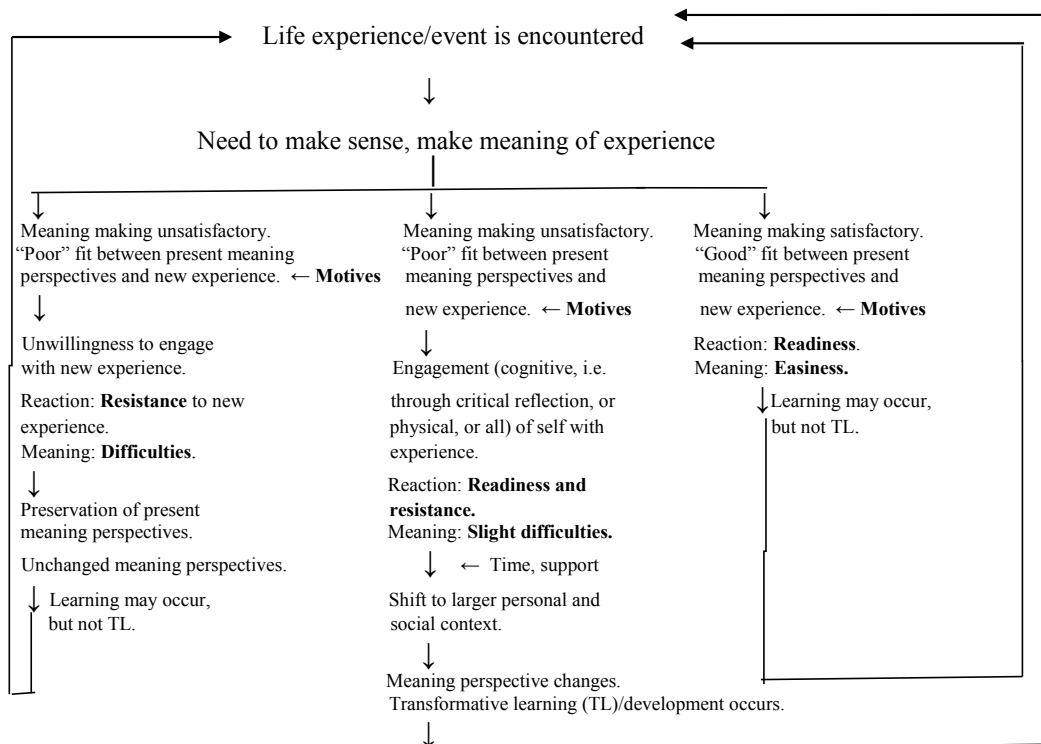
The modified adult learning model below can be considered as a development of Mezirow’s 10-stage TL process and Merriam and Heuer’s learning model, as it considers resistance and readiness distinctly and as central parts of the meaning making and learning process. Also the aspect of adults’ motives has not been brought up by these three theorists, something which has been added to the model as well, since the findings indicate the existence of this aspect in adult migrants’ meaning making. In the coming section, each of the meaning variations

³⁸ Merriam & Heuer (1996) place *system* and *meaning system* on a par with *meaning perspectives*.

difficulties, slight difficulties and easiness will be described, by applying examples from the empirical data to them, to concretize the variations and make them easier to understand.³⁹

Meaning making and learning

There are three kinds of meaning variations involved in the newly arrived individuals' meaning making, which seem to be connected with the individuals' reactions of readiness and resistance. Both the reactions and the three meaning variations should be seen in relation to the meaning perspective of the "good" citizen, since the migrants' experiences are often made in such contexts that constitute expressions of the "good" citizen perspective. In this section, each of the columns of the meaning making and learning model will be represented by each of the three meaning variations. Here, the reactions of readiness and resistance will first be explained in short. After that, a concretization of the learning model will be performed, to facilitate the understanding of it, by showing one example from the data of each meaning variation in the separate column headings further below. As the modified model shows, meaning making, and the learning process is also influenced by individuals' motives, besides those other factors or aspects that are defined in the model. The essential aspects of the model are those in boldface.



³⁹ Difficulties, slight difficulties and easiness are not meanings in themselves, but they rather constitute the frames, so to speak, for the migrants' meanings, and permeate the migrants' meaning making. However, for the sake of simplicity, they are referred to as "meanings" here.

Figure 3 (previous page) – The meaning making- and learning process. (Adapted from Merriam & Heuer, 1996, p.252, and freely based on Mezirow, e.g. 1991, and Schutz, 1967).

Readiness and resistance

After the newly arrived individual has experienced something new in Swedish society, and depending on what motives he or she has, he or she seems to react with either readiness, resistance, or with both readiness and resistance towards the new experience. I have interpreted the migrants' reactions to their experiences as also being expressions of reactions to the "good" citizen idea, or to the "means" aimed at achieving this goal. The reason for this interpretation is that most of those experiences which the migrant respondents mention can be connected to different kinds of introduction measures, which are based on the notion of the "good" citizen.

Left column – the example of childrearing

In the first vertical column on the left, even if there is no satisfactory understanding of the new experience, when the individual tries to interpret it using his or her present meaning perspectives, he or she does not become engaged critically with the new experience, i.e. does not think critically about his or her present meaning perspectives, to be able to understand the new experience. The reason may be that this individual is satisfied with his or her present meaning perspectives, and does not desire to change them. The reason for not engaging critically with the new experience may also be connected with other motives the individual in question has. The migrant chooses to preserve his or her present meaning perspectives. Therefore, learning, in the deep sense, i.e. through changed meaning perspectives, does not occur. The individual only "acquires" new information about the new experience, which includes the same superficial kind of phenomena that are also seen in the column three process.

Example: As regards childrearing, the migrant parent experiences child independency and freedom in Swedish society. He or she then needs to make meaning, i.e. understand, this new experience. Since his or her meaning perspectives with regard to raising children does not fit the new experience, the parent makes the meaning of difficulties concerning the experience, and therefore he or she resists the values underlying the experience. As a consequence, the parent does not change his or her meaning perspectives, even if he or she has learnt something about the prevalent "Swedish" values concerning childrearing.

Here, a disorienting dilemma appears to occur for the newly arrived parent during the first "stage" of the meaning making process, i.e. when he or she discovers that his or her present meaning perspectives clash with the new experience. As some migrant parents have implied that the Swedish authorities does not like them to raise their children according to the childrearing methods in their home countries, the parents feel a distrust towards the Swedish society as concerns just childrearing. A question arises as to whether greater consideration for migrant parents' meaning perspectives regarding childrearing on the part of the Swedish authorities would mitigate the effect of the disorienting dilemma and lead to a faster *etablering*, based on, for example, trust.

Considering this left column process, there is reason for suggesting that it is possible to make meaning without reflecting on one's experiences. Meaning making without reflection leads, it can be presumed, to a kind of learning that does not change the person's meaning perspectives or actions. As the newly arrived migrant's present meaning perspectives might not sufficiently

facilitate his or her new meaning making, to achieve the goals of the “good” citizen idea, the individual makes the meaning of difficulties.

Middle column – the example of employment

In the second column, the new experience is interpreted by the individual’s present meaning perspectives. Since the migrant feels that he or she cannot make new meaning by the present perspectives, and as he or she has certain motives, the migrant reflects critically on the present perspectives, based on the new experience, or the information received about the new experience. The individual’s present meaning perspectives get changed, due to the outcome of his or her critical reflection, which means that transformative learning has occurred. As Merriam and Heuer (1996) assert, before transformative learning can occur, the learner needs to have time and support, two factors that vary, depending on individual variations. Here, the question can be asked whether it is sufficient for all newly arrived migrants to have two years of introduction, before they are expected to participate fully in the Swedish society. Further, the authors underline that another key element in the meaning making and learning process “is being able to shift focus from dwelling on the experience or event itself, to situating it in a larger personal and social context” (Ibid., p.251). According to Mezirow (e.g. 1991), this stage of learning also includes acting upon the new experience, i.e. acting according to the new meaning perspective which is acquired from the new experience.

The newly arrived individual experiences the Swedish labour market as different than the one in the home country. For example, R6 is an economist, and he makes the meaning that economists are not needed in the new society, so there is a “poor” fit between his present meaning perspectives and the new experience. After some critical reflection on the new experience of the Swedish labour market, the migrant reaches the conclusion that he has to adjust to the new life situation, to be able to obtain employment in Sweden. While he resists the new experience, since he is already an economist and could have continued working with economy in Sweden, if there had been a need for people with this profession, he is also open towards the idea of changing his career, and studying anew, to obtain such professional competence that he sees is needed in society, such as engineering competence. Thus, this migrant has shifted his context to a larger social one, and has changed, or is on his way to changing his meaning perspective as regards his professional life.

The outcome of making meaning through critical reflection seems to pave the way for changed meaning perspectives, which may facilitate meaning making and *etabliering* in the new society. As Mezirow (e.g. 2000) explains, changed meaning perspectives through critical reflection may facilitate an individual’s democratic thinking and acting. Those adult migrants who take up this position of critical reflection tend to make the meaning of having slight difficulties in Sweden, in terms of reaching the goal of the “good” citizen idea.

Right column – the example of individual freedom

And, finally, in the column to the right, meaning making takes place through the individual’s present meaning perspectives, as these fit the new experience, and thus are sufficient to “explain” the new experience, so that the individual understands it. In addition, the new experience suits the individual’s motives. Transformative learning does not occur, except the kind of learning that may be included in the new information which is embedded in the new experience. This information can consist of, for instance, numbers or other phenomena which one does not have to think further about, in order to make meaning.

Example: a male adult migrant experiences that Swedes can dress however they want outside the home, and at the gym. According to his meaning perspectives regarding religion, he knows that one has to be tolerant towards other people, and that he can keep his way of dressing, at the same time as he should accept that others might have other ways of dressing. Here, there is a “good” fit between his present meaning perspectives and the new experience in Swedish society. Therefore, the migrant is ready for the new experience, and does not see any problems concerning it. His present meaning perspectives do not have to change for him to understand the new experience. In this context, values that, according to my interpretation, are connected with religion, tend to open up individuals’ meaning perspectives, and may thus promote *etablering* in the new society.

Those newly arrived migrants whose meaning perspectives are sufficient to help them understand their new experiences in Sweden seem to make the meaning of easiness in their new life situation.

Concluding analysis

The aim of this chapter has been to answer the research question of what learning can be discerned in the newly arrived migrants, as a result of their meaning making. As has been accounted for, there are stages in Mezirow’s TL process which can be discerned in some newly arrived adults, for instance the first three stages, and the seventh stage. There are also data which show that the modified meaning making and learning model of Merriam and Heuer (1996) can be applied to newly arrived migrants’ meaning making and learning, since the three processes of the model can be seen to take place among the newly arrived individuals. However, there are some deviations from this learning model, which will be shown further below in this section. In addition, there are variations of meaning which exist alongside of the three processes – difficulties, slight difficulties, and easiness. The final modified model can be seen as a deepening of the 10-stage model, and as generating a certain development of it and of Merriam and Heuer’s model, considering, for example, that these theorists do not talk explicitly about resistance to new meaning perspectives or experiences.

An application of the empirical data from the results shown in Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight to the theoretical model of meaning making and learning unmask that migrants’ meaning making in their new society can lead to a transformation of a specific meaning, or a transformation of several specific meanings of a certain phenomenon, such as childrearing or a value connected with religion. It is worth noting that there can be a variation of meaning in the same individual, as well as a variation in each of the three meaning variations, i.e. difficulties, slight difficulties, and easiness. It has also been clear that there are newly arrived migrants who seem to preserve their meaning perspectives, even if they encounter other meaning perspectives concerning different things in the Swedish society. Thus, there are individuals who change their meaning perspectives, and those who preserve their present meaning perspectives, even though these might not be compatible to the new experiences, or to the meaning giving in Sweden. Some migrants in the study both have new experiences which they make meaning of and learn from, and are open towards, such as shaking hands with everybody, irrespective of gender, and at the same time they have new experiences, or hear of values which they dissociate themselves from, such as the lack of morality. For example, one and the same individual seems to make two meanings; easiness and slight difficulties, which make him or her open towards change. Consequently, the three different

meaning variations should be regarded as variations in a continuum, rather than as fixed extremes.

The reasons for the different variations of meaning among the newly arrived adults are numerous. First, those who make the meaning of difficulties in their new society react with resistance towards the new experiences they make, and the meaning they are given. This resistance can be based on different grounds. For instance, if the migrant is afraid of something he or she has not experienced before, such as utter freedom for youth, he or she might wish to dissociate him- or herself from it, by preserving present meaning perspectives. It is obvious that the migrants who make the meaning of difficulties in their new life situation do not reach transformative learning during their introduction period.

Second, those who make the meaning of slight difficulties seem to react with resistance towards some, and readiness towards other things they encounter. They also seem to have meaning perspectives which are “receptive” to new experiences or meaning giving. For instance, there are respondents who assert that they have always been open people, even in their home countries. Therefore, my conclusion is that the disorienting dilemma can be less painful and dramatic for those individuals who are open to new experiences and meanings than those who are not. This group of migrants differs from the other two groups, in that they seem to reflect critically on their present meaning perspectives and new experiences in Sweden, and are therefore able to re-evaluate or reassess their present meaning perspectives in light of their new experiences.

Third, those who make the meaning of easiness seem to share many of their meanings with the meanings represented in the “good” citizen notion. As seen from the data, it can be presumed that this group does not reach a transformative learning, since they do not undergo the same stages in the meaning making and learning process as those who experience slight difficulties. Thus, one conclusion gleaned from the empirical data is that the dominant type of meaning variation one has decides what kind of learning one reaches.

Furthermore, it has been clear that the kind of meaning which the newly arrived adults make during their introduction period affects their learning about how their new life should be lived, something which, in turn, may influence how they live up to the conception of the “good” citizen. For instance, there is a resistance or readiness towards the “good” citizen idea, depending upon which of the meaning variations that is dominant in an individual. The example of childrearing in Chapter Eight may illustrate the discrepancy between e.g. the meaning variation of difficulties and the idea of the “good” citizen. As several migrant parents fear the “good” citizen values of individual freedom and praise of children’s independency, among other things, they tend to distrust the Swedes and the Swedish society as regards these values and the ways by which childrearing is conducted. The values of the parents who feel the fear, clash with some parts of the “Swedish” meaning giving in terms of what a “good” parent, and thus a “good” citizen, is like. For example, rather than teaching the child independency, it appears that those of the studied migrant parents who express the meaning of difficulties, value teaching the child to have high moral standards.

The migrant respondents’ meaning variations can, according to the social constructionist perspective, be seen as constructions of their new experiences in Swedish society. In addition, the three meaning variations in the learning model can be seen as *ideal types*. The theory of ideal types originates with Max Weber, and is explained and referred to in Schutz (1967). Similar to the meaning variations I have constructed from my empirical data, ideal types are

constructions social scientists make of the people they observe, when trying to understand these peoples' behaviour. According to Schutz (Ibid.), "the social sciences can understand man in his everyday social life not as a living individual person with a unique consciousness, but only as a personal ideal type without duration or spontaneity" (p.241). Therefore, one should regard the different meaning variations as constructions, rather than as fixed and real categories. Nevertheless, although they are merely constructions, they are necessary for enabling me, as a social scientist, to understand how the newly arrived migrants of this study make meaning and learn, for, as Schutz implies, it is this constructing process which gives an understanding of any individual's meaning.

It is well known that the way we understand experience and objects in the world around us is subjective to each one of us (Schutz, 1967; Hacking, 1999; Crotty, 1998; Patton, 2002). Although this subjectivity of human learning is shown in the model of above, one cannot help but wonder why the social aspect of learning, which is clearly outlined in the social constructionist perspective (Schutz, 1967; Berger & Luckmann, 1966), is not included, as meaning making and learning appears to be mostly an individual enterprise, if one only considers the model here. In the TL theory, and the meaning making and learning model, the focus lies on the individual's meaning making. Thus, the role that social interaction may play for an individual's learning has been neglected. What if other people around a person, irrespective of this person's meaning, influence this person's meaning making to such an extent that he or she is hindered in his or her transformative learning? From the empirical findings, we have seen that there is a possibility for a meaning giving from e.g. other migrants, or the policy texts, through the introduction measures, to the newly arrived migrants.

The two models of meaning making and learning proposed by Mezirow and Merriam and Heuer describe transformative learning as a phenomenon which can only be reached through critical reflection on one's meaning perspectives. From the empirical material, it is shown that there are newly arrived migrants who do reflect over aspects of Swedish society, even if they do not transform or change their meaning perspectives on a certain issue, such as democracy. Therefore, it could be presumed, according to my interpretation, that the two meaning making and learning models fail to note the reverse critical reflection, i.e. the kind of reflection which does not lead to transformed meaning perspectives, but which can make the individual aware of the reason why he or she should preserve his or her meaning perspectives.

Further, one can conclude that those newly arrived adults who have mostly made the meaning of difficulties as concerns many things in the new society tend to be those who make the most resistance to its prevalent values, and thus to the idea of the "good" citizen. The resistance of those adult migrants who make the meaning of difficulties in their new life situation may also stem from the meaning giving which they may experience, either in the CO course, or at, for instance, the SPES, and which they react to. This meaning giving, as shown in Chapter Five and Chapter Six, deals with the policy documents' idea of the "good" citizen. And it could be the other way around, as the wish to live up to the "good" citizen idea is also implied through wishing to feel a belonging to Sweden and Swedes, which is expressed by several respondents (R6, R8, and R11). It is also expressed through the talk of wanting to protect and contribute to one's new home country's development.

Considering what is apparently the *etablering*-promoting effect of values concerning religion's role in their new life in Sweden on those of the participants who have such values, the TL theory seems to be a bit limited regarding these particular values. As I have interpreted

Mezirow, he thinks that, for instance, cultural canons, ideologies, and philosophical assumptions, where religious doctrines are included (Mezirow, 2000), tend to distort and limit the human being's meaning making. Therefore, he implies, we need to reflect critically on them, to change them to become more open and discriminating. As the data in the previous chapter have depicted, several respondents' values connected to religion rather open up these respondents' meaning perspectives, and trigger the individuals' critical reflection, something which thus makes the individuals ready towards a change in their meaning perspectives. Therefore, this kind of values appear to be the ground on which the individuals' readiness towards change is shaped.

Chapter 10: Concluding discussion - migrants' readiness and resistance in their new life situation

The focus of this thesis has been to find out what meaning newly arrived adult migrants make, where meaning making is seen as an important part of their learning process, and how they construct their new life situation in Swedish society during the two years' introduction period (after receiving a residence permit). The research questions which have been generated by this focus are:

- 1a. What is *etablering*, and how is it said to be achieved for newly arrived migrants, according to policy documents?
- b. How is the *etablering* conception manifested and discussed in the classroom of the CO course?
2. What in the newly arrived migrants' present meaning perspectives and new experiences influences the migrants' meaning making in Swedish society, as concerns employment, language and values?
- 3a. How is the newly arrived migrants' meaning making expressed, in light of their new experiences and present meaning perspectives?
- b. What learning can be discerned in the newly arrived migrants, as a result of their meaning making?

In this chapter, I will discuss those parts of the results which I find most interesting, with the help of the theoretical perspectives and previous research. The chapter starts with a summary of some of the results, followed by a discussion of these, and a discussion of the possible relationship between migrants' meaning making and learning, and *etablering*, which includes a brief discussion of the pace for a possible *etablering*. After that, there will be a discussion of the methods used. The chapter ends with some suggestions for future research.

After the brief overview of the results, the chapter will follow the same structure as the order of the empirical chapters, which means that it starts with the respondents' meaning of work, and ends with their meaning of values.

Overview of results

According to the studied Swedish policy documents for newly arrived migrants, the goal for newly arrived adults is *etablering*. This concept comprises three major aspects, which are self-support through employment, acquisition of the Swedish language, and democratic values. What is expressed in the reasoning behind the goal of *etablering* is the idea of the "good" citizen, someone who has certain characteristics, which are, roughly speaking, being independent (and defending individuality), free, egalitarian, secularized, law-abiding (which includes being honest), responsible for his or her life, and being a "good" parent. From what can be discerned in the policy documents, by engaging the newly arrived adults in the three main introduction measures, these adults are being shaped into or constructed as "good" Swedish citizens. These measures are the civic orientation course, Swedish for immigrants (SFI), and different kinds of work related activities, such as internships at various work places. The measures are compulsory for those newly arrived adults who have been given refugee status upon receiving a residence permit. Thus, to be able to receive a monthly

introduction benefit during the two years' introduction period, the migrants are obliged to attend and become engaged in the measures.

In this thesis, it has been argued that the "good" citizen agenda for the newly arrived adults can be interpreted as a kind of meaning giving from the policy documents to the newly arrived adults, i.e. that the policy documents provide for the migrant adults a meaning of what a citizen should be or act like. Below, the "good" citizen idea will be further elaborated upon and discussed, in light of the three introduction measures and the newly arrived individuals' reactions to them, which they have expressed when they have talked about their experiences in the new society and their meaning perspectives. There are three kinds of reactions identified in this thesis: readiness, readiness and resistance, and resistance. Thus, among the newly arrived migrants of this study, there are those who react with readiness, with both readiness and resistance, or with resistance to the meaning giving in Swedish society. This reaction, in turn, is connected to the individual's meaning variation of either easiness, slight difficulties, or difficulties. The difference between the reactions and the meaning variations is that a meaning variation is a construction (interpretation, or "picture") of a certain experience, whereas, for instance, readiness is a reaction to the experience itself.

The SPES and work

The SPES provides different kinds of work-related activities, such as internships, and support during an individual's search for employment. The findings show that this authority gives a specific meaning, composed of "prepackaged boxes", to the newly arrived adults. These are package offers, which are aimed at making the newly arrived migrants self-supporting as soon as possible after receiving a residence permit. At the same time, the "prepackaged boxes" are a unanimous meaning which the adult migrants have made of the SPES's measures and work. The adult migrants show resistance to the package offers and to what they have understood as the SPES's misrecognition of their former professional identity, and they have made the meaning that their former educational and occupational competence is being disregarded in the new society. This kind of misrecognition is also related in e.g. Kemuma (2000), where several adult migrants in her research study assert that their professional and educational background is not recognized in Sweden, a consequence of which is that the adults have to start all over again.

One reason why the package offers of the SPES lead to migrants' dissatisfaction and resistance is that they make the meaning that the SPES tries to construct their working life through the offers, and in that way tries to construct their professional identity. This also makes the migrants feel that they do not receive the support they need in trying to find suitable employment in Sweden. The package offers are connected with the notion of the "good" citizen, as they aim at making the newly arrived migrants self-supporting, and thus make the fulfilment of one part of the "good" citizen idea possible. As the data show, most of the respondents have made the meaning of difficulties as regards the SPES's activities and measures for them.

When scrutinizing the migrants' resistance to the SPES's activities, including the package offers, and their motives for obtaining employment and becoming self-supporting, it becomes rather obvious that their meaning of difficulties in the context of SPES is not a rejection of the idea of the "good" citizen, but instead, the difficulties and resistance concern the "means" of living up to the "good" citizen goal, which are the different activities of SPES, including the package offers. Therefore, one can suggest that the migrants resist the *way* they are made to

live up to the “good” citizen. Several of the motives the adult migrants mention are compatible with the “good” citizen idea, such as becoming self-supporting, promoting one’s language skills, and contributing to Swedish society, things that may facilitate *etablering*. To make it clearer, the migrants of this study do not resist the idea of obtaining employment, but they do resist the methods or means which SPES employ to “make” the newly arrived individuals self-supporting. Thus, the conclusion could be drawn that there is a link between the notion of the “good” citizen and the newly arrived individuals, and that this link, in the context of the SPES and work, is the means of the SPES. To use the social constructionist word, the migrants and the policy documents have made the same construction of what a “good” citizen should be like, when it comes to employment and the labour market, since both parties have made the meaning of the “good” citizen as someone who is self-supporting and contributes to Swedish society. In a way, it is not unexpected that the construction of the “working” citizen is shared between the newly arrived adults and the policy documents, as we all live in an “intersubjective life-world”, which means that, in our natural (physical) and social world, we are affected by, and affect other people (Schutz & Luckmann, 1973; Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Much of human beings’ meaning perspectives are derived from historically shared meanings, which we have been exposed to through our socialization (Schutz, 1967; Schutz & Luckmann, 1973). Thus, it can be suggested that one such shared meaning is the meaning of work and doing something useful for oneself and others in society. This seems to be a universal feature in human beings, according to my interpretation. This leads to the suggestion that certain kinds of meanings are made in the same way, or, in Berger & Luckmann’s (Ibid.) sense, through habit-forming processes which become *institutionalized*. The institutionalization of the habit of work, in turn, can be related to our learning what a “good” human being and citizen should be like.

The package offers contradict the democratic value of giving the individual a choice, which is included in the “good” citizen notion, and thus, one can say that there is a problem in the means of finding employment that the SPES thrust upon the migrants. Therefore, it can be concluded that society, in the form of the SPES, is unable to deliver what the newly arrived migrants need in their new life situation, in order to establish themselves in Sweden. Judging from the migrant respondents’ utterances about their experiences with the SPES, this inability to choose leads to a distrust of the authority. Had the SPES recognized the migrants’ former competences, it might have resulted in the adult migrants’ trust in the SPES.

Many participants in this study express that they, either explicitly or implicitly, think about recognition, especially as concerns their educational or occupational background. For instance, they mention that Swedes should think about what the Swedish society has gained from the migrants, and not only think that the migrants can be an encumbrance. The lack of recognition of the participants’ former competence and skills could be linked with Taylor’s (1994) idea of recognition and misrecognition, where he connects respect with recognition, which he claims is necessary for humans. Taylor underscores that there could be a misrecognition, which shows, among other things, a lack of respect, and emphasizes that recognition “is a vital human need” (Ibid., p.26). According to Taylor (1994), all human beings have a basic need of recognition, because it is connected with the sense of identity, and who we are. Further, Heidegren (2009) implies that this need of recognition cannot be fulfilled by the human being alone, but has to be fulfilled through our social interaction with others. Honneth discusses social solidarity, which he thinks is based on the kind of recognition that makes an individual feel self-appreciation, as a result of doing things that other members of society regard as valuable (Heidegren, 2009). And, since respect and appreciation are two important ingredients in the concept of recognition, it could be suggested

that the newly arrived migrants need to feel and make the meaning that they are respected also for what they bring with them to Sweden, in order to feel a belonging to Swedish society. This is partly expressed by respondent R6, when he talks about his desire to be *respected*, and not only *accepted*, by Swedes. Therefore, it could be presumed that, if the newly arrived individuals make the meaning that the SPES recognizes their occupational or educational background and their needs, their trust in both themselves and society would probably also increase, something which is likely to facilitate *etablering*. Further, Fog Olwig (2011) emphasizes that for many migrant individuals, “when social recognition is lacking” in the host society, the extended family also becomes important as a social context to maintain one’s identity within (Ibid., p.193). This may give rise to the suggestion that some migrants’ attachment to their miniaturized communities, as described above, can also be explained by their meaning of a lack of recognition and respect from the larger society.

Learning Swedish

From what the adult migrants imply, the meaning of how great a role Swedish plays in one’s new life, and how important it is, therefore, to acquire the language, is also given in the CO course, apart from in the SFI course, which is provided by the municipal adult education schools (*Komvux*) in the municipalities of Sweden. In fact, several interview respondents who have attended the CO course quote the sentence which is written in the CO course material, which reads “the language is the key to society”. As Carlson (2002) shows, this expression has become somewhat of a mantra in Swedish society, and can be found both in school policy and at the SPES. The interview respondents’ own use of the expression indicates that the norm of the Swedish language, which prevails in Swedish society, is not questioned by the migrants. It seems as if the newly arrived migrants have convinced themselves of the meaning that acquiring Swedish is the only way of obtaining employment and being accepted in society (cp. Carlson, 2002). This conviction not only derives from the meaning the individuals are given from the policy documents, but is also a meaning they themselves seem to make. As an example, several respondents say that the lack of Swedish hinders *etablering*,⁴⁰ as limited Swedish proficiency most likely limits the contact and communication between them and native Swedes. The solution to this problem, according to two respondents, is to learn Swedish quickly, by moving out of the migrant dominated areas, and moving to Swedish dominated areas or small towns, where there is a majority of native Swedes.

In similarity to the reaction to the means of finding employment that is thrust upon the migrants by the SPES (see above), most respondents seem to react by resisting the means of achieving the language requirement of the “good” citizen goal, but make the meaning of easiness or slight difficulties as concerns the idea of learning the Swedish language as such. In other words, they do not resist the goal of learning the Swedish language, but the conditions for learning it. Thus, the link between the policy documents’ goal of the “good” citizen, and the newly arrived adult, seem to be the conditions for acquiring Swedish. The conditions, or means in this context, consist of the organization of SFI, and other conditions which are given for learning Swedish. Among other things, according to many adult migrants, it takes time to learn Swedish, something which makes several of them, especially the elderly, resist attending SFI-lessons, as they already have made a career and do not have enough motivation to learn an entirely new language. Worth noting is that Lindberg (2008), referring to The Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*), underscores that learners who have a distant mother tongue, such as Arabic or Somali, have a harder time reaching the goals for the SFI

⁴⁰ The respondents use the word *integration*.

course (Ibid.). Therefore, the conditions for learning Swedish, in the time frame, which consists of the introduction period of two years, do not provide the migrants with the right circumstances for acquiring Swedish. In addition, the organization of the SFI courses, according to the respondents, is not the most suitable, since most classes include a mixture of adult students at different language levels, or include students who have the same mother tongue, conditions which migrants describe as making language acquisition difficult. Thus, also as concerns acquiring Swedish, society, in the form of the introduction measures, appears unable to deliver what the migrants need in order to acquire Swedish skills, and facilitate their *etablering*.

Besides the resistance to the means of learning Swedish, some migrants' negative expectations of obtaining employment within their already acquired professional fields also lowers the motivation for learning Swedish. Thus, one could assert that there are also structural reasons for some migrants' resistance to learning Swedish.

Meaning making as concerns values

When it comes to the adult migrants' meaning of the values which are included in the policy documents' goal of the "good" citizen, their values concerning religion mostly make them ready to accept the "good" citizen notion, since there are several similarities between how these two sets of values are expressed. However, as concerns childrearing, several migrant parents in this study resist those "Swedish" values which are connected to childrearing, and which are included in the "good" citizen idea. Below, these values will be discussed in light of the CO course, as it is this course that appears to provide the newly arrived adults with an overview of "Swedish" values.

Religion

The importance of honesty and obeying the law in the democratic Swedish society are values that can be compared with several of the newly arrived migrants' statements about living by the right path (doing good deeds, and being honest and tolerant), which appear to be based on their meaning perspectives regarding religion. Some participants have implied that their values connected with religion have made them see their surrounding world in another way. For instance, there are expressions of tolerance towards other people, regardless of their religion.

Further, when it comes to equality between human beings, the migrant respondents say that they really appreciate and like the Swedish idea of equality, since it is also important from a religious point of view, and say that they have missed it in their countries of origin. However, for some respondents, the gender equality in Sweden, as concerns working and earning one's living, appears to be reserved for men. This is not expressed explicitly; rather, the respondents imply it when expressing their meaning of the important role of a man's employment. Throughout the interview, some male respondents imply that they wish to be the ones who support their wife and children financially. Here, one can suggest that it might be these male migrants' meaning perspectives, which they probably have been raised with, that have given them the idea that they, and not their wives, should support their families.

Childrearing

In the context of childrearing, there is no link between the goal of the “good” citizen, and the newly arrived migrants of this study. An exception might be the CO course tutors’ and the course material’s way of mediating the “good” citizen goal, since this can be seen as a means to reach the goal. The tutors and the material highlight the differences between what are regarded as “Swedish” values, and what are regarded as “Arabic”, or non-democratic values. Thus, it can be suggested that some part of the respondents’ resistance might be linked to their resistance to the way the “good” citizen is conveyed through the course.

Some migrants say that the childrearing values which are prevalent in Sweden are unacceptable, as they have made the meaning that it is not proper to give one’s child what they experience as “total freedom”, or encourage one’s child’s independency, especially if he or she has already experienced a part of their upbringing in the home country and thus is used to another kind of upbringing, which is grounded on other values. The reasons that have been brought up are, among others, that the child would be socially ruined and might get “lost” between two cultural contexts: the Swedish and the Arabic. This is said to lead to negative outcomes both for the family and the new society. Migrant parents’ resistance to the Swedish values concerning childrearing can be seen in light of the findings of the World Values Survey. In the cultural map of Inglehart-Welzel, found in this survey, Sweden stands out as the country with the most secular-rational, and self-expression values, which include an emphasis on the freedom of choice, gender equality, and personal independency (<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSContents.jsp>). There are thus not many countries where the “Swedish” values of e.g. gender equality and personal independency are recognized.

According to those respondents who have expressed this resistance, the childrearing values in Swedish society might bring about their distrust in Swedes and society, and make them want to “protect” their children against the Swedes, by choosing to live in housing areas where the migrants are in the majority. This way, the Swedes’ influence on the family would be reduced, according to some respondents. This can be compared to the phenomenon called *miniaturized communities*, which Lindström (2004) and Fukuyama (1999) describe, and which can be interpreted as closed communities, where the community members’ trust in fellow community members is greater than their trust in the larger society. As long as there are newly arrived adults who distrust Swedish society, there is a strong reason to believe that many of them will continue to live and operate in their closed communities in Sweden. This gives rise to the question of whether the resisting adult migrants are likely to get as established in society as is the goal, according to the Swedish policy documents, since adult migrants’ stronger feeling of connection to one’s “own” migrant group might undermine the aim of social cohesion which is described in the policy documents as playing an important role for *etablering*.

Whereas several respondents express a readiness for and an appreciation of individual freedom, there are some migrants who assert that there is too much freedom in the new society, i.e. that the freedom is unlimited, to the extent that children’s moral sense can be ruined by it, for instance when teenagers can come home late at night, and have extramarital sexual relationships with whomever they want. On the other hand, some respondents assert that Swedish freedom is positive for them, for instance as regards how they think and dress, and have made the meaning that freedom can also be good for the migrant children. Most of the respondents appear to regard what they describe as “Swedish” freedom as a phenomenon

which enables individuals to do and think what they want, or feel comfortable with (within the rule of law).

It has been shown that the values concerning religion alone result mostly in more open meaning perspectives, something which may facilitate *etablering*, because they, for instance, make the migrant individual grateful of his or her new life situation, as this situation has been predetermined by God, according to their meaning perspectives. The newly arrived migrants' values concerning religion may also ease their disorienting dilemma of being migrants in a foreign society. However, when connected with childrearing, the values linked with religion tend to be a part of the meaning which may be interpreted as hindering *etablering*, in that several parents seem to understand their children's meaning perspectives concerning religion as being threatened by the "Swedish" values of freedom and independency.

Summing-up

Although employment, self-support, and the Swedish language are also given meaning in the CO course, the emphasis is clearly placed on democratic values. A majority of the power-point slides which are presented during the sessions take up these values in one way or another. Thus, the focus of the meaning which is given to the adult migrants during the course is that of democratic values, and what a "good" citizen should be like, or how he or she should act in Swedish society. Although this course carries out the policy documents' purposes – more exactly, it activates the "good" citizen idea – it seems to do so by emphasizing the differences between "Swedish" values, which are described as the desirable ones, and the "Arabic" values, which are depicted as being less democratic. This way of mediating the "good" citizen idea appears to lead to many participants' resistance to some of the democratic values.

At the same time as the notion of the "good" citizen includes the values of free and independent human beings, it clashes with the introduction measures' construction of migrants' meanings. This may be one of the reasons why many of the interviewed participants in this study have described the CO course as merely an information course, without any deeper anchorage in the newly arrived individual's life. Indeed, the values that are mediated through the course aim at constructing the "good" citizen, something which several of the newly arrived individuals resist, because the adult individuals have made the meaning that their meaning perspectives should be altered to fit in with the "good" citizen idea. Thus, one interpretation of the "good" citizen notion is that there are assimilation⁴¹ mechanisms operating in Swedish society, even if that might not be a deliberate purpose of the policy documents. *Etablering* is the word used in the policy documents, but, according to the findings, it is actually a matter of assimilation. The meaning giving of the "good" citizen (including *etablering*) is an important issue for consideration, as one can ask the question whether the meaning should be given in a way that includes space for negotiation between the newly arrived adults and those behind the contents of the policy documents. What would happen to the *etablering* of the migrants, if they were given this space? Would the resistance to some of the democratic values vanish, or lessen?

⁴¹ Here, I use the definition of assimilation which entails the migrants' adopting the values and customs that are prevalent in their host country, which means that the migrants abandon those e.g. cultural values and customs which they have been socialized by in their countries of origin (cp. Fog Olwig, 2011).

It can be suggested that several of the factors related above concern the influence of the SPES on the adult migrants, creating a lack of trust in the SPES and Swedish society. For, in order to trust their new society, the newly arrived migrants need to participate in the construction of the “good” citizen, and in their own future, as concerns, among other things, their occupation in Sweden. This does not allow for any “prepackaged boxes”, with roles that are predetermined. An interesting observation is that, when it comes to *etablering* in the labour market, individuality and independency seem to be disregarded, but when it comes to values and *etablering* in other domains of the Swedish society, individuality and self-determination etc. are emphasized. Could it be that the contents of the policy texts are mostly implemented in an effort to shape people’s values, and that these values are a higher priority?

The notion of the “good” citizen might be linked to the Scandinavian welfare states’ notion of equality, which entails providing the necessary assistance to newly arrived migrants, in order for them to become equal members of society (Fog Olwig, 2011). However, it is clear that despite the good intentions, this kind of assistance is disadvantageous for the migrants, because it brings with it an intervention in the migrants’ private lives by professionals in the Scandinavian countries (Ibid.). This intervention can manifest itself in the policy documents’ construction of migrants’ identities, since, according to Fog Olwig (2011), the migrants are not supposed to be free to decide what values to maintain. The interesting thing is that the aim of the policy documents, carried out by the state-funded introduction measures, is recognized as a “good” aim by the present study’s migrants who criticize the measures. Many of the respondents express their gratitude towards the Swedish society for everything it has offered them, but assert that the good purposes have come out wrong.

One of the interesting things, according to my interpretation, is that there are similarities between the notion of the “good” citizen in the policy documents on migrants’ *etablering*, and the idea of the policy texts which regulate Swedish education. In the context of newly arrived migrants, there is a view that the migrant should take responsibility for his or her *etablering* in Swedish society: the migrant ought to be active, and responsible for his or her own future. This can be compared with what Sjöberg (2011) points out; she finds that since the individual is constructed as being free to shape his or her own future, he or she is also regarded as responsible for his or her own inclusion or exclusion, which, in Sjöberg’s research is in the educational system. Sjöberg (Ibid.) also underscores that one of the education policy documents’ main messages is that the student should be an active and productive citizen, which could be compatible with the “good” citizen notion of the policy documents concerning newly arrived migrants’ *etablering*. Fejes (2006) has studied Swedish policy texts on adult education and in similarity with Sjöberg (2011), concludes, that “the adult needs to be mobilised as a way of taking responsibility for his or her own life [...]. In this way, an autonomous, self-governing individual is constructed” (Fejes, 2006, p.59). Further, Fejes (Ibid.) asserts that the Swedish policy texts regarding adult education construct the Swedish citizen, based on traditional Swedish ideas of what a good education should include. There are also recent studies (Sandberg et. al., 2016) which have shown that adult education aims to shape ideal citizens, to become beneficial both for themselves and for society. These individuals are prepared for the labour market and ought to participate in society as active democratic citizens. Thus, the responsibility for shaping an employable citizen falls on adult education (Ibid.). Therefore, the goals of adult education in general appear to hold also for the newly arrived migrants’ *etablering*. For example, the CO course can be considered a kind of adult education for adult migrants, so it is not surprising that the “good” citizen idea permeates this course as well, since this idea seems to be applied to all the adult citizens of Sweden.

Meaning making, transformative learning, and etablering

From the meaning making- and learning process of Mezirow, and from the empirical data, it is clear that many of the newly arrived migrants make meaning of their new life situation and react to the introduction measures in terms of the meaning perspectives which are brought with them from their countries of origin. It is noted that the process of meaning making and learning⁴² about a new society with different values and cultures, takes time and involves stressful aspects (Garcia Coll & Pachter, 2002). During this process, the individual's adaptation to a different cultural environment occurs, which, besides learning a new language, may bring forth feelings of confusion, loss, and guilt etc., and migrant parents, especially, are likely to experience stress over their responsibility for bringing up their children (Ibid.). Thus, when several of the participants of this study say that they need more time and space than they are given to adjust to all the new things in society, they have a reason for their claim. The time factor, together with the intersections which every migrant is faced with, lay the groundwork for understanding each migrant's pace of *etablering* individually. Although it feels tempting to imagine how long an *etablering* might take, one cannot disregard migrants' individual pace for *etablering*. The empirical data, with the occurrence of the different meaning variations, and the theoretical perspective of TL, also give rise to the question whether all migrants will get established in Swedish society in accordance with what is expressed in the Swedish policy documents.

Those newly arrived individuals who have mostly made the meaning of difficulties as concerns many things in Sweden tend to be those who mostly resist its prevalent values. Part of this resistance can have its grounds in the fact that the newly arrived individuals regard the policy documents' meaning giving, as it is expressed in the introduction measures, as an attempt to change their meaning perspectives in the new country. What if the individual does not wish to change his or her meaning perspectives? Does that mean that this individual is doomed to be an outsider, excluded from society? Some interviewed migrants' meaning, as shown in the result chapters, is that they have to stay in a "miniaturized community", in order to preserve their and their family's meaning perspectives, and thus their identity. This implies that the migrants are actually placed in the periphery of society, because they do not want to change their meaning perspectives. Does this mean that they have resisted the learning in Sweden, or can it mean that they have learnt that they should keep to their own ethnic group, if they want to preserve the meaning perspectives which they have come to Sweden with, and which, in this thesis, have been viewed as being part of the respondents' identity? An interesting observation is that there are newly arrived migrants who do reflect upon things in the new society, even if they do not transform or change their meaning perspectives. Many of the migrants of this study tend to direct their reflection towards the meaning giving, and not towards their own meaning perspectives. This reverse critical reflection, which one can assume does not lead to transformed meaning perspectives, but instead may make the newly arrived adult preserve his or her (present) meaning perspectives, has, as far as I know, not been paid much attention by Mezirow, or Merriam and Heuer. Among other things, according to my interpretation, the absence of recognizing the reverse critical reflection gives rise to the assumption that the TL theory is actually normative, since it implies that it is only those who reflect critically on their own meaning perspectives who can undergo a "desirable" perspective transformation, and thus can be accepted by a democratic society.

⁴² The authors name this process the *acculturation process*.

As I have interpreted Schutz (1967), the meaning, i.e. construction, of an experience can undergo changes, depending on both what kind of attention the individual gives it, and on the time when the individual observes the experience. This, according to my interpretation, opens up for reasoning that the time aspect also plays a role in the adult migrant's meaning making and learning, in that the migrant might make one meaning during his or her introduction period, i.e. in the beginning of his or her life in Sweden, and then make another meaning at another time, maybe several years after his or her first encounter with the specific experience. It could be suggested that there is the possibility of a modified meaning of an experience, which could also be applied to the values that are included in the "good" citizen idea. For instance, a resistance towards a specific value concerning childrearing encountered during the introduction period might turn into a readiness towards that specific value after some time in Sweden.

Methods

This section starts with a discussion of the data collection methods of observations and interviews. After that, my experiences and meaning perspectives will be discussed, as these can be assumed to have influenced the data collection and results in some respects.

Data collection and methods

Like all research studies, there are strengths and weaknesses involved. In this section, I will therefore describe the strengths and weaknesses that, from my own perspective, concern this piece of work.

As regards the data collection, one has to consider, for instance, what kind of respondents have been willing to take part in the study, and be interviewed. When I have spoken of age in the methods' chapter, I have made clear that the target group of this thesis is migrants who are between 18 and 65 years old, i.e. those who receive the introduction benefit. However, those whom I have interviewed, and who have been willing to be interviewed, are between 25 and 45 years of age. During the interview data collection, it was hard to get hold of any participants over age 45 for the interviews, due to there being a lack of participants above the age of 45 or the like in the groups I visited at the unit for the CO course. The reason for this was that, at that time (in 2015), there were merely a few elderly migrants coming to Sweden from the war in Syria, and they were mostly young men. This deviation between the planned and the final target group as regards age can, however, be looked upon as something positive, since this group of interviewees obviously is made up of persons who are of working age, and thus are very important for answering the research question about *etablering*. If a person is of this age, he or she has at least 20 years left until retirement. Therefore, the interviewed individuals do have the incentive to get into the labour market, unlike an individual who is, for example, 61 years old, who might be tired of working, or does not want to go on with work.

Concerning the field observations, I chose to make field notes in a classic, ethnographic manner (cp. Emerson et. al, 1995), because, from my point of view, when one writes field notes, one may also become more attentive to what is happening in the field, and can also decide what to turn one's attention towards at the moment. Further, after some time, I experienced that I could be more discriminating about what to write down. In addition, had I audio-recorded the field observations, I may have got more accurate data from them, but, on

the other hand, there would have been a risk of making the study participants uneasy, something which might have affected the data collection negatively.

The findings of this thesis cannot be generalized to all the newly arrived, Arabic-speaking adults. For example, some respondents' meaning of childrearing in Sweden is by no means representative of the whole group of newly arrived, Arabic-speaking adults in Sweden. Naturally, this group of individuals is a heterogeneous group in many respects. I might have obtained more representative data by using another data collection method, such as questionnaires, or by combining questionnaires with observations and interviews, a phenomenon which e.g. Patton (2002) refers to as *triangulation*. In that case, a wider spectrum of answers would probably have been gained. However, rather than obtaining representative data, the purpose of the study has been to understand how learning may occur in adult migrants during their first years of residence in Sweden. In my view, the way I analysed the findings with the theories I used, made it possible to gain knowledge of *how* learning may occur in the target group.

Connected with the above, the question arises of whether the learning phases which the newly arrived Arabic-speaking migrants seem to go through during their introduction period can also be applicable to other newly arrived migrants' learning. I do not think that the specific meaning making of the Arabic-speaking migrants depicted in this thesis could be similar to other ethnic migrant groups who have arrived recently in Sweden. Although the newly arrived adults may have similar experiences in Sweden, since the experiences consist, to a great extent, of meaning giving, migrants' meaning making differs, as it is dependent on, among other things, migrants' individual differences and meaning perspectives, which have been shaped in different societies. However, in my view, the adult meaning making- and learning process may be similar for most newly arrived individuals, irrespective of their countries of origin, as this concerns the aspects of readiness and resistance and variations of meaning. Thus, there is a hope that the meaning making and learning model which is constructed above, based on Mezirow's, and Merriam and Heuer's learning model, can facilitate the understanding of newly arrived adult migrants' meaning making and learning in their host society, which, in turn, may influence policy makers in their reasoning about, for instance, introduction measures.

Before ending this section, it should be pointed out that in some places of the thesis, I have felt a need to show the empirical findings uncontradicted, as regards, for instance, some newly arrived parents' fear of losing their child to the Swedish social services. Here, the reader might think that I have shown a "lack of indignation" when I have written about some migrants' fear. However, the only reason for this "lack of indignation" has been to show how some migrants talk about the fear of losing one's child, without placing any judgement on their utterances.

The influence of my experiences and meaning perspectives on results

Even if I felt that my Arabic background mostly made a positive contribution to the research, it was somewhat disadvantageous as well, as for instance during the data collection through interviews. As an Arabic-speaking person, I sometimes did not ask any further questions, even if the respondent's answer was not developed, as I took for granted that I already knew the meaning of the answer, since I thought that I had similar meaning perspectives as the interviewee. For example, when R3 said that he now is afraid to say "the wrong word" to his daughter, I did not ask for any clarification, because I "knew" that he meant that he could not make any threat of punishment or the like, if she did not listen to or obey him. Thus, my

meaning perspectives from having been born in an Arabic-speaking country posed a hindrance to the quality of the data collection. On the other hand, as has been described in Chapter Four, my ethnic background seemed to make some respondents confide in me, which could mean that they related things for me which they might not have related for someone who did not have any connection to the Arabic language or cultures. For example, things concerning childrearing, shown in Chapter Eight, that some respondents entrusted to me, were entrusted to me because the respondents regarded me as “one of them” (cp. Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Further, my Arabic language proficiency facilitated the data collection, as I did not need to use an interpreter, neither during the observations nor during the individual interviews.

Suggestions for future research

After analysing the data and drawing conclusions from it, there are a few questions that seem interesting to warrant further investigation. These questions did not get any attention here, due to their lack of relevance to the purpose and research questions of the present thesis.

One such question which should receive attention is what meaning the newly arrived adult migrants make some years after the introduction period has ended. Do they change their meanings in the future? If so, in what way, and as concerns what things in the Swedish society? Therefore, a longitudinal study would not be out of place.

Another interesting thing which the data has shown is that the tutors’ instruction/information seems to focus on differences between newly arrived Arabs’ values or lifestyle etc. and “Swedes” values etc., rather than presenting similarities. Also, in the tutors’ instruction, the “Swedish” values are depicted as the most desirable. This might have consequences for how the newly arrived individuals react to the meaning they are given during the CO course, and to their new life in Swedish society. Therefore, one suggestion for a future research study could be to look at and analyse the CO course tutors’ tutorials more deeply, and discuss these with the tutors.

In addition, although this thesis was written in the field of adult learning, it would be interesting to find out how the children of the newly arrived adults make meaning of their new life situation, and of their place in the family after migrating to Sweden. Do, for instance, the teenagers make other kinds of meaning than their parents, and if so, how does their meaning differ from their parents’?

Svensk sammanfattning

Bakgrund

Föreliggande studie handlar om nyanlända vuxna migranternas erfarenheter från de offentliga introduktionsinsatserna, och deras lärande i det svenska samhället. Studien undersöker hur dessa nyanlända skapar mening i sitt nya liv och vilket lärande detta meningsskapande genererar, medan de deltar i de offentliga introduktionsinsatserna under de två första åren i Sverige (efter erhållandet av ett permanent uppehållstillstånd). Föreliggande text är en avhandling i vuxnas lärande, där tonvikten ligger på vuxna migranternas meningsskapande, vilket utgör en viktig del i vuxnas lärande.

De två första åren efter att uppehållstillstånd har erhållits benämns introduktionsperiod eller etableringsperiod, där det s.k. introduktionsprogrammet ingår. Den främsta anledningen till att det finns ett introduktionsprogram är att underlätta nyanländas etablering i samhället och i arbetslivet så snart som möjligt efter deras ankomst. Enligt policytexterna, som utgår från olika förordningar, ska den vuxna migranten delta i introduktionsprogrammets samtliga tre delar: kursen *Samhällsorientering*, svenska för invandrare (*SFI*) samt olika arbetsrelaterade och -främjande insatser, såsom *praktik* på olika arbetsplatser (SOU2010:16). Fram till år 2010 hade etableringen på arbetsmarknaden och i samhället i övrigt inte skett så snabbt som staten hade förväntat sig, och därför reglerades de offentliga introduktionsinsatserna i december 2010. Detta innebär att det har förtydligats vad samtliga kommuner i landet som tar emot nyanlända förväntas göra för att underlätta etableringen för denna målgrupp. Tanken är att de nya etableringsinsatserna, vilka omfattar de tre delar som nämnts ovan, ska vara mer effektiva när det gäller att påskynda nyanländas etablering.

Det svenska introduktionsprogrammet går att jämföra med andra västeuropeiska länders introduktions- eller integrationsprogram, då målen är liknande, nämligen att etablera de nyanlända på arbetsmarknaden och i samhället, bl.a. genom att förmedla mottagarlandets värderingar.

Syfte och forskningsfrågor

Alla människor skapar mening i sitt liv för att kunna förstå sina erfarenheter och allt de går igenom. Utgångspunkten för individens meningsskapande är hans eller hennes *meningsperspektiv*⁴³, och de erfarenheter han eller hon gör (Mezirow, t.ex. 2000). Sättet att skapa mening av en erfarenhet påverkar, i sin tur, ens meningsperspektiv, och således finns ett inbördes förhållande mellan dessa två fenomen, d.v.s. meningsskapande och meningsperspektiv. När en vuxen individ lämnar sitt ursprungsland och flyttar till ett annat land, gör han eller hon andra erfarenheter än tidigare, och skapar mening om dessa erfarenheter, genom att relatera dem till sina meningsperspektiv. Under de första åren av de

⁴³ *Meningsperspektiv* består av en uppsättning antaganden och förväntningar som är grundade i exempelvis en individs kulturella, religiösa, eller politiska övertygelser, genom vilka individen betraktar och tänker på världen och hans eller hennes erfarenheter på ett specifikt sätt (Mezirow, t.ex. 1991). Således, ingår individens tidigare erfarenheter i hans eller hennes meningsperspektiv, eftersom det är genom våra tidigare erfarenheter, såsom de som vi har fått under vår socialisation, som våra meningsperspektiv formas.

vuxna migranternas vistelse i Sverige, sker en stor del av deras meningsskapande när de befinner sig i det sammanhang som utgörs av de offentliga etableringsinsatserna. I denna avhandling har detta sammanhang belysts, och delats upp i tre delar: det utbildningsmässiga sammanhanget i samhällsorienteringskursen, mötet med det offentliga, vilket mestadels innefattar migranternas erfarenheter från Arbetsförmedlingen, och de värderingar som de nyanlända på olika sätt får till sig under etableringsperioden. Följaktligen är det övergripande syftet med denna avhandling att ta reda på vilken mening de nyanlända migranterna skapar, och hur de konstruerar sin nya livssituation i det svenska samhället under den tvååriga introduktionsperioden.

Forskningsfrågorna är:

- 1a. Vad är etablering, och hur sägs den uppnås för nyanlända migranter, enligt styrdokumentet?
- b. Hur manifesteras och diskuteras etableringsföreställningen i klassrummet på kursen i samhällsorientering?
2. Vad i de nyanlända migranternas nuvarande meningsskapande och nya erfarenheter påverkar deras meningsskapande i svenska samhället, när det gäller arbete, språk, och värderingar?
- 3a. Hur kommer de nyanlända migranternas meningsskapande till uttryck, mot bakgrund av deras nya erfarenheter och nuvarande meningsskapande?
- b. Vilket lärande kan skönjas hos de nyanlända migranterna, som ett resultat av deras meningsskapande?

Teoretiska utgångspunkter

De teoretiska perspektiv som jag har utgått från i studien, och som har genomsyrat både datainsamling och dataanalys, är det socialkonstruktionistiska perspektivet, och teorin om transformativt lärande, som jag fortsättningsvis hänvisar till som TL. I detta avsnitt redogör jag först för de två teoretiska ansatserna. De för avhandlingen väsentliga företeelserna meningsskapande och lärande kommer att beskrivas i anslutning till teorin om transformativt lärande.

Socialkonstruktionism

Utifrån det socialkonstruktionistiska⁴⁴ synsättet, som Schutz (1967) och Berger och Luckmann (1966) representerar, har *mening* inte samma innebörd som människor i allmänhet lägger in i det. Som Schutz (1967) framhåller, gör vi en konstruktion, d.v.s. skapar en mening, av den nya situationen eller erfarenheten, samtidigt som vi tolkar denna situation eller erfarenhet. Med andra ord, ingår alltid en tolkning i den mening vi skapar. Det är således en människas mening (eller konstruktion) som vederbörande handlar utifrån, och baserar sitt tänkande på. Detta innebär att meningen inte ligger i den erfarenhet man gör, utan snarare är

⁴⁴ Det förefaller som om det inte finns några skarpa skiljelinjer mellan begreppen *socialkonstruktionism* och *konstruktivism*, eftersom flera samhällsforskare, däribland Berger och Luckmann (1966) och Schwandt (2000), inte gör en sådan indelning. För enkelhetens skull, har jag därför enbart använt termen *socialkonstruktionism* när jag hänvisar till detta teoretiska perspektiv.

ett resultat av ens reflektion över, eller tänkande kring erfarenheten. Även Hacking (1999) och Crotty (1998) har resonerat kring hur vi människor tillskriver saker och förhållanden i vår omvärld mening, för att kunna förstå och hantera dem. Därför, menar socialkonstruktionister, bör vi skilja mellan verkliga objekt i vår värld, och våra föreställningar om dem.

Föregångaren till socialkonstruktionismen, Alfred Schutz, var inspirerad av Edmund Husserls fenomenologiska tankar, exempelvis när han beskrev sina idéer om erfarenhetsscheman och *meningskontexter*. Enligt min tolkning har idén om meningskontext flera likheter med Mezirows (1991; 2000) föreställning om meningsperspektiv. Både Schutz och Mezirow hävdar nämligen att det som är vägledande för meningsskapandet av våra nya erfarenheter dels är våra tidigare erfarenheter, dels vår ”kultur”⁴⁵ eller socialisation. Således är det inte enbart våra tidigare erfarenheter som utgör våra ”glasögon” när vi tolkar och försöker skapa mening om våra nya erfarenheter. Schutz påpekar att man skapar mening om sin nya erfarenhet genom att reflektera över den med hjälp av sina meningskontexter, vilka innehåller en rad olika kunskaper eller produkter, såväl om sociala och fysiska ting och varelser, som av mentala aktiviteter (Schutz, 1967). Därför bidrar våra meningskontexter (eller meningsperspektiv) till att vi kan ha kontroll över våra liv. Det kan antydast att denna kontroll, eller snarare, känsla av kontroll över ens liv är något som tenderar att försvinna när migranten anländer till Sverige, eftersom han eller hon stöter på okända situationer och erfarenheter som inte kan förstås genom de meningsperspektiv som han eller hon har tagit med sig till Sverige från ursprungslandet.

Teorin om transformativt lärande (TL)

Eftersom denna avhandling hör till fältet vuxnas lärande, har den inramande socialkonstruktionistiska ansatsen kompletterats med en lärandeteori som specifikt beaktar och behandlar vuxnas lärande. Denna teori kan användas på två olika sätt; antingen som ett verktyg för att utveckla analysmetoder för dataanalys, eller som en praktisk guide för pedagogiska metoder som syftar till att främja förändring hos studenter. Det är i den förra betydelsen som TL har använts här. En annan anledning till att just TL valdes ut som komplement till det socialkonstruktionistiska perspektivet var att TL både tar hänsyn till det individuella och det samhälleliga i meningsskapandeprocessen, något som också är mer applicerbart på de empiriska rönen i denna studie. Det huvudsakliga syftet med TL och de tänkesätt som denna teori förmedlar är, enligt Mezirow, att forma vuxna till demokratiska medborgare.

Det bör påpekas att jag inte har använt TL i dess helhet, utan endast valt ut och använt de begrepp och idéer som antogs vidga förståelsen om nyanlända individers erfarenheter, och underlätta analysen och tolkningen av empiriska data. För detta ändamål, ansågs begreppen *meningsskapande*, *meningsperspektiv*, *desorienterande dilemma*, och *kritisk reflektion* vara relevanta.

⁴⁵ Jag är medveten om att orden *kultur* och *kulturell* är kontroversiella. Däremot, har de här använts dels för enkelhetens skull, och dels för att respondenterna i studien själva använder dessa ord, exempelvis när de vill beskriva skillnader mellan deras tänkesätt och det som de betraktar som ”svenskarnas”. Enligt min uppfattning, kan kultur definieras som en föränderlig och icke-statisk uppsättning av värderingar, normer, seder, sociala koder etc. som en grupp av individer, antingen liten eller stor, delar och omförhandlar. Dock har definitionen av ordet kultur inte blivit problematiserat av de teoretiker och samhällsforskare som förekommer i föreliggande avhandling.

Meningsskapande och transformativt lärande

Eftersom lärande är ett stort område och innefattar så många aspekter, har jag valt att fokusera på förhållandet mellan meningsskapande och lärande. Dessa betraktar jag som två sammanlänkade begrepp, där meningsskapandet utgör en viktig del i lärandeprocessen hos vuxna. Nedan görs en beskrivning av den inbördes relationen mellan meningsskapande och transformativt lärande.

Mezirow (t.ex. 1991) och Taylor (2000) ser meningsskapande som en viktig del av lärandeprocessen. Individens skapar först en mening om, eller konstruktion av, den nya erfarenhet han eller hon gör, och sedan kan denna mening leda till ett transformativt lärande, beroende på huruvida individen ändrar sitt meningsperspektiv till att passa den nya erfarenheten eller inte. Vidare sker meningsskapande varje gång vi erfar något nytt, och är individuellt, därför att det bygger på våra individuella meningsperspektiv, och tidigare erfarenheter. Dock kan flera människor skapa en liknande mening, om de har liknande meningsperspektiv, och erhåller liknande ny information som de kan basera sitt meningsskapande på. Ett exempel på detta är när en grupp av nyanlända vuxna har samma akademiska, geografiska, religiösa och sociokulturella bakgrund, och deltar i samhällsorienteringskursen, och får samma information om det svenska samhället.

Meningsperspektiv innehåller kulturella, historiska, och biografiska kontexter, genom vilka människan har blivit socialiserad, och varigenom människans individuella kunskaper, övertygelser, värderingar och känslor har tillägnats (Mezirow, t.ex. 1999, 2000). Detta betyder att vi inte alltid kan hålla fast vid gamla meningar när vi möter nya situationer som inte kan förstås eller förklaras genom de gamla meningarna, och därför kan våra meningar förändras (transformeras) när vi gör sådana nya erfarenheter som exempelvis inbegrips i en migration till ett nytt land med annorlunda seder och kulturer än de som funnits i vårt ursprungsland.

En förändring av ett meningsperspektiv utgör det transformativa lärandet hos den som genomgår förändringen, enligt Mezirow, som har ställt upp tio steg för den transformativa lärandeprocessen. Kitchenham (2008) och senare även Mezirow själv understryker dock att det inte är nödvändigt för en individ att genomgå samtliga tio steg i processen för att uppnå en perspektivtransformation, d.v.s. transformativt lärande. De tio stegen är följande:

1. ett desorienterande dilemma
 2. självgranskning, med känslor av vrede, skuld, fruktan eller skam
 3. en kritisk bedömning av epistemologiska, sociokulturella, eller psykiska antaganden
 4. erkännande av att ens missnöje och transformationsprocess är delad, och att andra har förhandlat en liknande förändring
 5. utforskande av alternativ för nya roller, förhållanden och nytt handlande
 6. planeringen av en riktning för handlandet
 7. tillägnande av kunskaper och färdigheter för implementeringen av ens planer
 8. provisoriskt försök att inta nya roller
 9. bygga upp kompetens och självförtroende i nya roller och förhållanden
 10. inlemma de nya meningsperspektiven i ens liv
- (fri översättning, Mezirow, 2000, s.22; Kitchenham, 2008, s.105).

Det desorienterande dilemman är den triggnande faktorn för lärandeprocessen. Detta dilemma sker när individen utsätts för exempelvis en förlust av en livskamrat, en allvarlig sjukdom, pensionering, eller en skilsmässa (Mezirow, 1991). Detta slags dilemma har visat sig vara en

av de viktigaste faktorerna för lärande (Taylor, 2000). Det är en erfarenhet av att tappa kontrollen över sitt liv, och leder därför till att individen förändras. Ett hinder för förändring är, enligt TL-teoretikern Brookfield (2009), att den mänskliga naturen inbegriper att hålla fast vid bekvämlighet, och därför är det inte lätt att vilja förändras.

Vidare är kritisk reflektion av sina antaganden ett viktigt led i det transformativa lärandet, i och med att individen, genom att reflektera över sitt meningsperspektiv, kan bli varse om huruvida detta perspektiv stämmer överens med de nya erfarenheterna eller inte. Individen kan också jämföra detta perspektiv med andra individers, för att få en uppfattning om vilket av perspektiven som är det mest "giltiga" för att förstå erfarenheten ifråga. Mezirow (t.ex. 1991) menar att en kritisk reflektion lämpligast sker i dialog med andra människor, men att även kritisk självreflektion kan förekomma, och leda till transformativt lärande.

Metod

Datansamlingen har skett genom två metoder: fältobservationer och individuella djupintervjuer. Under fältobservationerna gjordes även en genomgång av kursmaterialet, samt de policydokument som ligger till grund för samhällsorienteringskursen (i avhandlingen även benämnd *SO-kursen*). Policydokumenten, som bygger på olika förordningar, har använts som en bakgrund till SO-kursen, för att förstå idén bakom kursen. Fältobservationerna var ungefär 62 h, och genomfördes i två olika grupper under 2010/2011, samt dokumenterades genom handskrivna fältanteckningar, medan djupintervjuerna genomfördes på sensvåren och sommaren 2015. Ett kriterium för att delta i studien var att samtliga deltagare, oavsett om de observerades eller intervjuades, fortfarande deltog i den tvååriga introduktionsperioden. Ett annat kriterium var att samtliga deltagare i studien skulle uppbära s.k. *etableringsersättning*, d.v.s. skulle ha fått sitt uppehållstillstånd i egenskap av att vara flyktingar, andra skyddsbehövande och deras anhöriga (Jfr Prop. 2009/10:60).

Fältet för observationsstudien utgjordes av enheten för samhällsorientering i en stor stad i Sverige, där jag deltog under lektionsspansen på samhällsorienteringskursen. Målgruppen för studien är arabisktalande nyanlända i olika åldrar, mellan 18 och 65 år, och när det gäller de observerade, kommer de från såväl olika arabisktalande länder som från olika socioekonomisk, religiös, och akademisk bakgrund. Därför är dessa deltagare en tämligen heterogen grupp av individer, vilkas gemensamma nämnare är att de talar samma språk. Även om intentionen att deltagarna skulle komma från olika arabisktalande länder var densamma för intervjustudien som för observationsstudien, kunde den dock inte fullföljas, eftersom ett svårt inbördeskrig bröt ut i Syrien några månader före tiden för intervjuerna. Detta resulterade i en markant ökning av antalet migranter till bl.a. Sverige, vilket påverkade den geografiska bakgrunden för intervjudeltagarna, och alltså resulterade i att de flesta intervjupersoner var från Syrien.

Det slutliga antalet blev 12 enskilda djupintervjuer med nyanlända, i tre närliggande städer. En intervjuguide användes vid intervjuerna, vilka varade mellan 45 min. och 1,5 timme, och spelades in på diktafon. Intervjuspråket var arabiska, i enlighet med samtliga deltagares önskemål.

Både vad gäller observationsstudien och intervjustudien, presenterade jag mig själv och min forskning för deltagarna på arabiska, och de fick även ett informationsbrev som var skrivet på arabiska, tillsammans med en samtyckesblankett.

Resultat

Respondenternas skilda meningsvariationer har delats in i *Svårigheter* (difficulties), *Lätta svårigheter* (slight difficulties), och *Lätthet* (easiness). Det bör understrykas att dessa variationer används som analytiska kategorier som jag har konstruerat, för att handskas med de empiriska resultaten, och ska därför inte förstås bokstavligt. Vidare bör dessa meningsvariationer inte betraktas som givna skiljelinjer mellan meningar, utan snarare ses som flytande punkter i ett kontinuum. Lätthet står för migranternas mening att det finns erfarenheter i det nya samhället som underlättar uppnåendet av målet den ”goda” medborgaren, såsom att erhålla ett arbete. Svårigheter står för meningen att nya erfarenheter gör att uppnåendet av målet den ”goda” medborgaren hindras, medan meningen lätta svårigheter visar på en slags mittemellanvariation, d.v.s. meningen att det både finns möjligheter och hinder för att leva upp till målet om den ”goda” medborgaren. De tre meningsvariationerna har mejslats fram, genom att jag har gjort en klassificering av deltagarnas utsagor om sina erfarenheter och reaktioner i det nya samhället.

Etablering – den ”goda” medborgaren

Av policytexternas och samhällsorienteringskursens kursmaterial att döma, är statens mål med etableringsinsatserna att fostra de nyanlända vuxna migranterna till ”goda” medborgare. Det är uttryckt som om detta mål ämnas att uppnås genom den mening som de nyanlända ges under kursen i samhällsorientering om vad en ”god” medborgare förväntas göra i samhället, och vilka karakteristika denna medborgare bör ha. Meningsgivandet sker gällande tre huvudsakliga områden: arbete och att bli självförsörjande, det svenska språket, och demokratiska värderingar. Etablering uppnås, som uttryckt i policytexter, kursmaterial, och av kurslärare (s.k. *samhällsinformatörer*), när den nyanlända migranten har fått ett arbete som han eller hon kan försörja sig själv genom, har lärt sig svenska, och har anammat de demokratiska värderingar som är rådande i samhället. Således är en etablerad migrant en ”god” medborgare, enligt den föreställning som finns i policydokumenten om densamma. Utifrån policydokumenten och SO-kursmaterialet, framgår det tydligt att en ”god” medborgare är självständig, ansvarsfull, fri, aktiv, sekulär, och laglydig. Dessutom, är han eller hon en ”god” förälder, och en jämlikhetstänkande individ. Nedan kommer dessa karakteristika att förklaras närmare.

Meningsgivandet är tydligt i vissa avsnitt i policydokumenten, t.ex. när det understryks att uppmärksamhet bör riktas ”inte bara mot vad som ’går ut’ – alltså det föreskrivna innehållet i samhällsinformationen - utan framför allt på vad som ’går in’, dvs. vad deltagarna faktiskt förstår och tar med sig” (SOU 2010:16, s.11).

Att vara en självständig, fri och ansvarsfull individ inkluderar bl.a. att man låter andra människor vara självständiga. Det innebär också att man måste ta ansvar för att leta och erhålla arbete, och för att lära sig svenska. Därför innebär ansvar att den nyanlända ser till att han eller hon får det liv i Sverige, genom vilket vederbörande kan bidra till det svenska samhället. Vidare är en aktiv individ någon som deltar och engagerar sig i olika områden i samhället, såsom exempelvis arbete och föreningsliv. Ytterligare en egenskap hos den ”goda” medborgaren är att vara sekulariserad, vilket innebär att man, trots att man är religiös och har en viss religiös övertygelse, respekterar och är öppen mot andra som inte har samma religion som en själv. Dessutom låter en sådan person inte sin religiösa övertygelse eller sitt religiösa tänkande påverka det politiska livet, eller de demokratiska värderingar som är förhärskande i samhället. Utöver detta, förväntas en ”god” medborgare följa lagen och uppfylla sina

förpliktelser, vilket exempelvis innebär att han eller hon inte accepterar svart (illegalt) arbete, fastän det inte finns några goda sysselsättningsmöjligheter på arbetsmarknaden. Utöver detta ska en ”god” medborgare även värdera jämlikhet och jämställdhet högt, genom att t.ex. ta sitt ansvar för sina barn och att acceptera och leva i enlighet med idén att män och kvinnor är jämlika i Sverige. Detta senare är specifikt riktat till nyanlända män, av kursmaterialet att döma. Slutligen ska den ”goda” och etablerade medborgaren vara en ”bra” förälder, som exempelvis tillåter sina barn att ha sin frihet och ger dem utrymme till självständighet i vissa avseenden. Vidare, känner denna ”goda” förälder till sina barns rättigheter och söker skydda och försvara dessa, vilket bl.a. innebär att föräldern inte använder aga som uppfostringsmetod.

Även om vikten av självförsörjning och tillägnandet av det svenska språket är poängterade under SO-kursen, är de demokratiska värderingarna ett starkt framträdande drag genom hela kursen. Sandberg et al. (2016) menar att den svenska vuxenutbildningen i mångt och mycket handlar om att forma den vuxna till en anställningsbar medborgare. Eftersom SO-kursen kan betraktas som en slags vuxenutbildningskurs, är det inte oväntat att den delar ungefär samma mål för de vuxna deltagarna.

En tolkning av idén om den ”goda” medborgaren är att assimilationsmekanismer fortfarande existerar i det nutida svenska samhället. Dock behöver assimilation⁴⁶ inte vara ett medvetet syfte med introduktionsinsatserna, eftersom föreställningen om den ”goda” medborgaren, enligt Fog Olwig (2011), härrör ur det jämlikhetstänkande som finns i de skandinaviska länderna, även om dessa länders etableringspolicys skiljer sig åt.

Meningsgivande om arbete – paketerbjudanden

Data har tydliggjort att det är fler meningsvariationer när det gäller arbete och praktik än när det gäller Arbetsförmedlingen (AF), där nästan samtliga respondenter har förstått AF som en myndighet som utgör svårigheter för dem. Dock finns det olika grunder för meningen om svårigheter bland de nyanlända. Medan några respondenter gör motstånd mot AF:s nonchalerande av deras yrkesmässiga behov och önskemål, gör andra motstånd mot icke-erkännandet av deras tidigare meriter och kompetenser.

En stor del av de nyanländas mening om AF förefaller vara grundad på ett motstånd mot vad som kan tolkas som meningsgivandet från denna myndighet. Meningen ges genom t.ex. ”paketerbjudandena”, som migranterna säger att de, mer eller mindre, måste acceptera och anpassa sig till, och som, i praktiken, innebär att migranterna blir anvisade aktiviteter, praktik eller arbete som inte passar deras behov och kompetens. Enligt respondenterna är ett konkret uttryck för paketerbjudandena att en person får rådet att ansöka om exempelvis ett arbete som kassör i en butik när vederbörande har kända ryggsproblem, eller att delta i en mekanikkurs när migranten i fråga är elektriker från sitt forna hemland. Det finns nyanlända som har skapat meningen att AF enbart ”fyller ut” deras etableringsplaner, så att de 40 timmarna per vecka i etableringsplanen täcks upp. Denna mening går emot det som uttrycks i policydokumenten, t.ex. i SOU 2008:58, där det står om ett samband mellan AF:s arbete i praktiken och AF:s mål i teorin. Migranternas idé om paketerbjudanden utgör ett konkret skäl till deras mening om

⁴⁶ Här använder jag den definition av *assimilation* som betyder att migranterna anammar de värderingar och seder som är rådande i deras mottagande samhälle, vilket innebär att migranterna, mer eller mindre, överger exempelvis de värderingar och seder som migranterna har blivit socialiserade genom i sina ursprungsländer (Jfr. Fog Olwig, 2011).

AF:s försummelse av deras kompetens, behov och önskemål, vilket sägs resultera i en förlust för både individen och det svenska samhället.

AF:s strategi, såsom den är förstådd av de nyanlända, kan förknippas med föreställningen om den ”goda” medborgaren, eftersom föreställningen innefattar en specifik ram för den ”goda” medborgaren att förhålla sig till och skapa sin mening inom. På ett sätt verkar emellertid AF gå emot ett av sina huvudsakliga mål, nämligen att underlätta de nyanländas etablering på arbetsmarknaden, eftersom myndigheten konstruerar de nyanländas behov och professionella identitet för dem och individualiserar inte insatserna, enligt respondenterna. Såsom flera forskare poängterar, bör etablering också innebära individualiserade sysselsättningsinsatser, för att bättre kunna passa de enskilda migranternas kompetens och behov, något som kräver att migranternas erfarenheter tas hänsyn till (Scuzzarello, 2010; Al-Baldawi, 2014). Annars riskerar myndigheter att stöpa de nyanlända i samma stereotypiska form (Scuzzarello, 2010).

Upplevelsen av bristen på stöd från AF medför att migranten känner sig försummad, vilket också kan förstärka hans eller hennes misstro mot svenska samhället.

Det faktum att AF fick det samordnande ansvaret för nyanlända migranternas etablering i december 2010 gör resultatet av föreliggande studie intressant. Bl.a. innebär föreställningen om den ”goda” medborgaren i policydokumenten att ”fostra” självständiga människor som deltar i sin egen framtid (t.ex. SOU 2008:58). Vad händer om migranter skapar meningen att deras behov är förbisedda, och att de inte kan göra egna val för sin framtid, i enlighet med sina individuella behov? Istället för att skraddarsy etableringsinsatser som tillgodoser migranternas individuella behov, som, enligt informationen på AF:s hemsida (Arbetsförmedlingen^a) förefaller vara ett av målen för de nyanlända, och därigenom uppmuntra dem att arbeta inom de områden som intresserar dem, är de nyanländas mening att denna myndighet tillhandahåller ”förpacketerade” lösningar. Sålunda verkar principen om individualitet, som är ett av de viktigaste kännetecknen för idén om den ”goda” medborgaren, lysa med sin frånvaro i migranternas mening om sina erfarenheter från AF.

Arbete och praktik

Bortsett från vad studiedeltagarnas mening om AF är, har data visat de vuxna migranternas egen vilja att arbeta, även om arbetet, när det gäller flera deltagare, inte motsvarar deras tidigare yrke. De antyder att man bör kunna bestämma vad man ska arbeta med, eftersom man arbetar för sin egen skull. I detta sammanhang är migranternas tänkesätt om individens självständighet och valfrihet tydligt, och går i linje med föreställningen om den ”goda” medborgaren. Sålunda är en intressant sak att flera av respondenternas motiv till att få arbete och bli självförsörjande indikerar att de är öppna för den centrala tanken om policytexternas föreställning om den ”goda” medborgaren när det gäller självförsörjandeaspekten.

Att lära sig svenska

De nyanlända deltagarna i denna studie har skapat meningen att det tar tid att lära sig svenska, vilket gör att flera av dem gör motstånd mot kravet att de ska lära sig svenska på kort tid. Dessutom uppger flera respondenter att de redan har gjort karriär i sina ursprungsländer och därför inte känner att de har ett tillräckligt motiv för att lära sig en helt ny sak. De upplever att de s.a.s. är färdigutbildade. Förknippat med denna mening är de negativa förväntningarna på att få arbete inom det område som de redan behärskar, vilket också begränsar motivet till att

lära sig svenska. Samtidigt betraktas dock tillägnandet av svenska som väsentligt för många saker i det nya samhället, för att kunna kommunicera.

En konsekvens av att inte lära sig språket påstås vara missförstånd mellan migranten och svenskarna, något som, i högsta grad, kan påverka båda parter negativt. Data visar att även ens meningsperspektiv, vilket är knutet till ens modersmål, påverkar ens användande av svenska. Exempelvis kan den pragmatiska betydelsen av vissa ord eller uttryck i ens modersmål, vid en bokstavlig översättning till svenska, förstås och tolkas fullständigt olika av en svensk, jämfört med av modersmålstalare, och kan därför orsaka missförstånd mellan de båda parterna.

Tiden det tar att lära sig svenska, som vissa migranter har uttryckt, hindrar kontakten med svenskar och därmed etablering, i och med att, under den tid det tar att lära sig svenska, vilket är högst individuellt, men kan vara flera år, riskerar migranten att "fastna" i sin "egen" språkgrupp, eftersom han eller hon har den språkliga kommunikationsfriheten inom denna typ av grupp. Enligt några respondenter är en konsekvens av denna "bundenhet" att det blir för sent att stifta bekantskap med svenskar senare, när man har tillägnat sig det svenska språket. Enligt flera respondents mening, är botemedlet mot detta problem att lära sig svenska snabbt, genom att flytta ut från de migranttäta områdena och in till svenskdominerade områden eller småstäder, där majoriteten av befolkningen är infödda svenskar. Detta sägs vara det enda sättet att tillägna sig svenska snabbt, och därmed bli etablerad.

Som data påvisar, ifrågasätter eller problematiserar ingen av de vuxna migranterna samhällets förväntning på varje nyanländ att lära sig och kunna svenska. Snarare verkar alla förstå tillägnandet av svenska som en regel. Detta synsätt går hand i hand med policytexternas föreställning om den "goda" medborgaren, eftersom svenskinläring är en av de tre viktigaste och mest understrukna sakerna för etablering. Därför kan det antas finnas en överensstämmelse mellan migranternas mening och policytexternas meningsgivande om vikten av att lära sig svenska.

Meningsskapande i relation till värderingar

Värderingar är inkluderade i migranternas meningsperspektiv, som, i sin tur, kan härröras ur tidigare och nya erfarenheter, där de tidigare erfarenheterna betraktas som de erfarenheter som exempelvis kan härstamma från individens socialisation. Det kan konstateras att värderingar kan ge upphov till olika nivåer av motstånd och beredvillighet gentemot föreställningen om den "goda" medborgaren. I detta avsnitt kommer värderingar som gäller barnuppfostran och religion att framhållas, eftersom dessa har visat sig vara de mest intressanta i empirin.

Beträffande barnuppfostran, dominerar meningsvariationen svårigheter bland vissa nyanlända migranter. Denna meningsvariation kan yttra sig i ett motstånd mot barnuppfostringsvärderingar som betraktas som svenska. En av de slutsatser som dras är att den påverkan som härrör ur erfarenheterna av barnuppfostran i Sverige har lett till vissa migrantföräldrars rädsla, vad gäller deras barns uppfostran och framtid i det nya samhället. Respondenterna tar upp olika anledningar till sin rädsla. En av dessa är att de sociala myndigheterna kan ta deras barn ifrån dem, p.g.a. deras auktoritära uppfostringsmetoder, med inslag av barnaga. Ytterligare en anledning är att det finns en risk för barnets förändrade tänkande och beteende, som en konsekvens av det svenska samhällets obegränsade frihet, och de svenska traditionerna, som man menar kan förändra deras barns meningsperspektiv. Rädslan, som både är baserad på de nyanlända individernas meningsperspektiv, vilka inkluderar värderingar, och på deras nya

erfarenheter i Sverige, har påverkat migrantföräldrarna på olika sätt. Exempelvis har den lett till att föräldern har börjat ogilla sin nya livssituation eller känner ett tvång att förändra vissa saker i sitt beteende gentemot sitt barn. En utväg ur denna rädsla är att vissa migrantföräldrar kan välja att bosätta sig i ”slutna” bostadsområden, där de s.a.s. kan vara ”utom synhåll” för svenskar.

De ”rädda” migrantföräldrarna har alltså skapat meningen att de svenska sociala myndigheterna har makten att bestämma över deras barns framtid och välbefinnande. Konsekvensen av migranternas rädsla att förlora sina barn på olika sätt, utifrån det som empirin visar, är en misstro både mot svenskar och svenska samhället. Rädslan för de svenska traditionerna kan utgöra ett hot mot föreställningen om den ”goda” medborgaren, eftersom den kan hindra, eller åtminstone påverka, deltagande i samhället.

Enligt en del föräldrars uppfattning, behöver de ges mer utrymme, och få vara delaktiga i de lösningar eller beslut som berör deras barn. Med andra ord, behöver de sociala myndigheterna samarbeta med migrantföräldrarna, enligt flera respondenter som är föräldrar. Det är också uttalat att även lärare i den svenska skolan behöver vara vaksamma, så att de inte ”inkrärkar på” unga migrantstudenter meningsperspektiv vad gäller t.ex. värderingar knutna till religion.

Även tidigare forskning (t.ex. Dumbrill, 2008) visar att myndigheterna bör samarbeta med migrantföräldrar, och att de senare behöver ges utrymme att både förstå de obekanta värderingar som skiljer sig från de egna, och att delta i de insatser som rör deras barns välbefinnande. Med andra ord, bör det finnas en dialog mellan migrantföräldrar och de sociala myndigheterna, innan något beslut fattas om ett barns liv. Enligt migrantföräldrarna i föreliggande studie, finns det anledning att anta att en migrantförälders rädsla skulle reduceras eller försvinna, om föräldern skulle ges mer utrymme att påverka sitt barns liv, och följaktligen skulle hans eller hennes tillit till samhället öka. Enligt Lagen om vård av unga (LVU), 1§, ska åtgärder för barn och unga vidtas tillsammans med barnet och hans eller hennes vårdnadshavare, i enlighet med *Socialtjänstlagen* (SFS 1990:52). Fastän det finns en reglering som möjliggör för svenska sociala myndigheter att omedelbart ta hand om ett barn eller en minderårig, enligt 6§ i LVU, är det ett undantag som enbart kan omsättas i praktiken i vissa fall (SFS 1990:52). Därför kan det antas att den önskvärda dialogen med föräldrarna redan existerar i verkligheten, men, eftersom de nyanlända föräldrarna uppenbarligen inte har skapat denna mening, uppstår frågan om skälet till frånvaron av denna mening.

Respondenterna säger att det inte är någon tvekan om att man bör följa svenska lagar, och respektera de svenska värderingarna⁴⁷, om man bor i Sverige. Problemet uppstår däremot när vissa lagar eller värderingar, som t.ex. gäller barns välbefinnande, direkt går emot vissa meningsperspektiv. Även om det står klart för respondenterna att lagen står över allt annat, är det långt ifrån klart att de statliga myndigheternas ingripande i nyanländas familjeliv medför saker som de inblandade familjerna finner lämpliga. De nyanlända föräldrarna säger att man naturligtvis måste ta avstånd från exempelvis barnaga, men tycker att, när det gäller nyanlända föräldrars uppfostringssätt, de svenska sociala myndigheterna bör ta hänsyn till

⁴⁷ Här har ingen problematisering gjorts av huruvida vi faktiskt kan påstå att några värderingar kan definieras som svenska eller inte. Eftersom samhällsorienteringskursen förmedlar en bild av att det finns specifika ”svenska” värderingar, och eftersom de nyanlända migranterna själva använder denna definition av värderingar, har jag inte ifrågasatt detta i avhandlingen. De ”svenska” värderingarna anses av de nyanlända exempelvis vara demokrati, jämlikhet, frihet, och individualitet.

föräldrars motiv och bakgrund, innan de drar förhastade slutsatser om en migrants lämplighet som förälder.

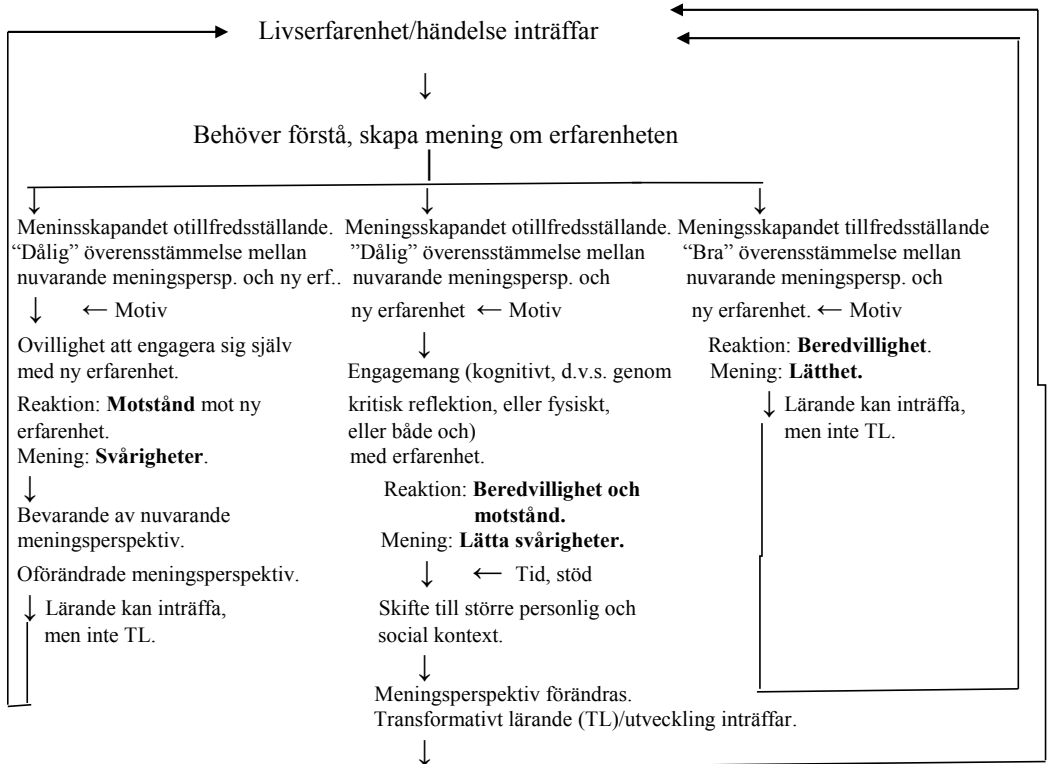
Föreställningen om den ”goda” föräldern, som också uttrycks i policydokumenten, sammanfaller med idén om den ”goda” medborgaren, genom att en ”god” förälder tillåter och uppmuntrar sitt barns individualitet och frihet. Som resultatet har visat, har vissa deltagande föräldrar skapat meningen att deras barn, som redan har blivit uppfostrade i ursprungslandet, kommer att ”tappa fotfästet” p.g.a. två typer av barnuppfostran i Sverige, och därmed inte kommer att bli ”goda” människor. Paradoxen i detta sammanhang verkar därför vara att vissa nyanlända föräldrars mening om den ”goda” medborgaren krockar med meningen som de svenska policytexterna skapar om densamma, även om migrantföräldrarna har ett liknande syfte som finns uttryckt i policydokumenten.

Värt att nämna är att de värderingar hos migranterna som är knutna till religion, som inte nämns i anslutning till barnuppfostran, motsvarar policytexternas föreställning om den ”goda” medborgaren, eftersom flera av de värderingar som kan kopplas till religion kan betraktas som demokratiska, eller ”svenska” värderingar. Exempel på dessa värderingar är ärlighet (som kan relateras till laglydighet), jämlikhet, och tolerans. Dessa värderingar kan vara viktiga för de nyanlända individernas etablering i samhället. Vidare finns det uttryck för en önskan om att få känna en samhörighet med det svenska samhället och få hänge sig åt det, något som kan kopplas samman med etableringsidén såsom den är framhållen i policydokumenten, där det exempelvis finns en önskan om att nyanlända ska uppleva solidaritet med resten av medborgarna i landet. Vad gäller könsjämlikhet, finns det dock en slags avvikelse i vissa respondenters syn på jämlikhet. Dessa respondenter uttrycker nämligen att jämlikhet mellan människor är mycket viktigt, men ger uttryck för ett visst undantag från denna värdering, som kan tolkas som att de anser det vara acceptabelt med viss könsojämlikhet, vad beträffar att sörja för boende, eller att förtjäna sitt uppehälle, ansvar som betraktas kunna axlas av män. Därför föreligger en paradox här. Den förbisedda könsjämlikhetsvärderingen hos några nyanlända respondenter kan utgöra ett problem för deras etablering, eftersom de kan möta omständigheter i svenska samhället, då deras förbiseende krockar med den gängse målsättningen om könsjämlikhet i arbetslivet. Exempelvis kan en situation uppstå, när en man inte anser det nödvändigt för sin fru att arbeta i Sverige, eftersom han själv kan arbeta och försörja sig och sin familj.

Vuxna migranternas meningsskapande och lärande

Det finns data som visar att den modifierade meningsskapande- och lärandemodellen som Merriam och Heuer (1996) har gjort, kan appliceras på nyanländas meningsskapande och lärande, eftersom de tre processerna i modellen förefaller ske hos migranterna. Med tanke på att Mezirows (t.ex. 1991) lärandemodell, med tio olika steg, samt Merriam och Heuers (1996) modifierade lärandemodell, har visat sig otillräckliga för att förklara de nyanlända migranternas lärande under deras introduktionsperiod, och utifrån analysen av mina data, har jag dock reviderat modellen ytterligare. Jag har dragit slutsatsen att det är flera faktorer som påverkar vilket lärande en vuxen nyanländ kan uppnå. Det har nämligen framkommit att den typ av mening en individ gör är avhängigt av antingen reaktionen motstånd eller beredvillighet, eller både och, gentemot målen som finns i idén om den ”goda” medborgaren, samt av vilket eller vilka motiv han eller hon har. Dessutom finns det, i stora drag, tre variationer av mening hos de nyanlända representerade i studien, vilka har benämnts Svårigheter, Lätta svårigheter, och Lätthet, som vardera hänger samman med reaktionen motstånd, beredvillighet och motstånd, och beredvillighet. Den slutliga modellen, som visas

nedan, kan betraktas som en fördjupning av Mezirows tiostegsmodell, och som genererande en viss förändring av denna och av Merriam och Heuers modell, speciellt med tanke på att dessa teoretiker inte explicit talar om motstånd mot nya erfarenheter eller mot meningsgivande.



Figur 3 – Modell över meningsskapande- och lärandeprocessen. (Omarbetad från Merriam & Heuer, 1996, p.252, och fritt baserad på Mezirow, t.ex. 1991, och Schutz, 1967).

Appliceringen av empiriska data på den ovanstående teoretiska modellen har avslöjat att migranternas meningsskapande i deras nya samhälle kan leda till en transformation av en specifik mening, eller en transformation av flera specifika meningar av ett visst fenomen, såsom t.ex. barnuppfostran, eller en religiös övertygelse. Värt att nämna är att det kan finnas en variation av meningar hos en och samma individ, men också skillnader i var och en av de tre meningvariationerna, d.v.s. svårigheter, lätta svårigheter, och lätthet. Det har också klart framkommit att det finns nyanlända vuxna migranter som verkar bevara sitt meningsperspektiv, även om de stöter på andra meningar gällande olika saker i det svenska samhället. Således finns det individer som förändrar sitt meningsperspektiv, och de som bevarar sitt nuvarande meningsperspektiv, trots att dessa kanske inte är förenliga med de nya erfarenheterna, eller meningsgivandet om den "goda" medborgaren i Sverige. En del migranter i studien gör både nya erfarenheter, som de skapar mening genom och lär sig från, vilket bl.a. kan innebära att de säger sig vara öppna för exempelvis att skaka hand med alla människor, oavsett kön, samtidigt som de säger sig ta avstånd från t.ex. den upplevda bristen på moral. En och samma individ verkar t.ex. skapa två meningar; lätthet, och lätta svårigheter, vilket gör honom eller henne öppen för förändring. Följaktligen, bör de tre olika

meningsvariationerna ses som variationer i ett kontinuum, snarare än som fasta punkter/ytterligheter.

Anledningarna till de olika variationerna av mening bland de nyanlända migranterna är många. För det första, reagerar de som gör meningen om svårigheter i sitt nya samhälle med motstånd mot de nya erfarenheterna de gör, och den mening de ges. Detta motstånd kan ha flera grunder. Om migranten ifråga exempelvis är rädd för något som han eller hon inte har erfårit tidigare, såsom en upplevd total frihet för ungdomar, kan han eller hon vilja ta avstånd från denna, genom att bevara sitt nuvarande meningsperspektiv. Det är uppenbart att de migranter som skapar meningen om svårigheter i sin nya livssituation inte uppnår transformativt lärande under sin introduktionsperiod.

För det andra, verkar de som skapar meningen om lätta svårigheter reagera med motstånd mot vissa, och beredvillighet gentemot andra erfarenheter som de får. Dessa individer verkar också ha meningsperspektiv som redan är "mottagliga" för nya meningsperspektiv. Exempelvis finns det respondenter som påstår att de har varit öppna personer även i sina ursprungsländer. Därför kan man dra slutsatsen att det desorienterande dilemmat kan vara mindre smärtsamt och dramatiskt för de individer som uppger sig vara öppna för nya erfarenheter och meningsperspektiv än för de som inte är det. Denna kategori av migranter, alltså migranter med lätta svårigheter, skiljer sig från de två andra kategorierna, i och med att de verkar reflektera kritiskt över sina nya erfarenheter i Sverige, och därför är kapabla till att omvärdera eller utvärdera sitt nuvarande meningsperspektiv, mot bakgrund av sina nya erfarenheter och meningsgivandet.

För det tredje, förefaller de som skapar meningen om lätthet dela många av sina nuvarande meningsperspektiv med de rådande värderingar som kommer till uttryck i policydokumenten. Som data visar, kan det antas att denna kategori av migranter inte uppnår transformativt lärande, eftersom de inte genomgår samma stadier i meningsskapande- och lärandeprocessen som de som erfår lätta svårigheter. Sålunda, är en slutsats från empiriska data att den dominerande typen av meningsvariation man har styr vilken typ av lärande man uppnår.

Diskussion

Avsikten med denna avhandling har huvudsakligen varit att besvara tre forskningsfrågor. Den första frågan handlar om vad etablering är, och hur etablering sägs uppnås för nyanlända migranter, enligt styrdokumentet, samt hur etableringsföreställningen manifesteras och diskuteras i klassrummet på kursen i samhällsorientering. Enligt svenska policydokument, är målet för nyanlända vuxna att de ska bli etablerade i svenska samhället under sin tvååriga introduktionsperiod, vilken påbörjas efter att de nyanlända erhållit permanent uppehållstillstånd. Denna etablering sägs främjas av att migranten deltar i kursen samhällsorientering, SFI, och olika arbetsrelaterade insatser (t.ex. SOU 2010:16). Det är alltså dessa tre etableringsinsatser som ska leda till en etablering i samhällsliv och arbetsmarknad. Det empiriska resultatet har även visat att etablering egentligen också handlar om att forma de vuxna nyanlända till "goda" medborgare, genom bl.a. SO-kursen, som regleras genom policydokumentet, och som s.a.s. tillhandahåller mening för de nyanlända. De demokratiska värderingar som kursen förmedlar kan ses som ett slags meningsgivande från statens sida till migranterna. Sålunda är det genom detta meningsgivande som migranterna ska lära sig att bli "goda" medborgare. Denna medborgare har vissa specifika kännetecken, vilka är att han eller hon är självständig (och försvarar individualitet), fri, jämlikhetstänkande, sekulariserad, laglydig (vilket inkluderar ärlig), ansvarsfull och tar ansvar för sitt liv, och en "god" förälder.

I SO-kursen kommer dessa karaktärsdrag till uttryck på olika sätt, exempelvis genom de power point-bilder som visas under passen, och genom att samhällsinformatören pratar om svenskar och svenska samhället. Det svenska framställs då också som något eftersträvänsvärt, och skilt från det som antyds vara "arabiska" värderingar och tänkesätt. Föreställningen om den "goda" medborgaren verkar sikta på att konstruera den vuxna nyanländas (och dennas familjs) meningsperspektiv, något som en del migranter som deltagit i studien verkar göra ett motstånd mot. Exempelvis säger vissa migranter att de barnuppföstringsvärderingar som råder i Sverige är svåra att acceptera, eftersom migranterna har skapat meningen, d.v.s. gjort tolkningen, att det är olämpligt att ge ens barn total frihet, eller uppmuntra barnets självständighet, speciellt om barnet redan har erfårit en del av sin uppfostran i sitt gamla hemland och därför är van vid en annan typ av uppfostran, som är grundad på andra värderingar.

När det gäller värderingar, finns det ingen tydlig överensstämmelse mellan målet om den "goda" medborgaren och de nyanlända migranterna i föreliggande studie. Ett undantag kan vara samhällsinformatörernas och SO-kursmaterialets sätt att förmedla målet om den "goda" medborgaren, eftersom dessa kan ses som medel att uppnå målet. Samhällsinformatörerna och kursmaterialet belyser skillnaderna mellan vad som betraktas som "svenska" värderingar, och vad som betraktas som "arabiska", eller icke-demokratiska värderingar. Följaktligen, kan det antydvas att en del av respondenternas motstånd kan vara knutet till deras motstånd mot sättet, genom vilket målet den "goda" medborgaren är förmedlat genom SO-kursen.

Den andra frågan som jag har försökt besvara rör vad i de nyanlända migranternas nuvarande meningsperspektiv och nya erfarenheter som påverkar migranternas meningsskapande i svenska samhället när det gäller arbete, språk, och värderingar. När det gäller den nyanländas nya erfarenheter, verkar det vara de som han eller hon fått genom kontakt med bl.a. Arbetsförmedlingen (AF) som påverkar meningsskapandet i det nya samhället. Även erfarenheter som migranten gör i SO-kursen, samt den mening som "gamla" migranter förmedlar till honom eller henne, förefaller spela roll för hur migranten skapar mening om Sverige och svenskarna, och om sin nya livssituation.

Den tredje forskningsfrågan handlade om hur migranternas meningsskapande kommer till uttryck, mot bakgrund av deras nya erfarenheter och nuvarande meningsperspektiv, och vilket lärande som kan skönjas hos de nyanlända migranterna, som ett resultat av deras meningsskapande. Den mening som de flesta av respondenterna har gjort av AF:s insatser för dem är att denna myndighet enbart erbjuder dem "förpaketerade" lösningar, och inte tillhandahåller den hjälp eller det stöd som de behöver. Därför har migranterna skapat meningen att AF inte tar hänsyn till deras tidigare kunskaper och kompetens, när AF hänvisar dem till en praktikplats eller till ett arbete. En anledning till de nyanländas missnöje med och motstånd mot dessa förpaketerade lösningar kan vara att de förra förstår dessa som ett sätt för samhället att konstruera deras yrkesliv och yrkesidentitet, vilket inte inbegriper ett erkännande av deras gamla yrkeskompetens. Dessa förpaketerade lösningar verkar sikta på att göra den nyanlända självförsörjande så snabbt som möjligt, och således möjliggör uppfyllandet av en del av föreställningen om den "goda" medborgaren. Utifrån analysen av migranternas motstånd mot AF's aktiviteter, vilka inkluderar de nyanländas mening om "paketerbjudanden", samt deras motiv till att erhålla arbete och bli självförsörjande, framgår det tydligt att migranternas mening om svårigheter i detta sammanhang inte är relaterade till idén om den "goda" medborgaren. Svårigheterna och motståndet gäller snarare "medlen" att uppnå målet om den "goda" medborgaren, vilka består av de olika aktiviteterna som AF

anordnar, inklusive "paketerbjudandena". Därför kan man anta att de vuxna migranterna gör motstånd mot tankarna om hur man ska uppnå den "goda" medborgaren, och inte målet i sig.

Det svenska språket betraktas både av SO-kursen och av de nyanlända deltagarna själva som något mycket viktigt att tillägna sig. De nyanlända ifrågasätter inte normen om det svenska språket, utan verkar anse att det är det enda språket som kan leda till arbete i Sverige. Många av dem hävdar också att det tar lång tid att lära sig svenska, vilket kan antas förlänga deras etableringstid. Att meningsskapandet och lärandet är individuellt leder till slutsatsen att etableringstiden också är individuell, och att det inte går att på förhand bestämma hur lång tid en nyanländ behöver för att bli etablerad, i policymakarnas bemärkelse. Detta är något som de svenska policymakarna inte verkar ta hänsyn till. I likhet med reaktionen mot AF's medel ovan, verkar de flesta respondenter reagera genom att göra motstånd mot medlen att uppnå språkkravet som ingår i målet den "goda" medborgaren, men skapar meningen om lätthet, eller lätta svårigheter vad gäller tanken om vikten av att lära sig svenska språket. Med andra ord, gör de nyanlända inte motstånd mot målet om att lära sig svenska, men mot villkoren för svenskutlännandets. Således, förefaller länken mellan policytexternas mål den "goda" medborgaren och den nyanlända vuxna vara villkoren för att tillägna sig svenska. Dessa villkor, eller medel i detta sammanhang utgörs av organiseringen av SFI, samt andra villkor som finns för svenskinläring. Enligt flera respondenter, tar det bl.a. tid att lära sig svenska, vilket gör att många av dem, i synnerhet de äldre, gör motstånd mot att delta i språklektioner, eftersom de redan har gjort karriär och därför inte har tillräckliga motiv för att lära sig något nytt.

Meningsskapande och lärande, och etablering

Utifrån den meningsskapande- och lärandeprocess som Mezirow (t.ex. 1991) har beskrivit, och utifrån den föreliggande studiens empiriska data, står det klart att många av de nyanlända migranterna skapar mening om sin nya livssituation, och reagerar mot etableringsinsatserna, genom de meningsskapande perspektiv som de har med sig från sina ursprungsländer. Garcia Coll och Pachter (2002) noterar att meningsskapande- och lärandeprocessen⁴⁸ om ett nytt samhälle, med olika värderingar och kulturer, tar tid och innebär stressande aspekter. När flera av deltagarna i studien således säger att de behöver mer tid än de får för att anpassa sig till alla nya saker i samhället, har de ett skäl till detta, enligt min tolkning. Denna tidsaspekt, tillsammans med de meningsskapande perspektiv som varje migrant omfattas av, lägger grunden för att förstå varje enskild migrants takt för etablering i samhället individuellt. Trots att det är frestande att föreställa sig hur lång tid etablering kan ta, bör man därför inte bortse från migranters individuella tid för etablering. Dessutom, ger empiriska data, där olika meningsskapande variationer förekommer, och det teoretiska perspektivet som valts, anledning att undra huruvida alla migranter kommer att etableras i svenska samhället, på det sätt som framgår av de svenska policydokumenten.

De nyanlända som mestadels har skapat en negativ mening om många saker i Sverige tenderar att vara de som gör mest motstånd mot meningsskapandet den "goda" medborgaren. Delvis, kan detta motstånd grunda sig på att de nyanlända betraktar policymakarnas meningsskapande som ett försök att förändra deras meningsskapande perspektiv i det nya landet. Tänk om individen inte har en önskan om att förändra sitt meningsskapande perspektiv? Innebär detta att denna individ är dömd till ett utanförskap, exkluderad från samhället? En del intervjurespondenters antydda mening, som framkommit i de olika resultatkapitlen, är att de måste bo i ett "miniätnersamhälle", för att

⁴⁸ Författarna kallar denna process för *ackulturationsprocessen* (*acculturation process*).

kunna behålla sitt och sin familjs meningsperspektiv, och således sin identitet. Detta antyder att migranterna faktiskt befinner sig utanför samhället, därför att de inte vill förändras. Vidare kan detta innebära att de nyanlända har genomgått lärande i Sverige, men att lärandet inte har resulterat i det som policydokumenten uttrycker är målet med etablering.

En annan sak som framgår av resultatet är att det finns nyanlända migranter som reflekterar över saker i det nya samhället, även om de inte förändrar (transformerar) sina meningsperspektiv. Denna "omvända" kritiska reflektion, d.v.s. som inte riktas mot ens egna meningsperspektiv, utan mot majoritetens, som, om man följer Mezirows resonemang, inte antas leda till förändrade meningsperspektiv eller transformativt lärande, utan istället kan medföra att den nyanlända bevarar sina nuvarande meningsperspektiv, har inte uppmärksamrats av vare sig Mezirow, eller Merriam och Heuer. Frånvaron av den "omvända" kritiska reflektionen ger anledning att förmoda att TL faktiskt är normativ, eftersom den antyder att det enbart är de som reflekterar kritiskt över sina egna meningsperspektiv som genomgår en "önskvärd" perspektivtransformation (och ett "önskvärt" lärande), och därmed kan bli accepterade av ett demokratiskt samhälle.

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HÖGSKOLAN VÄST

Marie Westerlind 0520-22 37 22
Afrak Abdulla 0520-22 37 54

مفادق

لقد اظهرت على كل هذه المعلومات ومبتاه تمام اونا موفق على لمشاركه في هذا البحث.
للترايخ:

١ م:

Appendix B – Information- and consent letter for observations, Swedish



2010-09-09

Vi är två doktorander, Afrah Abdulla och Marie Westerlind, anställda på Högskolan Väst i Trollhättan som håller på med ett forskningsprojekt angående de introduktionsprogram som anordnats i Sverige för nyanlända flyktingar. Vi är speciellt intresserade av hur samhällsinformation/samhällsorientering går till. Våra syften med forskningen handlar dels om hur integration förstås och görs i en praktisk verksamhet och dels om det handlingsutrymme som skapas för deltagarna.

För att samla in underlag för vår forskning är det viktigt att vi får möjlighet att träffa personer som på olika sätt medverkar i samhällsinformationen; det vill säga deltagare, informatörer, samordnare etc. Ert deltagande är med andra ord värdefullt för oss. Vi vill gärna ta del av vad som sker under samhällsinformationen och andra aktiviteter som är knutna till den verksamheten. Det kan ske genom att vi sitter med under olika pass med samhällsinformation, gör intervjuer med deltagare och andra inblandade samt några videoinspelningar av hur ett pass med samhällsinformation kan gå till.

Allt deltagande är frivilligt och var och en har rätt att själv bestämma över sin medverkan. Det innebär bland annat att deltagare kan välja att avbryta sin medverkan när som helst utan att ange skäl för sitt val. Allt material kommer att anonymiseras, hanteras konfidentiellt och endast att användas för forskningsändamål. Utöver oss själva kommer våra handledare vara de enda personer som tar del av de uppgifter som samlas in. Insamlat material kommer att analyseras, sammanställas i artikelform och slutligen publiceras i såväl nationella som internationella tidskrifter samt i form av ett större avhandlingsarbete. Det kommer att erbjudas möjlighet för alla deltagare att ta del av resultaten.

Med vänliga hälsningar;

Afrah Abdulla och Marie Westerlind

Handledare: Lisbeth Eriksson, 0520-22 37 69

Hans-Erik Hermansson, 0520-22 37 42

Thomas Winman, 0520-22 39 43

Doktorander: Afrah Abdulla, 0520-22 37 54

Marie Westerlind, 0520-22 37 22

Samtycke

Jag har tagit del av och förstått ovanstående information och jag samtycker till att delta i forskningsprojektet.

Datum :

Namn:

Appendix C – Information- and consent letter for interviews, Arabic

مغلوات تخصص لشخص موضوع وغلب بحث

اسم لدرسہ: عین البالغین وانشاء مرغی لجیٹلہج دی دہ فی السہید.

لغوي ه **ول** **دنف** بل **دنف** من **مذه** **الراس** ه **مو** **اجرا** **ت** **تخي** **ق** **ع** **لف** **ك** **ار** **ال** **م** **ه** **ا** **ج** **ن** **ال** **ل** **غ** **ن** **ال** **ج** **د** **د** **ع** **ن** **ي** **ك** **م** **ال** **ج** **ي** **د** **ف** **ي** **ال** **س** **ي** **د** **ب** **ا** **ل** **س** **ن** **ل** ه **م** **ذ** **ال** **ح** **ث** **مو** " **ال** **م** **ذ** **ن** **ي** **ع** **ط** **ي** **م** **ع** **ل** **ح** **ي** **ا** **ه** **ل** **م** **ه** **ا** **ج** **ر** **ال** **ج** **ي** **ف** **ي** **ال** **م** **م** **ع** **م** **ع** **ال** **ج** **ي** **د** **؟** "

اس تفسار عن لشاركه: بل ان الذلالت تقتلهم فلهذا لم يبق لهم من احوالهم الا ما كان من غيرهم. فلهذا لم يبق لهم من احوالهم الا ما كان من غيرهم. فلهذا لم يبق لهم من احوالهم الا ما كان من غيرهم.

كيفية سير العمل بالبحث العلمي
 ١. يات ل هذا البحث تحقيق الغايات والمقاصد بعد انتمت خطيط لمؤتيه واليه حدث الى
 المشير لفي رين امج ان دماج المقدم للباب في الفصاحات هدف الى عمل مقارن فتودي لبلالغ هال عربي وثاني سوفت س جل
 في اشرطه فيجئ التالوق التلخووع الفقاياك فريه سوف فوكو في حدود مليون 45:60 فيقه ولما كان القا وتسوف
 حي دمي للباب في الفصاح والمشير ك مع الاخطه هي انتم عمل مؤتيه واحده مع كل مشير لففي الي البحث لادرطه وللق عن
 لاجاج فيتم عمل مجموع ضل افني هال القا ت .

ما هی لمخاطر؟ قتیحدث عدم ملتویاحتیاج به مراجع مغفرت و تضارعت قیوم به فی حلاله ش عور کف عدم اتیاحتفاء او بعبه اهل بغانزلی الف فرصه عن طریقیاباض مغفراحت انت جمل لیل طلق اقامت ش او نسی فی ال فی طوالت یتعی شرب ها.

[illegible]

المقات سوفيت متبحرين في وحده تخرين متحركه ومع دة ايدت نسخ ه القتب طلس جي لطباع ل مذهب القات
سوفيت حفظ في حافظم غرق في مبللى جامعه ديست . وهو العاليجين المشمولي في الدراسة سوفيتي كون لي ممال حرق في
الوصول لى مذهب موالد جمع مبللي انات الوهيه لالمشتري في فنتكره اجراء الدرله ال موالد بقي مبعوث هاء الدراسة
سوفيت م فضطه لى شريف جامعه ديست طلال فتره استمرار اطروحه لدراسه بطل لقولون الهان انكش خبريه
(PUL) كل الهان انكش خبريه سوفيت م لتعامل مع مبلول طه جامعه ديست التى هى مموله عن الهان انكش خبريه
للمشتري في مذهب الدراسة . مذل قولن ل حظه ا اصافه يوين هيتب قق وولش خص بطل جالدراسه سوفيت متبحرين ه
عن طريقي انشرفى مجل لمباحث دوليه هاهيه الى الشرفى الفتى الاخ اصبر سلا مافتوراه . ومع القشر لزيتمش يخص و اشار ه
ترك في الدرله .

لغوي: المشاركون في هذه الدراسة اختاروه، ولأنك الحظي في أقل مشاركون في أي وقتشاء وبدون إلهاء في أسباب في حله عدم رتبته في المشاركون في الدراسة وفي حل إيقاف مشاركتك فان هذا لن يشرح لي مشاركتك في كورس العمل ومات عن المجتمع.

للمسؤولون:

الباحث) المسمى قول عن علمي الموقب ت وتحول لمعطيت واقتبله المقال العلمى (AfrAh Abdulla

مؤلف/0520223754@hv.se.abdulla.afrah

المشرفون: Lisbeth Eriksson هاتف 0857922071.

0520223809 هاتف Signild Risenfors

Margareta Åkesson مسؤول حليق (مديرة) حليق جلع ميسر في انون PUL (جلع ميسر)
ملف 0520223054.

لم يدرس هـ: عين البالغين وإنشاء مجرى لجيتلاج ديده فى السويدي.

مفلقه

لقد تم ا ط عى على كمل العلوم اتال غصب هذا الدرس و حصل لتوزيع الفرص ملطرح ا ئل نوال لوصول على اجداتل دا و اعلم
 رب المل طلت قف عن الم شارك فى اى قت ايد. بموجب هذا مل مخلق على الم شارك فى هذا البحث .

التاريخ:

:

رقم ال ملف:

Appendix D – Information- and consent letter for interviews, Swedish

Forskningspersonsinformation (samtyckesbrevet)

Projektets titel: ”Nyanlända vuxnas meningsskapande i sitt nya liv i Sverige”.

Bakgrund och syfte: Syftet med föreliggande studie är att undersöka vilka tankar vuxna nyanlända har om sitt nya liv i Sverige, och en av forskningsfrågorna är ”Vad ges mening av den nyanlända i det nya samhället?”.

Förfrågan om deltagande: Du har fått detta brev genom att du deltar i introduktionsprogrammet för nyanlända flyktingar i Sverige. Vi har fått kontakt med dig genom chefen för enheten för Samhällsorientering, som har blivit informerad om den föreliggande studien.

Hur går studien till?: För att samla underlag för denna forskning, har forskare Afrah Abdulla planerat att träffa och samtala med nyanlända personer som deltar i introduktionsprogrammet. Afrah avser att genomföra enskilda intervjuer på arabiska, som spelas in på digitalt band. Den ungefärliga tidsåtgången per intervju är 45-60 minuter, och platsen för intervjun kommer att bestämmas av Afrah och deltagaren gemensamt. Planen är att genomföra en intervju med varje deltagare i studien, men vid behov kan det bli fler intervjutillfällen.

Vilka är riskerna?: De obehag som kan uppstå i samband med att gamla minnen och upplevelser väcks och gör sig påminda. Ifall du känner obehag, antingen under eller efter intervjun, har du, genom Afrah, möjlighet att få kontakt med en kurator i den stadsdel där du bor.

Hantering av data och sekretess: All data som samlas in kommer att kodas, och redovisas på ett sådant sätt att det inte blir möjligt att följa en specifik persons uttalanden genom resultatredovisningen. Alla namn kommer att vara fingerade, och andra uppgifter, som är mer specifika och kan innebära risk för identifikation, kommer att ändras eller uteslutas. Dina svar och resultaten av dessa kommer att behandlas så att inga obehöriga kan ta del av dem.

Intervjuerna kommer att spelas in på flyttbart lagringsmedia och därefter transkriberas. Inspelningarna och utskrifterna av dessa kommer att förvaras i ett låst skåp i Högskolan Västs lokaler. De forskare (Afrah Abdulla och hennes handledare) som är knutna till studien kommer att ha tillgång till insamlat material i oidentifierat skick under studiens fortgång. Det material som finns kvar efter avslutat projekt kommer att arkiveras på Högskolan Väst i 10 år, för att möjliggöra granskning. I enlighet med personuppgiftslagen, PUL, kommer samtliga personuppgifter att hanteras av Högskolan Väst, som är personuppgiftsansvarig för denna studie. Denna lag är till för att skydda den enskilda individen, och ta tillvara hans/hennes rättigheter.

Studiens resultat kommer att presenteras genom att insändas för publicering i en internationell vetenskaplig tidskrift, samt ingå i forskarens avhandling. Vid publiceringen kommer ingen enskild individ att kunna urskiljas.

Frivillighet: Allt deltagande är frivilligt och du har rätt att avbryta din medverkan när som helst och utan särskild förklaring. Om du väljer att inte delta i studien, eller avbryta din medverkan, kommer detta inte att påverka ditt deltagande i kursen Samhällsorientering.

Ansvariga:

Forskare som är ansvarig för genomförandet av intervjuer, databearbetning och skrivandet av den vetenskapliga artikeln: Afrah Abdulla, tel.0520-22 37 54, afrah.abdulla@hv.se

Handledare: Lisbeth Eriksson, tel.08-579 220 71.
Signild Risenfors, tel.0520- 22 38 09.

Personuppgiftsombud (ansvarig för att kontrollera att Högskolan Väst följer PUL):
Margareta Åkesson, Högskolan Väst, tel.0520-22 30 54.

Studien: "Nyanlända vuxnas meningsskapande i sitt nya liv i Sverige"

Samtycke:

Jag har blivit informerad om studien, fått möjlighet att ställa frågor, fått dem besvarade och är medveten om att jag kan avbryta mitt deltagande när jag vill. Härigenom samtycker jag till att delta i studien/forskningsprojektet.

Datum:

Namn:

Telefonnummer:

Appendix E – Interview guide

Intervjuguide

Förståelse för ens nya liv i Sverige (meningsskapande)

Bakgrund – arbete, socialt liv i hemlandet, familj/vänner, fritid...

Vad är ett bra liv för den nyanlända?

Vad är integration för den nyanlända?

Vad gör man idag?

Mål/planer? Strategier för att nå dit man vill.

Bemötande i Sverige. (Skolan, grannar, folk på gatan etc.).

Hinder? Möjligheter?

Är meningsskapandet annorlunda idag, jämfört med tidigare, i hemlandet?

Har personen förändrats under sin tid i Sverige?

Samhällsorienteringens/introduktionsperiodens påverkan på tänkandet? (I vilken grad).

166. SANDBERG, FREDRIK. Recognition of Prior Learning in Health Care. From a Caring Ideology and Power, to Communicative Action and Recognition. 2012. ISBN: 978-91-7519-814-9
167. FÄGERSTAM, EMILIA. Space and Place. Perspectives on Outdoor Teaching and Learning. 2012. ISBN: 978-91-7519-813-2
168. FALKENSTRÖM, FREDRIK. The Capacity for Self-Observation in Psychotherapy. 2012. ISBN: 978-91-7519-797-5
169. BENNICH, MARIA. Kompetens och kompetensutveckling i omsorgsarbete. Synen på kompetens och lärande i äldreomsorgen – i spänningsfältet mellan samhälleliga förutsättningar och organisatoriska villkor. 2012. ISBN: 978-91-7519-777-7
170. RUSANGANWA, JOSEPH. Enhancing Physics Learning through Instruction, Technical Vocabulary and ICT. A Case of Higher Education in Rwanda. 2012. ISBN: 978-91-7519-739-5
171. MBABAZI, PENELOPE. Quality in Learning in Rwandan Higher Education: Different Stakeholders' Perceptions of Students' Learning and Employability. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-682-4
172. BYSTRÖM, ERICA. Ett lärorikt arbete? Möjligheter och hinder för under-sköterskor att lära och utvecklas i sjukvårdsarbetet. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-679-4
173. KAGWESAGE, ANNE MARIE. Coping with Learning through a Foreign Language in Higher Education in Rwanda. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-640-4
174. MUTWARASIBO, FAUSTIN. Understanding Group-based Learning in an Academic Context: Rwandan Students' Reflections on Collaborative Writing and Peer Assessment. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-633-6
175. MÅRDH, SELINA. Cognitive erosion and its implications in Alzheimer's disease. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-612-1
176. HARLIN, EVA-MARIE. Lärares reflektion och professionella utveckling – Med video som verktyg. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-611-4
177. ÖSTERGREN, RICKARD. Mathematical Learning Disability. Cognitive Conditions, Development and Predictions. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-565-0

178. ENGVALL, MARGARETA. Handlingar i matematikklassrummet. En studie av undervisningsverksamheter på lågstadiet då räknemetoder för addition och subtraktion är i fokus. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-493-6
179. JOHANSSON, ROBERT. Treating depression and its comorbidity. From individualized Internet-delivered cognitive behavior therapy to affect-focused psychodynamic psychotherapy. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-467-7
180. BERGMAN NORDGREN, LISE. Individually tailored internet-based cognitive behavioural therapy for anxiety disorders. 2013. ISBN: 978-91-7519-459-2
181. FREJD, PETER. Modes of Mathematical Modelling. An Analysis of how modelling is used and interpreted in and out of school settings. 2014. ISBN: 978-91-7519-414-1
182. AMAN, ROBERT. Impossible Interculturality? Education and the Colonial Difference in a Multicultural World. 2014. ISBN: 978-91-7519-348-9
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