MOZHGAN ZACHRISON

INVISIBLE VOICES

Understanding the Sociocultural Influences on
Adult Migrants' Second Language Learning and
Communicative Interaction

Linköping University

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INVISIBLE VOICES

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To my mother, the woman behind me

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a qualitative study exploring the sociocultural influences on adult migrants' second language learning and the communicative interaction through which they use the language. Guided by a theoretical perspective based on the concepts of life-world, habitus, social capital, symbolic honor, game, and the idea of the interrelatedness of learning and using a second language, this study aims to understand how migrants' everyday life context, attachments to the home country, and ethnic affiliations affect the motivation for and attitude towards learning and using Swedish as a second language. Furthermore, the study explores in what way the context within which the language is taught and learned might affect the language development of adult migrants.

The research questions of the study focus on both the institutional context, that is to say, what happened in a particular classroom where the study observations took place, and a migrant perspective based on the participants' experiences of living in Sweden, learning the language and using it. Semi-structured interviews, informal conversational interviews, and classroom observations have been used as strategies to obtain qualitative data.

The findings suggest that most of the participants experience feelings of non-belonging and otherness both in the classroom context and outside the classroom when they use the language. These feelings of non-belonging make the ties to other ethnic establishments stronger and lead to isolation from the majority society. The feelings of otherness, per se, are not only related to a pedagogical context that advocates monoculturalism but are also rooted in the migrants' life-world, embedded in dreams of going back to the home country, while forging a constant relation to ethnic networks, and in the practice of not using the Swedish language as frequently in the everyday life context as would be needed for their language development.

Keywords: Adult migrants, second language learning, communicative interaction, sociocultural context, life-world, habitus, symbolic capital, social capital

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What I wanted to show was that we need to see the whole migrant and his/her entire life-world in order to understand adult migrants' second language development. It took me 300 pages to convey this message. Finally *Invisible Voices* is finished, and there are a great many people that I want to thank from the bottom of my heart, as they have all contributed to it in one way or another.

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Mozhgan Zachrison
Lomma, spring 2014

1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation attempts to portray, describe, and analyze adult migrants' second language learning and use in a sociocultural context. This means that understanding the sociocultural impacts on teaching, learning, and using the Swedish language as a second language is the main objective of this dissertation.

Background

Try to teach language to a class of thirty students (fifty, if you are unlucky), a class that every week is filled with beginners, some of whom are associate professors, and some of whom cannot spell, where some want to do their best, others cannot give much because they are on painkillers after being raped in Kenya. Still others are sitting here for the third year, because someone decided that they need “to have regular routines and something to do.” And you, dear teacher, have perhaps never taught adults, if you are a language teacher at all. You can be the dance teacher, asking colleagues about the difference between object and subject (yes, it happened before at Lernia in Stockholm). But if you happen to be a qualified SFI-teacher, which means that you studied longer than your colleagues who teach Swedish, you have a lower salary and longer hours. (Maciej Zaremba, Dagens Nyheter, March 3, 2009)¹

1 ”Försök att lära ut språk till en klass på trettio elever (femtio, om du har otur) som varje vecka fylls på med nybörjare, där några är docenter, andra inte kan stava, där några vill ge järnet medan andra inget kan ge, då de går på valium efter våldtäkten i Kenya. Ännu andra sitter här på tredje året, för att någon bestämt att de behöver ”ha fasta rutiner och någonting att göra”. Och du själv, bästa lärare, har kanske aldrig undervisat vuxna, om du alls är språklärare. Du kan vara danspedagog som frågar kollegerna vad det är för skillnad mellan objekt och subjekt (ja, det hände hos statliga Lernia i Stockholm). Men råkar du vara behörig SFI-lärare, vilket betyder att du pluggat längre än dina kolleger som undervisar svenskar, har du lägre lön och längre arbetsdagar”. (Maciej Zaremba, Dagens Nyheter 2009-03-03)

The above quotation illustrates the complex situation within which Swedish as a second language is taught to thousands of adult migrants. Migrants attending second language courses in Sweden have diverse social backgrounds and have left different lives in the home countries for different reasons. This fact makes the whole process of second language teaching and learning, besides being a pure pedagogical task, a social process. I have myself studied SFI (Svenska för invandrare, Swedish for immigrants), and I have also had many friends and acquaintances who have taken the education. My view is that when designing second language teaching we need to take into consideration, on a deeper level, the social reality within which adult migrants live.

Previous studies indicate that adult migrants' social disposition can easily disappear in the teaching context and they can be reduced to being students in need of instruction and upbringing (see, for example, Ljungberg 2005; Carlson 2002; Runfors 2003; Bringlöv 1996; Årheim 2005). Examining the social experiences of second language learners and users (see Chow 2006) adds a dimension that shows how the second language learner as an individual, with a certain life history and her/his specific need for language development, might disappear in a school context².

Because of my interest in the relation between learners' social reality and second language outcomes, I decided to study language, communication, and IMER (International Migration and Ethnic Relations) and wrote my first essay about second language learning and identity. In my other essays I examined how second language learners experienced their language development and communicative interaction in the Swedish society.³ These studies gave some answers but raised even more questions. I was interested in seeing what a more scientific and qualitative study, at a deeper level,

2 I use the word school because the way teaching is conducted and norms are conveyed is not only a result of teachers standing in classroom and teaching certain things. The curricula, other educational authorities, and the politics of school education, are responsible for what second language courses contain and how knowledge is mediated. By using the word school, consequently, I refer to a whole system within which several agents are included.

3 "Second language learning and communication seen in a socio-cultural context" (2002). Master's Thesis

"Acquiring a new language in a cultural and social context" (2001). C-level paper

"Language and its significance for identity" (2000). B-level paper

would show about the importance of adult migrants' language development as related to the existing social dispositions of both learners and school. I aimed to realize this approach by combining knowledge from two different but interrelated aspects: knowledge which is constructed through the eyes of the participants (personally constructed knowledge) and knowledge which is constructed within a social context (socially mediated) (Clarke & Robertson 2001, p. 774).

My purpose was to immerse myself in the language learners' inner world and see if there was something more that could be discovered or that could explain what affects adult migrants' language learning and communicative interaction through using the Swedish language. The link between learning and using the second language became important for me when my earlier studies indicated a strong interrelatedness between learning and using Swedish language. However, choosing how to look at the issue was not so simple, because all my personal and previous study experiences showed another remarkable tendency. There were some migrants who knew the language well, but still felt that they had problems blending into communicative situations with Swedes. They still felt, after many years in Sweden, and in spite of possessing a rather good language ability, that they did not succeed in being a natural part of communicative situations with Swedes and in developing their language ability further. This reflection became a paradox, which portrayed another problem area: language ability and what happens during communicative interaction are two interwoven phenomena, and there is a series of different factors that influence learning a second language and using it.

As Qarin Franker rightly emphasizes, learning and using a second language is a complex conduct that includes a series of interdependent elements. This interdependence indicates the need to change the focus from learner to social situations and relations. A language in all its forms (written, verbal, pictorial, etc.) is socioculturally coded, which means that language learners of a second language can interpret what is being mediated in different ways in different social contexts (Franker 2011, pp. 13, 14). Firth and Wagner are among researchers who stress the importance of

the interrelatedness of both learning and using a second language and who also stress the need for more attention to communicative competence in second language learning contexts (the term “communicative competence” will be defined later). The core idea here is that we need to subscribe to a view of language that takes into consideration the cognitive and psychological system of producing a second language and the mental process involved in it (see also Li 2010). The contextual factors involved in learning a second language and using it require a “more emically and interactionally” adapted approach. When the authors talk about focusing on a more emical approach, they refer to a more participant-sensitive context that takes into account the experiences of the language learners, such as their communicative problems. Since language is a product of the human brain, it becomes a social phenomenon which is acquired and used through interaction contingently, in different settings, and with various purposes. Thus, Firth and Wagner suggest a holistic approach to second language learning and language use based on a distinction between individual, cognitive, and social fundamentals (Firth & Wagner 1997, pp. 296-298).

Therefore, even before writing down the research problem, I had a firm conviction, deeply rooted in the principle of a holistic approach to learning and using a second language as an adult migrant, that one could examine the issue of adult migrants’ second language learning and use as if it were a triangle. The top of the triangle is the migrants, their whole existence, their background, the sociocultural setting they exist in, their mind, and their way of handling life situations. School as an institution, with all kinds of teaching attitudes, approaches, and standards that it wants to convey, is another corner of the triangle. And, finally, adult migrants’ sociocultural experiences of a migration society consisting of people, ethnic networks, and communicative and social rules and codes, constitute the last corner of the triangle. These three dimensions need to be examined simultaneously and should be seen as interdependent, in terms of looking at the issue of adult migrants’ lack of language and communication skills. The above-mentioned triangle, with its three major elements of influence on second lan-

guage learning and use in a migration context, can be portrayed as follows:

Figure 1. Three major elements in a sociocultural understanding of the second language learning and language use of adult migrants

The figures used in this study aim to convey the general approach of the dissertation and portray the key dispositions in the minds of the readers. The figures only serve their specific purpose in this particular dissertation and are thereby not maps of reality outside the context of this study.

Adult Migrants' Language Education in Sweden

The educational system in Sweden, as in many other countries, is constantly affected by the social changes in society. Migration has been one of the strongest factors affecting the design and ideological approach of education in Sweden. In an analytical report from the Swedish National Agency for Education, one can read that in-

creased migration, changes in traditional family constellations, societal changes, residential segregation, increased differentiation between schools and between various groups of students, and decentralization (giving municipalities more responsibility) are the most vital factors influencing the educational design and research (2009, p. 14).

According to the Swedish National Agency for education, Sweden has in recent years faced the challenge to cope with the “ideologically grounded social changes” (2009, p. 14), which means that there is a need to problematize the role of students’ social background, gender, ethnicity, and living conditions as well as the conduct of schools and teachers in relation to teaching and the outcome of learning. Locating education and learning outcomes in a social context, the ability of the students to “speak the language of schooling” has a great impact on educational outcomes. What the students bring to schools has been called, also in an international context, “the curriculum of the home” (ibid., p. 52). The curriculum of the home as a concept that usually refers to “identifiable patterns of family life that contribute to a child’s ability to learn in school”⁴ can also be used in the context of adult migrants’ second language learning in order to show how patterns of migrants’ life can affect their language achievements. The idea of the curriculum of the home indicates the weight of socio-cultural factors, such as people’s social background and cultural capital, something that needs to be considered when designing teaching practices (ibid., pp. 45, 46; see also Fladmoe 2012; Jackson et al. 2012).

From the late 1960s the discussion of language competency was handled within a frame where migrants’ adaption to the migration society and the language teaching’s connection to the labor market were dominant. When the first curriculum for Swedish for immigrants was presented in 1971, it had only an advisory nature, because it was The Association for Adult Education that was responsible for language education for migrants. At that time the curriculum regulated by the government was not an obligatory directive for The Association for Adult Education. When finally, in 1986,

4 http://www.gilacountyschools.org/uploads/Curriculum_Of_The_Home_Sept.pdf 2012-07-18

SFI, Swedish for immigrants, became a responsibility for the municipalities, with a centrally designed curriculum, the nature of SFI education, which from the beginning was anchored in the labor market policy, was changed and it became an issue of migrant policy instead (Raka 2010, pp. 11, 12).

In a government inquiry one can read that high-quality education in Swedish should be considered as a good investment for society, and that different agents, such as the government, the municipalities, and individuals, must recognize a benefit with the education (SOU 2003:77, pp. 69, 70). Accordingly, some main questions are formed here: What does adult language education want to accomplish? Does it aim to accomplish language competency, be a tool for integration into society, be a platform for the transmission of norms, traditions, and values, prepare the students for the labor market, or what? Thus, as discussed in the investigation *Vidare vägar och vägen vidare*, there has been an antagonism between those who believe that SFI should primarily be seen as an instrument of integration policy or social policy and others who stress the role of SFI as an educational activity which should have language skills as its primary goal (ibid., p. 71).

In reading the documents about adult migrants' language education in Sweden, one can note that preparing the migrants for the job market and providing them with a familiarity with Swedish customs are considered as the two most significant starting points in designing the education. Looking at international research, on the other hand, as I will discuss more thoroughly later, one can observe that it is rather the language learners' empowerment (helping them to become independent and equal individuals by mastering a language) that is the main point. Mathews-Aydinli (see also Roberts et al. 2001) points to one of the most significant aspects in this context, namely, that migrants and refugees differ from other groups of language learners, for example, international students, and "represent a group of learners with unique expectations and needs". Therefore it is crucial to examine a) "the unique characteristics" of adult language learners, b) external factors that might have the most impact on language learning success or failure, and c) "the most effective curricula and pedagogical approaches for

these students” (Mathews-Aydinli 2008, pp. 198, 199). Furthermore, international research (see also Bernat 2004) advocates an approach based on examining language learners’ attitudes and motivation in relation to the possibilities for finding jobs (Mathews-Aydinli 2008, p. 201).

Another dilemma that impacts the outcome of language education for adult migrants is the status of the education. The reason that SFI is perceived as a low-status education according to the report can be summarized as follows: a) the education is not desired, b) the students are not proud of being a part of the education, c) teachers are not motivated to work with the education, and they are not required to have a particular competence, d) the responsible authorities are not well informed about the education, and e) the education is not prioritized, and degrees in SFI are not required and respected in society (SOU 2003:77).

Another interesting aspect is discussed in SOU 2003:77, namely, that Swedish for immigrants has never only involved pure language knowledge; the education has a broad purpose and has aimed to provide information about important aspects of civic and working life. According to Hans Ingvar Roth (1998), Swedish for immigrants, SFI, has been accused of not being able to fulfill its vital role to integrate the learners into the “new multicultural society”. Most documents and even the major investigation done in the work *Vidare vägar och vägen vidare* (SOU 2003:77) make a final verdict: SFI should involve knowledge about language, society, and work conditions; it should operate as an introductory door to society, its culture and work life.

Research Problem: Focusing on Non-Linguistic Determinants of Language Acquisition

Limited second language proficiency among migrants counts as a major problem for integration and for access to services offered in migration countries (see, for example, DeVortez & Werner 2000; Cheswick & Miller 2002). Adult second language learning, particularly in a migration context, is an understudied subject. Adult migrants as second language learners are a group that at the same time as they must acquire language and communicative ability

must also build a new life in a new society (see also Mathews-Aydinli 2008, pp. 198-200).

The problem involves, as stated by Knud Illeris, investigating the following questions: “what is learning, how does it come about, how can it be promoted, and why does teaching not always result in learning?” (Illeris 2005, p. 88). The holistic approach to adult migrants’ second language learning and use indicates the inseparability between teaching and learning. Teaching and learning occur in a sociocultural room where the world can be understood in different ways by school and teachers and the language learners (see, for example, Kozulin 1999, p. 135; Kozulin et al. 2003, p. I, 2; Nasir & Hand 2006).⁵ Furthermore, the issue cannot be separated from other social topics related to the act of migration that “entails adjustment and change, a process crystallized in the way language use patterns, proficiencies and identifications change” (Walker 2004, p. 3). Bonny Norton (2000) explains that adult migrants’ status changes after migration and this might entail a loss of power and social opportunities that has impacts on their language learning. Socio-psychological factors resulting from a changed social environment and losing the familiar social role and social networks, affect the development of the second language in a migration context.

Research on adult migrants’ second language learning indicates that much of the research on non-linguistic determinants of language acquisition posits that attitudes and motivation, which are functions of social, cultural, and personality factors, contribute to language learning (Nelson et al. 1984, p. 31). An emphasis on social, cultural and personality issues indicates that these elements might loom differently in different language learners’ case. This aspect in turn shows how complex it can be for every single learner to take a stance towards the second language and how the lan-

⁵ A sociocultural approach is relevant because in a time of social upheaval, as realised in Vygotsky’s studies, a radical reorientation of learning theories is necessary namely a changed focus from merely an individualistic approach into a sociocultural approach. This new orientation tells us that individuals can master “their own natural psychological functions of perception, memory, attention” by a set of psychological tools such as symbols, text, symbolic information and graphic organisers but not without having a cultural frame of references” (Kozulin 2003:16).

guage can help in reaching a better life in the migration society. Alice Kaplan describes this complex as follows:

I read as many scholarly disquisitions as I could find on second language acquisition- linguistic, sociology, education- and I found methods and statistics and the occasional anecdote, but nothing, really, about what is going on in the head of the person who suddenly finds herself passionately engaged in new sounds and a new voice /.../ there is more to language learning than the memorisation of verbs and the mastery of accent. (Kaplan 1994, pp. 59, 69)

As I will discuss in this study, not all migrants are passionately engaged in learning the Swedish language, but, as pointed out by Kaplan above, knowing about what is going on in the head of adult migrants who have left their countries and settled down in a new society with a new language is one of the key starting points in scrutinizing the issue of adult migrants' language ability and language development. What motivates the migrants, what they dream of, how they perceive the migration society and their surroundings as a whole, all this necessarily has an influential impact on adult migrants' attitudes towards the determination to learn a language and to what degree they want to master the language of the migration society. Integrating the cognitive into the social can therefore open new doors to understanding the complex issue of sitting in a classroom as an adult, trying to acquire a second language and at the same time build a new life from scratch. From a school and educational point of view, the post-migration condition requires a somewhat different understanding not only of how the second language is taught and learned but also of how it is used and under what circumstances, since it is the usage of the language which leads to language ability (see, for example, Krashen 1982, p. 83; Cote 2004, p. 2).

Purpose and Questions

The empirical platform of this dissertation is built upon data showing how thirty persons formulate their thoughts about and experi-

ences of a) participating in school, b) their life situation after migrating to Sweden, and c) using and communicating in the Swedish language, and how these sociocultural experiences might affect the participants' identity formation and language development. A sub-platform based on a few interviews with teachers attempts to problematize some key aspects of the study from 'a teacher angle'. The classroom observations conducted in this study stand for the understanding of the classroom second language teaching and learning activities in the particular context of the present study.

It is not the purpose of this study to give an explanation of the linguistic development of adult migrants, but rather to promote an understanding of how sociocultural features (inside and outside the classroom) affect adult migrants' language learning and language use.

The present study was designed as an exploratory step in understanding sociocultural influences on adult migrants' second language learning. My point of departure is that migrants' lack of language proficiency, or in other cases their success in learning a second language and communicate it, should be understood in the light of the significance of the cultural and social influences on the settings in which teaching and learning are carried out. To understand the sociocultural sphere which surrounds adult migrants we need to consider carefully the dynamic interaction between the migrants' past, their present situation, and how they perceive their future in the migration society. Therefore, the purpose of this study is: to construct an understanding of how the sociocultural inputs embedded in a group of migrants' past and present situation, and their perception of the future, might influence the course of their motivation and their attitudes with regard to learning and communicating in the language of the migration society; to illustrate in what way the teaching context, seen mainly from a sociocultural perspective, might interfere with the participants' learning and the communicative outcomes; and to examine in what way the two different groups of participants in this study perceive their language and communicative interaction, and what perspective they see as vital regarding their language and communicative development.

The following main questions will guide the research. These questions are designed according to the triangular approach to the problem of this study (see figure 1).

In what ways do the sociocultural influences shape the content of the teaching of the Swedish language?

In what ways do the language learners' life situations influence the course of their language development and language use?

What are the sociocultural experiences of the participants with respect to using the Swedish language through communicative interaction?

Disposition

This dissertation comprises seven chapters. The structure of these seven chapters is as follows.

Chapter 1 contains an introduction, with the background and the purpose of the study as well as the research questions. Previous research is outlined, and the use of some central concepts is discussed.

Chapter 2 describes the overall research methodology, which consists of the use of a qualitative method and a scientific, hermeneutic approach to the data.

Chapter 3 examines the theoretical frame that will, in chapter 7, serve as a tool to understand the different aspects that emerged and that were observed during the study. Here I describe how the theoretical concepts, that is, life-world, habitus, social capital, symbolic capital, and the game, are relevant to an understanding of the participants' statements and of the observations done.

Chapter 4 focuses mainly on my classroom observations. I describe what is taught in the classroom, how it is taught, and what reactions this creates among the participants. In this chapter I also start to connect the observed material to what other researchers in the field have emphasized in their research. The main perspective of chapter 4 is to show how much emphasis is put on sociocultural

aspects in the classroom and how these sociocultural aspects are illustrated in the teaching context.

Chapter 5 focuses on the participants at the Basic adult education. It discusses adult language learners' perception of living in Sweden and attempts to illustrate the connection between their everyday life context, the role of their past, their attitudes towards the Swedish language and society, and their motivation to learn the language.

Chapter 6 investigates the participants' experiences of participating in communicative situations where they use and communicate in the Swedish language. The chapter takes a somewhat different approach and narrows the participants' reflections on communicative situations. The purpose of this chapter is to show how the participants experience the actual communicative situations and how their experiences shape their attitudes to and their motivation for communicating in the Swedish language.

Finally, in chapter 7, I discuss the overall consequences of the findings in this thesis. Here I try to both analyze and summarize, using the research questions as points of departure.

Previous Research

Extensive research has already been done in the area of education and diversity and the understanding of minority education within the frame of school thinking and practices in the Swedish multicultural society. These studies, despite a somewhat different approach compared with the present study, give an overview of the climate of education and diversity in Sweden. Many of the aspects discussed in these studies touch upon sociocultural features involved in education and diversity, a perspective which is significant for this study.

School as a Vehicle for Otherization

In their study of the dilemma of education, Lena Sawyer and Masoud Kamali remark on a significant paradox regarding education and multiculturalism. They argue that multiculturalism underlines cultural differences and often contradicts its own ideals and purposes when it evokes thoughts of essential cultural differences

which encourage a culturalized understanding of the other. Liberal concepts such as ‘a multicultural approach’, ‘multicultural guidance’, and ‘multicultural education’ can actually be a channel for otherization and categorization of students in terms of African, Latino, Arab, Muslim, Somali, etc. (Sawyer & Kamali 2006, pp. 17, 18).

The structural and institutional discrimination is another angle which is the subject of Sawyer’s and Kamali’s study. The authors argue that the goals and visions of the state are supposed to be realized by actors with institutional power, such as teachers. However, the problem is that the positive goals of the educational system can meet with strong institutional obstacles. This depends largely on the institutions’ role as being the reproducers of norms and of a cultural and socioeconomic hierarchy. Consequently, the educational institutions obtain the power to determine the ‘reality’ (Sawyer & Kamali 2006, pp. 9-12). Sawyer and Kamali see the position of teachers as gatekeepers and welfare officers, and argue that study counselors, the schools’ pedagogical approach, and the school textbooks can operate as contributing factors to the otherization of the minority students. Thus, the authors point out a link between otherization of students by the school and the construction of discrimination.

Caroline Ljungberg has examined the consequences of the encounters and relations constructed “between everyday life in Swedish schools and the multicultural context of the Swedish society” (2005, p.4). What Ljungberg explains, based on her interviews with principals and teachers, is how in the eyes of the school, students with a certain ethnic and social background are seen as individuals who lack knowledge and role models with respect to the fundamental values appreciated by the school. Accordingly, it becomes the mission and responsibility of the school to socialize the students into what the school sees as accepted (*ibid.*, p. 78). What is most significant in Ljungberg’s study is how otherness is formed based on the existing traditional power of schools, a power that enables schools to categorize students. Categorization processes have always been a part of the school world, but what is essential according to Ljungberg is that students no longer are categorized

based on their school performance but rather based on ethnic and gender belongingness (*ibid.*, p. 189).

The issue of categorization constructed within the school practices is discussed thoroughly by Ann Runfors (2003) as well. She argues that there is a consensus which helps the teachers to determine a category of foreign students (a group of students who are seen as problematic). This consensus also helps in determining how to approach the students 'with problems'. The teachers' approach to diversity in school is based on the idea that students with certain ethnic backgrounds are different and hence should be changed. In an earlier study in the field of schools and minority children (Ronström, Runfors & Wahlström 1995), Runfors stresses that she observed the exact same tendency and consensus with regard to what was assumed to be the problem with foreign students. Runfors describes how the way the teachers worked in the three schools where she made her fieldwork turned out to be a method to subordinate students, put them aside and marginalize them. What is interesting in Runfors' study is the perspective of fostering, which is developed in terms of teachers' concern for the students when they encourage the students in how they should behave in order not to irritate the Swedes (Runfors 2003, p. 92). In other words, what interests Runfors is how otherness is perceived and created in Swedish schools. She asserts that schools are strongly ideologically charged, and as organizations they have certain functions, such as to qualify, socialize, and select (Runfors 2003, pp. 7, 54). What happens, she emphasizes, is a dichotomization in terms of normal and deviant; using a system of hierarchy in order to locate individuals in superior or inferior positions. By being defined by other people (here in negative terms) individuals are ascribed categories and belongingness which normally end in certain people acquiring the power which enables them to determine who is deviant and should be seen as belonging to a different category. In order to understand this kind of marginalization, she stresses that we need to understand the social relations, practices, and processes that are created and lead to social structures (Runfors 2003, pp. 16, 32, 33). Runfors uncovers the complex of educational systems in plural societies by showing how teacher influence impinges upon

the whole school process that students experience. Her research indicates how teachers' interpretations of equality and justice, and teachers' perceptions of how a society should work, operate as a principle in dealing with ethnic diversity and understanding it. The alienation of students is constructed by teachers describing the suburbs as areas with problems that are socially neglected and characterized by violence (Runfors 1996, p. 43).

Sabine Gruber, in her dissertation, indicates how ethnicity, or the conscious construction of ethnicity, is the foundation of categorization in the school system. But what is new in Gruber's thinking is the idea that categorizing on the basis of ethnicity can be connected to earlier ideas of race and biology (Gruber 2007, p. 18). Based on her interviews with school teachers she underlines how teachers' perception of ethnicity as an essential part of the 'foreign' students' life leads to the construction of a mechanism for hierarchical division. The cultural and ethnic categorizations existing in the daily organization of schools are reminiscent of the idea of the construction of human races (*ibid.*, p. 21). Furthermore, she discusses the dilemma of how, despite the fact that ethnicity is hardly problematized in the world of schools, it replaces class issues and how the actions and behaviors of students are explained in terms of ethnic affiliation (*ibid.*, pp. 25, 27).

Focus on Second Language Learning in a Social Context

Marie Carlson is one of the few researchers who have a research focus on adult migrants' language learning in Sweden. She has tried to highlight SFI education both in a societal context and in a practical teaching context. With a sociocultural approach, she attempts to illustrate how a group of women with lower education experience their SFI education. A key idea in her study is to examine how concepts such as knowledge, learning, and organization are understood by people involved in the educational process. One of her main conclusions is that the learners are not given autonomy; they are seen as the 'weaker one' and they are not treated with respect in the educational context (Carlson 2002, pp. 111, 133). According to Carlson, what schools for adult migrants mediate is that students must have a deep knowledge about the Swedish society,

about laws and rights, about equality between men and women, about conditions involved in the labor market, and about the norms and values which are central in the Swedish society. As a result, the education demonstrates an ethnic Swedish perspective, and not multiculturalism. The fact that Swedishness is frequently discussed in textbooks, and discussed in terms of how Swedes eat, what Swedes do in their spare time, etc., creates a dichotomy based on “we” and “they”, a discursive isolation (Carlson 2002, pp. 96, 98).

Inger Lindberg is another researcher who has a long experience of research within the field of adults’ second language learning and communicative interaction. Her research mainly involves language development and learning by conversation and interaction, second language aspects of learning in general, and language and integration. Lindberg, like many other researchers (for example, Carlson 2002; Cummins 2001; Cummins & Corson 1997; Gruber 2007; Runfors 2003; Mattlar 2008), points out how the schools’ concentration on making ‘real Swedes’ out of the students results in stigmatization, confirming divergence and seeing students as different (Lindberg 2009, p. 17). Lindberg has been interested in showing the shortcomings of teaching Swedish as a second language and Swedish for immigrants. As she argues, when the subject Swedish as a second language (*Svenska som andraspråk*) was introduced in the mid-1990s, the initial purpose of the subject, that is, to fulfill the need of minority students, turned out to be an indicator of divergence and exclusion. Moreover, due to the inferior implementation of Swedish as a second language, it became a low-status subject (Lindberg 2009, p.18). Low status is also ascribed to SFI and is seen as one of the failure factors of the education (see SOU 2003).

In another study, conducted by Lindberg and her colleague Ingrid Skeppstedt, 7 teachers and 70 language learners at SFI were observed. The purpose of the study was to examine the conditions for learning and developing a second language, and language awareness, by observing the participants’ interaction during different activities. The result of the study indicates that a collaborative method facilitated interaction and cooperation (Lindberg 2000). Lindberg’s studies are indeed significant for the development of the

methodological approach to learning and teaching Swedish as a second language.

Annick Sjögren is another researcher who has made valuable efforts in mapping out attitudes towards second language ability and the power construction involved in determining what good language ability is. The following quotation is a good example of Sjögren's interest in a deepened approach to the meaning of national language, society, and power and how these operate in a time characterized by migration and differences:

This insistence that "they have to learn Swedish, they have to learn Swedish" is as a matter of fact a defense against a threatened "Swedishness" and obscures the real problem that involves tolerance. And it is of course shocking to realize that one is not tolerant. Then it is easier to speak about language issues. ⁶(My own translation)

Sjögren points out that the long-lasting hegemony of the West, striving for a universal schooling based on the supremacy of the national language, is one of the most vital barriers in achieving satisfactory results in educating migrants. She stresses an approach where the second language education needs to see the whole person, the whole community, and the whole curriculum. The connection and the interplay between the macro levels, such as historical, political, and ideological forces behind the educational system, and the micro-level, where the daily implementation occurs, therefore need to be put forward. According to Sjögren, the strong institutional structure of the Swedish society contradicts multiculturalism, because the Swedish language operates as a symbol for cultural and societal competence (Sjögren 1997, p. 11 ff).

Pirjo Lahdenperä and Hans Lorentz are two other researchers who discuss the construction of monoculturalism in Swedish schools and emphasize the importance of intercultural pedagogy.

⁶Det här med att "de måste lära sig svenska, de måste lära sig svenska" är i själva verket ett försvar mot en hotad "svenskhet" och skymmer det verkliga problemet som handlar om tolerans. Och det är ju så klart chockerande att inse att man inte är tolerant. Då är det lättare att tala om språk.
<http://fou.skolporten.com/art.aspx?id=a0A200000000p76&typ=art> (2011-10-05)

Lahdenperä asserts that the Swedish schools see as their task to convert the students into Swedes by providing them with Swedish values and patterns of behavior. She argues that students' linguistic background is often seen as a challenge and students' earlier language and cultural knowledge are perceived as an obstacle for their Swedish language development. These attitudes exist despite the fact that many studies confirm the positive connection between 'mother tongue ability' and the development of a second language (Lahdenperä 2010, p. 23).

Hans Lorentz underlines the importance of educational research in relation to diversity and multiculturalism. He asserts that many of the existing research reports problematize the issue of school and diversity from other aspects than pedagogy, such as political science, sociology, ethnology, and social anthropology (Lorentz 2010, pp. 173,174). From a theoretical pedagogical angle, it is significant to conceptualize educational approaches and implementations in order to clarify what schools attempt to accomplish by using different concepts, such as gender pedagogy, adult pedagogy, special pedagogy, etc., and the author argues that a modernization of educational approaches becomes an inevitable measure in a world characterized by diversity (Lorentz 2010, pp. 178, 179).

Åsa Wedin takes a different turn in her research and focuses on motivational factors as related to social issues. She discusses the meaning of a pedagogical context that promotes learners' ability (Wedin 2010, pp.14-15, 65-66).

The Cultural Domination in School

Jörgen Mattlar, in his dissertation (2008), has studied five books for second language learning from 1995 to 2005. He has focused on how these books describe the Swedish society and how they reflect values with regard to gender, equality, ethnicity, multiculturalism, and class. He concludes that there is an ideological power struggle in textbooks. The political messages in the textbooks function as propaganda which gives a distinct inferior status to the target group and constructs an arena for ideological power relations. What Mattlar tries to mediate is that by using certain textbooks, schools attempt to assimilate the adult learners. According to

Mattlar, Swedes in the textbooks are represented as secular, scientific, and rational, in contrast to migrants, who should be enlightened and assimilated into the mainstream society. The consequence, according to Mattlar, is the construction of an inferiorized and alienated group that cannot be integrated into society. Mattlar's research indicates that the textbooks have a coherent political ideology production and that dominant values rooted in social democracy are systematically highlighted in the textbooks (Mattlar 2008, pp. 181-182). According to Mattlar, the integration into the Swedish society is not unconditional. It must be based on the Swedish values about child-raising and the social democratic ideology of gender equality. A latent premise is that migrants should have a secular approach to society and keep a private relation to their religiosity. Since the integration becomes the migrants' responsibility, the segregation issue also becomes their responsibility (Mattlar 2008, p. 186). Mattlar concludes that the message sent by the textbooks advocates an assimilationist approach and that linguistic, historical, religious, and cultural diversity is absent from the textbooks. The textbooks, in other words, do not recognize the diversity that characterizes the Swedish society (ibid., p. 195).

In her dissertation *A monocultural offer (Ett monokulturellt erbjudande)*, Ann-Christin Torpsten has analyzed the educational ideals that characterize the curriculum of Swedish as a second language. She investigates how these ideals have changed over time and how syllabi are related to curricula. By using a curriculum-theoretical approach she conducts a text analysis of curricula and syllabi. Second language learners, according to her, are not offered knowledge acquisition based on pedagogy, but they are encouraged instead to learn about Swedish culture and values. She concludes that the curricula of Swedish as a second language are characterized by monoculturalism (Torpsten 2006).

Åsa Bringlöv is another researcher who discusses the issue of who sets norms in schools and why. According to her, Christian traditions and Western humanism in curricula are the upholders of ethical values and foster individuals in school to have a 'coherent' view of justice, generosity, tolerance, and responsibility. She argues that Swedish schools represent an unproblematic and contradic-

tory picture of pluralism. On the one hand they recognize the internationalizing movement which means respect for and understanding of differences, while, on the other hand, Swedish schools do not act as neutral institutions, because they advocate the idea that students should be fostered according to certain fundamental values rooted in Swedish traditional society (Bringlöv 1996, p. 66 ff; see also Årheim 2005, p. 129; Lundgren 2005).

Katarina Norberg, in her research, discusses the fact that advocating a homogeneous culture in the classroom can be a strategy for survival in a complex and hectic classroom. Likewise, many teachers' individual values, with their origin in the majority culture, influence their presuppositions about children's needs. There is, then, a more or less conscious unexpressed goal of inclusion by assimilation into the dominant culture (Norberg 2004, p.17).

International Research: Second Language Learning, Diversity, and Migration Societies

Bonny Norton is a researcher within the field of second language learning who has been especially recognized for her thoughts on the relationship between social identity, language learning, and the investment in a second language. Norton attempts to make the research community of second language learning observant of the fact that the social identity of the learner and the power constructed between second language speakers and native speakers are two crucial factors. What is new in Norton's approach is that she uses the term "investment" in discussing motivation in a second language learning context.

I take the position that if learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources, which will in turn increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners will expect or hope to have a good return on that investment – a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources. (Norton 1995, p. 17)

Norton takes her research in identity-related factors into a second language learning context and emphasizes that changing identities are therefore an interesting issue for the process of language education (see Norton 2000). In her book *Critical Pedagogies and Language Learning* (2004) she goes further and advocates the implementation of language education that can provide social justice, and sociocultural, political, and economic changes.

Lately, many scholars, particularly in North America, have advocated what has been called multicultural education. Multicultural education, among other things, emphasizes minority students' own experiences as an asset rather than an excluding feature. Jim Cummins is one of the researchers who strongly argue for the importance of multicultural education. The key emphasis in Cummins' research is on using students' own experiences, instead of coercive power relations, as a means for developing and encouraging a dynamic collaboration between students and teachers. What he strives to indicate is how the patterns of underachievement of minority groups and the issue of empowerment are connected to the classrooms as the microcosm of the wider society (Cummins 1997, p. 89). Cummins has also tried to bring to the fore the role of policymakers and educators in a time when the school population becomes more and more multilingual. In his book *Language, Power and Pedagogy* (2000) he discusses how power relations in the wider society affect the classroom interaction.

Sonia Nieto is another researcher whose research has had great importance for the international research within the field of second language learning and diversity. Nieto stresses the meaning of cultural capital and the difference in socialization between migrants and the majority population as a crucial factor with respect to language competency and integration. She occasionally refers to her own life experiences as a migrant, in order to illustrate the above-mentioned differences. She, for example, situates her own childhood, with no bedtime stories and no museum visits, in a critical context, a context where the boundaries between 'normal' children and children at risk are defined. She explains: "in a word because of our social class, ethnicity, native language, and discourse practices we were the epitome of what are now described as 'children at

risk’/.../” (Nieto 2002, p. 2). She asserts that a cultural and linguistic background that is different from the mainstream makes the students vulnerable “in a society that has deemed differences to be deficiencies” (ibid., p. xvi). Her core idea, as developed in her book *Language, Culture, and Teaching* (2002), is the impact of the cultures (both learners’ and schools’) on teaching. In one of her latest works, *Affirming Diversity* (2012), she explores the benefits of multicultural education in a sociopolitical context. What she emphasizes is how personal, social, political, cultural, and educational factors influence the failure or success of students with diverse backgrounds. Like other researchers advocating multicultural education, she also stresses the importance of seeing multicultural education as a guarantee for social justice and social change in classrooms, schools, and communities. Accordingly, the first step towards a multicultural education, as discussed by Nieto (2002), is that schools need to have a *mission statement*. By moving beyond the traditional way of teaching and learning, schools can clarify what is their specific pedagogy, namely, their mission statement.

The culturally diverse classroom is the research area of James Banks as well. Banks’ main research focus is on how to become an effective professional by understanding the field of language and diversity. In his book *An Introduction to Multicultural Education* (2008) he attempts to provide teachers with a knowledge background to important issues involved in multicultural education. One of Banks’ main arguments is that by using a transformative and multicultural curriculum, you give students the possibility to draw their own conclusions and interpret knowledge in their own way (Banks 1999, p. 61).

Roberts et al.’s research (2001) indicates another significant aspect. The authors assert that there is a difference between international students’ and migrants’ conditions in learning a second language. Among other approaches, the authors encourage two pedagogical approaches called *Ealing Ethnography Programme* and *Student Centred Language Learning*. While the first approach advocates improving learners’ ability to “make sense of the information that surrounds them” (Roberts et al. 2001, p. 40), the latter approach has as its main purpose to promote opportunities for de-

veloping self-autonomy, flexibility self-confidence, and personal skills and orientation (ibid., p. 43).

Research Contribution

Examining the second-language development of adult migrants is an utterly significant issue, as language development has a huge impact on integration, self-realization, wellbeing, social justice, and societal participation. As reviewed in the section about previous research, the subject of second language learning and minority education is one the most topical issues within different disciplines. The subject has consequently been scrutinized from a variety of angles. However, there is very little research with respect to investigating adult migrants' language development as related to their life-world. Specifically, we need to know more about how her/his positioning in an everyday life context characterized by migration's aftereffects might have a meaning for language development in migration societies. Knowledge about how adult migrants' life-world is constructed within a sociocultural sphere can provide us with valuable insights, so that we can see teaching, learning, and using a second language from new perspectives. The present thesis attempts to fill this need by illustrating the meaning and impact of adult migrants' everyday life context as related to sociocultural features in teaching, learning, and using the Swedish language.

The Use of Certain Concepts

Culture

Over time the meaning of culture has engaged many scholars. The main questions have been in what way cultures matter, how cultures can be interpreted, and how cultural comprehensions influence people's minds and conduct. The present study's interest in the concept of culture has been developed in the course of the research, when it became obvious that culture, even as a dynamic phenomenon with restricted influence over time, can create meaning in the participants' life in one way or another. So taking the following quotation as a starting point, culture is in this study understood as one of the elements in the process of meaning constructions in adult migrants' lives.

Believing, with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning. (Geertz 1973, p. 5)

Geert Hofstede (2003) has during a long period of time emphasized culture's crucial impact on people's behavior in terms of patterns of thinking and feelings which human beings learn over a lifetime (see also Holliday et al. 2004; Mody & Gudykunst 2002). Culture describes the use of normality, heritage, and traditions. "Culture touches on all aspects of life, including general characteristics, food, clothing, housing, technology, economy, transportation, individual and family activities, community and governmental systems, welfare, religion, science, sex and reproduction, and the life cycle" (Matsumoto 2006, p. 35).

During the last decades, transnational conditions have added another perspective to the understanding of culture, which makes the relation between cultures and people even more complicated. The ethnologist Jonas Frykman encourages a problematization of culture in a diasporic context and emphasizes that we should not forget that nowadays we think of culture as mostly related to a complex society. We constantly deal with culture as a phenomenon connected to identity and influenced by features like nationality, gender, age, class, ethnicity, and social background. In this complex society characterized by diasporic existences, it is utterly significant to focus on the person who experiences culture (Frykman & Gilje 2003, p. 15). The relationship between cultures and within cultures should be explained by those who are, in different ways, culturally situated at the center of the social modification and the identity constructions. Studying culture from 'below', and trying to understand people's perspectives and thinking by being in the field, could be seen as the first step towards understanding a set of new questions and challenges for the complex society in the age of migration. So, a cognitive understanding of culture encourages seeing and understanding culture from new angles in diverse societies (ibid., p. 20). However, the question is if an 'intellectual' under-

standing of culture can help in improving the language learning, language teaching, and language use of adult migrants in migration societies.

A crucial aspect of the role of culture in this study is to understand the transnational relations and the continuity of cultures in the migration societies and how culture can be a potential organizing instrument in a migrant's life.

Refugees and migrants stay in touch not only with the “stay-behinds” in their former place of residence, but also with other refugees and migrants from their former city or region who have ended up in other countries. The dispersion is not confined to a single host country, but often covers many countries, sometimes even continents, all interconnected through these transnational communities. Therefore the idea of “commonality” must be replaced by a search for the capacity of differences to be united. Culture can then be described as a means, an instrument with which diversity can be organized, both in interests and standpoints. In such a vision, culture is not a system of fixed codes, but an implicit contract with respect for diversity. (Dijkstra et al. 2001, p. 77)

Here we narrow the perception of culture as a tool to organize diversity; it becomes an “implicit contract” and not a mystified collection of social inherited codes. Mohsen Mobasher refers to Joan Nagel and discusses culture in a similar context, comparing the concept with another significant concept, namely, ethnicity.

Nagel suggested that rather than viewing culture as a historical legacy loaded with cultural goods, we should perceive culture as an individual and group construct through which cultural items are selected, “borrowed, blended, rediscovered, and reinterpreted.” In Nagel's view, culture and ethnic boundaries are constructed through the same interactive process with the larger society: An ethnic boundary answers the question of identity – Who are we? – whereas culture answers the question of substance – What are we? (Mobasher 2006, p. 114)

The advantage of recognizing culture as what we are (instead of what we have become), as I see it and try to convey in this study, is that culture as a mediator of what we are refers to a temporality, a non-essentialist view of our cultural existence, which is, however, fundamental at times. The idea of culture in terms of what we are indicates a more reasonable perspective, which involves culture as offering a sense of living that can be changed and is not essential in eternal terms; it indicates that what we are ('our culture') is an interpretive apparatus we use in our search for meaning and which changes over time. Perceiving "human beings as cultural beings, with a desire to form attitudes to the world and to supply it with meaning" is something that indicates that the discussion about culture involves "a question of objective culture, created by man, and of the ability of men to be cultural" (Zeuner 2001, p. 109).

Communicative Competence

In his book *Rules and Representations* Chomsky refers to 'pragmatic competence', which is similar to the idea of communicative competence. He asserts:

/.../ the person who knows a language knows the conditions under which it is appropriate to use a sentence, knows what purposes can be furthered by appropriate use of a sentence under given social conditions. (Chomsky 1980, p. 224)

Communicative competence refers to the idea that "grammar must be based on semantic⁷ concepts and must help a learner to acquire a practical mastery of language for the natural communicative use of language".⁸ It can also be explained as the ability to know how to produce a language (Habermas 1976, p. 12).⁹ When the socio-

⁷ "In the most general sense, semantics is a component theory within a larger semiotic theory about meaningful, symbolic behaviour. Hence we have not only a semantics of natural language utterances or acts, but also of nonverbal or paraverbal behaviour, such as gestures, pictures and films, logical systems or computer languages, sign languages of the deaf, and perhaps social interaction in general" (van Dijk 1985, p. 103).

⁸ Ohno, A. *Communicative competence and communicative language teaching*. http://www.u-bunkyo.ac.jp/center/library/image/fsell2002_25-32.pdf

⁹ Canale and Swain as early as 1980 encouraged a communicative approach to language learning in terms of the interaction between social context, grammar, and meaning. This interaction stresses the

linguist Dell Hymes (1972) coined the concept of communicative competence, his intention was to stress universal features of language ability (see also Hymes 1967). It was the ethnography of language which was important in his approach, that is, people's different ways of producing and interpreting communication. In the same way, the term "communicative competence" is used in this study to portray the ethnography of learning and using a second language. Thereby communicative competence is seen as the bridge between learning a language and acquiring the feel for using the language together with other people. In a similar context, Bonny Norton points out the inseparability of speech, speakers, and social relationships and encourages an approach to second language learning based on the conditions under which language learners speak. She states that:

In this view, every time language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with their interlocutors; they are also constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. They are, in other words, engaged in identity construction and negotiation. (Norton 1997, p. 410)

Motivation

In using motivation as one of the major factors in learning a second language after migration I primarily refer to the ideas of Norton, who encourages an approach based on the use and understanding of the concept of *investment* rather than motivation. This deliberate move from emphasizing motivation towards the understanding of investment helps us comprehend "the complex relationship of language learners to the target language and their sometimes ambivalent desire to speak it" (Norton 1995, p. 9). In other words, the motivation to invest in a second language becomes a question of to what degree the migrants see the migration society as attractive and possible to invest in. Here, as Norton puts it, the notion of motivation involves the desire, or the lack of desire, to

crucial role of the interplay between grammatical competence, communicative competence, and sociolinguistic competence (Canale & Swan 1980, p. 3).

invest in another language; it becomes a matter of the relation “between the individual language learner and larger social processes” (ibid., p. 10). My interest in synthesizing the concepts of motivation and investment is grounded on the idea that by doing so the social world and the social context around the migrants become visible and we can see how this social sphere might affect the need and the desire to learn the Swedish language. This approach – as I see it and as was emphasized by Gardner as early as in 1985 – can explain the fact that motivation is about goals, how much effort learners put into their educational process, their desire (determination) to reach language competency, and their attitudes towards the process (Gardner 1985, p. 50).¹⁰

The study of language learning involves social, gender-, class-, and identity-related issues. Over the course of language learning, these identities simultaneously interact and determine a disposition according to which the learning process occurs. Learners’ efforts are a kind of ‘investment’ in social identity. Learners are motivated to various degrees in designing their future and what kind of people they want to be. Furthermore, learners’ investment in language learning can be understood when we know about their socio-cultural world (Kinging 2004, p. 240).

¹⁰ “The type of motivation answers the question of why the individual is studying the language. It refers to the goal. Many reasons could be listed: to be able to speak with members of that language community, to get a job, to improve one’s education, to be able to travel, to please one’s parents, to satisfy a language requirement, to gain social power, etc. It may even be that there are as many reasons for studying a second language as there are individuals” (Gardner 1985, p. 51).

2. METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION

The Design of the Study: The Two Groups of Informants

1. Language Learners at the Basic Adult Education

The school of my field study was located in Malmö. The education conducted in this school was Basic Adult Education (Grundläggande vuxenutbildning). According to the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket), the Basic Adult Education course is for those who are over 20 years old and need to study at primary school level. The Basic Adult Education (hereafter BAE) should be based on the students' earlier knowledge and life experience and provide the opportunity to combine the studies with internship or work.¹¹

The school of my field study was a small school for adult migrants who needed further studies, above all with regard to language improvement. The BAE was a continuation of SFI for those who needed more preparation from, above all, a language point of view. According to the head of the school, it was an adult education carried out on the basis of a commission from the educational authorities in Malmö. The education started in 1997 and was a result of the concept called "Knowledge improvement" (*Kunskapslyftet*), and since then the education had been going on for about ten years. The teaching in Swedish was based on the

¹¹ The interested reader can find more information about Basic adult education at: http://www.skolverket.se/om-skolverket/visa-enskild_publication?_xurl=http%3A%2F%2Fwww5.skolverket.se%2Fwtpub%2Fws%2Fskolbok%2Fwpubext%2Ftrycksak%2FRecord%3Fk%3D1395

Swedish national curriculum for Swedish as a second language both on a basic and on a high school level. Other subjects have varied considerably, but the school mostly worked with subjects such as English, civics, mathematics, home economics and consumer knowledge, and computer skills. All the subjects have been taught according to the curriculum for primary and high school. The principal of the school said that “we have strived as much as possible to use assignments which have a reality-based direction with regard to the labor market. This has become increasingly emphasized during the last few years when practice-based teaching has been debated frequently”. The education does not exist anymore within SFI, because the Malmö municipality has decreased its economic support for adult education strongly. “We do not have any idea what the future will look like”, stated the principal at the BAE during a discussion with me one year after my fieldwork was conducted.

Most of the students at the BAE, aged 22 to 45, were from the Middle East and had lived in Sweden between 3 and 15 years.¹² At the BAE they were taught more advanced Swedish and also social studies. Despite the fact that these students had been studying Swedish for immigrants (SFI) before, the school authorities considered them to be in need of more language improvement.

Group Discussions at the BAE

The selection of the participants was carried out on the basis of my intention to interview students with a background in the Middle East. The reason for this was that the availability was greater, because in Malmö there are many migrants with a background in the Middle East. This fact facilitated the implementation of the empirical part. Another reason for having people from the Middle East in my study was rooted in my own interest in and sense of closeness to these people and their language development after migration.

I usually met most of the female participants after class (these were students from the class I did my observations in and students

¹² For a more specified presentation, see appendix 1.

from other classes). We usually had lunch together after class. During these lunch meetings I asked them about their lives before moving to Sweden, their lives after moving to Sweden, how they perceived the language classes, how they perceived their own language development and communication with other people outside the school, and how they perceived their future. During my visits at the school I usually stayed for about two hours. The first hour I sat in the classroom for observation and the next hour I had group conversations with the female participants. These group conversations were conducted twelve times. At the beginning there was a more intensive period of conversation and at the end there were only a few occasions with a few of the participants who originally belonged to the conversation group; the rest of the participants were gone. The reason that some of the participants were gone was that some of them were finished with their studies and some dropped out for unknown reasons. The last conversation was conducted when a group of female participants came to me at Malmö University and we spent a whole afternoon together for group conversation.

I chose to conduct open-ended group conversational interviews, because I wanted, firstly, to give the participants the opportunity to open up and, without any restrictions, reflect upon their situation from a cultural, social, and communicative perspective. Secondly, I found it necessary to conduct open-ended conversational interviews in order to enhance an interaction between myself and the participants (see, for example, van Enk 2009, p. 1268).

There were eight female participants at the BAE who originally came from Syria, Iraq, and Lebanon. They were between the ages of 22 and 45 and had lived in Sweden for a period of 3-15 years. The nature of the group conversations was informal. This means that the participants were free to discuss various subjects. But these conversations always revolved around issues that I saw as constructive for the study (mentioned above). We usually had these conversations for an hour and I wrote down the conversations at the same time as I was listening to them. Once I invited these students to Malmö University and we had a group discussion for about two hours. Some of the participants felt uncomfortable with

the idea of tape-recording the conversations. They did not know how the tapes were to be used in the future. In order to create confidentiality and harmony, I decided to write down the conversations instead. I wrote down the key statements and opinions, and since the participants had restricted language ability and it took a long time for them to explain things, it was possible for me to write what they said during the conversations.

However, some problems were anticipated with respect to the low level of the participants' language skills. It was not easy to get 'good' comments and answers when most of them possessed a restricted vocabulary. It was difficult for some of them to convey what they really wanted to say because of inadequate language ability. With this in mind, I had some difficulties in reaching my purpose with the group discussions, which was to get an insight into the participants' experiences as adult migrants learning a second language. Because of this I asked one of the language learners, Zeynab, to help me with the translation whenever needed. She had lived in Iran since she was a little child and spoke fluent Persian. She sometimes translated my questions into Arabic and the participants' answers into Persian. Zeynab helped me with the translation, when needed, during my visits at the BAE when I had lunch with the female participants after the classroom observation. The interviews with male participants at the BAE were conducted individually and I had no translators.

For two reasons, I wanted the participants to express themselves without any help from an 'official translator'. Firstly, they told me explicitly and many times that they appreciated talking to me because it was good for their language development. Secondly, I wanted to see and hear how they used the language; to see their body language and the dynamic involved when they were using a language that they did not master completely. Given this context, the idea of having a translator was not appealing. I was afraid that the participants would associate the translator with the authorities and thereby become very careful about what they told me.¹³

¹³ During several lectures that I gave for nurses I got the information that migrants have rather negative attitudes towards translators. Trust and intimacy are two of the most important features in this context. My contact with other migrants also confirms the problem with regard to translators.

I also met a group of five men at the BAE for conversation on one occasion and two other men on another. These conversations took place in a classroom at the school. The men were from Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan.

Observations at the BAE

/.../ reality exists in textured and dynamic detail in the “natural” environment of the social world. The meaningful features of everyday life consist of participants’ orientation to, and actions within, this world as they purposefully manage their realities. (Gubrium & Holstein 1997, p. 19)

One of the main reasons for undertaking observation as a methodological choice is to obtain more insights and “to take the reader into the setting that was observed” (Patton 2002, p. 23). In studying small groups in a natural setting, participant or non-participant observation can be conducted. Usually the researcher aims to investigate a single social situation or social institution without altering the conditions. Non-participant observation, due to the fact that the researcher cannot interact in the social process, involves making interpretations based on qualitative data. However, by using other methodological research tools as supplementary tools “interpretations and maybe even hypotheses can be confirmed” (Parke & Griffiths 2008, pp. 2-5).

In this study non-participant observations were employed. I observed one group of learners in their classroom twelve times once a week for about an hour. The nature of the observations was non-participating, as I did not want to influence the context in any way. The language learners at the BAE belonged to the B level when I met them. It means that I met them when they started their second semester. During my observations the students had lessons in grammar, listening and reading comprehension, and oral presentations. I wrote down everything that happened and was said in the classroom. As said earlier, I stayed after class and had conversations with the students during the break and at lunchtime. After the observations I acquainted myself with the students in order to

facilitate future co-operation. Later we would eat lunch together in the school's dining room. The food was brought from home and we discussed when preparing and eating the food.

Home Visits

I conducted three visits at the homes of three of the participants at the BAE. One of the aspirations behind this initiative was to see if there were some obscured or meaningful patterns that would turn out to have an impact on the participants' learning development and that I had not noticed, or that they did not speak of in the school, patterns which could perhaps be discussed in their home environment. The idea of home visits was most of all connected to the perception that "if one is to understand it, one must enter and view it on its own terms" (Gubrium & Holstein 1997, p. 23). 'Being there' is an ideal vantage point, but in order to really understand participants' lives, the researcher must get inside "their worlds" (ibid., p. 25). Home visits became a shortcut, which enabled me to see the other side of the coin, that is to say, how some of the participants developed their thoughts in the familiar milieu of their home. To comprehend the depth of social life and lived experience, it was crucial to understand "the total man in his total natural environment" (ibid.). I am not saying that I have observed the total man in his natural environment by conducting three home visits, but I believe that, as Gubrium and Holstein point out, the field is also about extending emotionality, and that the home visits provided me with a better understanding in interpreting the context (ibid., p. 9). Furthermore, meeting people in their home is something that can "help participants to be more relaxed and allows the researcher to meet participants in a 'natural setting'" (Moriarty 2011, p. 8).

All the home visits took place in Malmö. The first visit took place in the home of Nadir, a male participant from Afghanistan. I spent the day and had dinner with Nadir and his family in their apartment. The second visit took place in Halima's apartment; I was invited to have lunch with her. The third visit took place in Leila's home and we had dinner together. Halima and Leila were

both from Iraq. All three participants were students from the BAE, and I interviewed them all.

2. Malmö University Students

During the period of 2004-2006 I was one of the guest teachers who lectured about language and identity in a course called Communicative Swedish at Malmö University. Communicative Swedish attracted many students with a foreign background and these students, according to my interpretation, were passionate about issues related to language use, identity, and belongingness. I saw an opportunity in this to highlight how two groups (learners at the BAE and students at Malmö University), with different educational backgrounds but with some common migration-related experiences and in some cases the same 'ethnic' background, coped with issues related to language and communication.

The starting point for the interviews with the students at Malmö University was how affiliation, identity negotiation, and finding a place in the new society, could be related to the language and the communicative ability of the students and to their understanding of the social and cultural codes of communicating in a second language. The students were reached by putting an ad on the student board for the course Communicative Swedish. The students from Malmö University were between the ages 20 and 39. The participants generally met no selection criteria. The only initial criteria were that they should have their origin in the Middle East and have moved to Sweden in their youth or as adults.

However, despite this initial ambition, five of the students at Malmö University came originally from Zimbabwe, Germany, Scotland, Singapore, and Luxemburg. I decided to use the interviews with these students, because despite their different origins some of the experiences they had were similar to those of other participants with regard to communicating in the Swedish language. The interviews with students from countries outside the Middle East were useful, because they can explain in what way the self-understanding and the introduction into the new society might be developed with similar characteristics for individuals with different nationalities and origins. It was critical to illustrate if differ-

ent factors in diverse situations could influence the participants' language and communicative development differently. The reason that I interviewed students from Malmö University was partly to see if a higher education influenced the sense of self and young migrants' sociocultural experiences of the use of the Swedish language and communicative interaction, compared with the participants from the BAE. I saw these interviews as vital in order to develop the idea of the influence of sociocultural conditions on a communicative interaction with the migration society among two distinct groups of migrants. The interviews with these 12 female and 3 male participants at Malmö University took place in my office and were tape-recorded. I interviewed two of the participants at Malmö University a second time after the first interview. These were students who were still studying at Malmö University and I found it interesting to listen to them two years after the first interview.

Interviews with Teachers at BAE

I also interviewed three female teachers and the principal (male) of the school, that is, the BAE. All the teachers and the principal had been involved with second language education between 5 and 15 years. Due to the less structured way in conducting qualitative research (see, for example, Leidner 1993), I was able to address different issues as they appeared to be interesting in an interviewing context. However, the major focus was the teachers' understanding of teaching the language learners and how they experienced various aspects of teaching Swedish as a second language.

A Qualitative Study

/.../it is important to first consider what it is that we, as qualitative researchers, actually do. We go into other people's lives, sometimes at a time of crisis and stress, and we ask them to talk in detail about their experiences. (Dickson-Swift 2007, p. 330)

I chose a qualitative approach, as it was important for me to conduct open-ended conversational interviews in order to make enough space for what the participants saw as important to say

during a crucial period of their life. Furthermore, as a methodological guideline I was inspired by Koro-Ljungberg et al.'s (2009) discussion about the importance of epistemological awareness in qualitative studies. The authors argue that qualitative research should focus on the following three questions: Is there any connection between the purpose statement and the chosen theoretical perspective? Is there any connection between the data collection methods and the chosen theoretical perspective? Is there any connection between the research questions and the chosen theoretical perspective (ibid., p. 693)?

Considering the first question mentioned above, since this study aims to illustrate sociocultural influences on second language learning and language use, an exploration of what affects the participants' thoughts, actions, and attitudes was necessary. Bourdieu's concept of habitus has been used, since the concept can offer an analytic function, firstly, in understanding the participants as a category, in terms of a group of people being migrants in a new country and learning and communicating in a new language, and, secondly, in understanding that this category is fluid and changeable depending on external outputs (Davey 2009, p. 276). The concept of life-world, on the other hand, as a concept referring to "the outer orientations" composed by different influences, indicates that education occurs in a setting constituted by different elements (Ashmore 1969, p. 47). Thus, both these theoretical angles have the potential to help shedding light on adult migrants' second language learning as a multidisciplinary issue in a sociocultural context.

With respect to the second question mentioned above, the connection between the chosen data collection methods and the theoretical perspective rests on the idea that understanding people's sociocultural experiences and habitual associations to life requires establishing trust, letting people talk, and asking questions that can lead to 'sincere' expressions. In order to achieve this goal, open-ended interviews and informal conversations were found to be most adequate. And finally, regarding the third question, since the research questions of the present study focus on individuals in a dynamic context influenced by the past, the present, and the future,

it was necessary to consider concepts and theories which could explain what features can influence individuals' thinking over a critical period, in this case a period shadowed by migration and the process of getting to know a new country.

As I understood it in the beginning of the research, conducting qualitative research not only involves a group of participants and what they do and say, but also my own accumulative experiences of participating in a social process and reflecting on it subjectively and objectively. What I saw was locally constructed and conditional (Miller & Fox 1997, p. 37), and I do not claim that my study has reached any clear-cut answers, but the methods used in this research are instruments for understanding the complexity of social life rather than tools for finding the answers (Gubrium & Holstein 1997, p. 16). The picture I present of those people that I met, talked to, and tried to understand will be a small part of the sociocultural understanding of thirty-four individuals, or, as Miller and Glassner (1997, p. 131) put it, I have only captured elements of their social world and established trust and "familiarity, showing genuine interest, assuring confidentiality, and not being judgmental" (Miller & Glassner 1997, p. 133).

It must be mentioned that the value of qualitative research has been criticized mainly because, according to some critics, it has poorly articulated standards and is usually not conducted upon evidence (Torrance 2008, p. 507). The criticism has, especially within education research, been motivated by referring to "producing too many small-scale, disconnected, noncumulative studies", which has also been called "cottage industry". These kinds of studies, accordingly, are not perceived as being able to provide explanations or develop methods for better teaching and learning (Torrance 2008, p. 509). Although there is a measure of relevance in this kind of criticism, a qualitative approach seems to be the best approach for studying migration-related issues that involve the "process of migration decision making, identity formation and change through migratory experiences, the role of social capital and social networks in immigrants incorporation" as well as "the dynamics of transnational social spaces" (Losifides 2011, p. 1).

This particular study aims to answer given research questions, by examining and understanding the participants' experiences and attitudes, and to some degree how they perceive things, as well as their opinions about certain things. Since the study aims to obtain specific information in a particular social context, I found it most appropriate to use a qualitative approach. Furthermore, since the research questions seek to provide a contextual description of how people experience a given situation, a qualitative approach seemed to be the best method in illustrating how perceptions, beliefs, opinions, emotions, behaviors, and relationships form the social room whose nooks and crannies this study attempts to visualize.

Qualitative Research Interviews

Qualitative research was originally conducted within sociology and anthropology as a “systematic approach to knowledge creation” (Crow & Edwards 2013, p. 11). In qualitative research the interviews are characterized by flexibility and lack of rigid structure. The terms used in qualitative interviewing, in general, are “in-depth, informal, non-directed, open-ended, conversational, naturalistic, narrative, biographical, oral or life history, ethnographic and many more” (Crow & Edwards 2013, p. 3). In qualitative research it is vital to explain to the interviewees and make them understand in what way qualitative interviews are different from other kinds of interviews (*ibid.*, p. 8).

Qualitative interviews are used in order to understand what people think, why they do things, and how they feel about certain things and conducts. They provide the possibility to describe social processes (how a phenomenon is constructed) and to acquire a more deepened understanding of peoples' experiences. During an extended discussion led gently by the researcher, qualitative interviews provide a more understandable picture of people, look into personal issues, and shed light on old problems (Rubin & Rubin 2005, pp. 2-4). In constructing understanding and meaning, the researcher cannot act as an automaton but tries to illustrate how people understand what is meaningful around them (*ibid.*, p. 22).

Qualitative interviews based on interpretive constructionist theory “try to elicit the interviewees' view of their world, their work,

and the events they have experienced or observed”; they attempt to understand how groups of people create definitions and share them. By grounding the research interviews on interpretive constructionist theory, the researcher searches for what the participants see, how they interpret, how their experiences are shared and transformed from one generation to another (from one group to another group), what is specific, and what details their life is made of. In other words, the researcher tries to build an understanding based on what is specific (Rubin & Rubin 2005, p. 28). “Constructionists often pay attention to the shared meanings held by those in a *cultural arena* – a setting in which people have in common matters such as religion, history, work tasks, confinement in prison, or political interests” (Rubin & Rubin 2005, p. 28). Since qualitative interviews encompass the worldviews of both interviewer and interviewees, the researcher must be aware of his/her own cultural assumptions and not let his/her assumptions “get in the way” (Rubin & Rubin 2005, p. 29).

Interviews built upon constructionist philosophy are called responsive interviewing. What characterizes responsive interviews is the construction of a relationship between interviewee and interviewer (between two human beings), the construction of a profound understanding, the flexibility of research during the project, and awareness of our own biases and expectations (ibid., p. 30). Responsive interviews require ethical obligations, writing everything you have learned, and asking more questions. One aspect of conducting responsive interviews is that questions can differ from what the researcher originally intended to ask, if the interviewee changes directions, and also that many of the questions emerge during the process (Rubin & Rubin 2005, p. 35). Responsive interviews based on the philosophy of constructionism are an appropriate method in this study, because its main principles help in fulfilling the purpose of this study and of the research questions. These principles are:

1. Obtaining the interviewee’s interpretation of their experiences and their understanding of the world in which they live and work is important;

2. Since the responsive interview will be built on and carried out through a mutual relationship between interviewer and interviewee, the researcher must be aware of his or her own opinions, experiences, cultural definitions, and even prejudices;
3. The relationship between interviewer and interviewee also stresses the issue of ethical obligations with regard to sensitive information that may have emerged during the interviews, and protecting the interviewees;
4. It is essential not to influence the interviewees by personal opinions, and to ask broad questions in order not to limit the answers;
5. Responsive interviewing design is flexible and adaptive because the researcher must take into consideration new inputs that have emerged during interviews (Rubin & Rubin 2005, p. 36).

Qualitative research interviews are supposed to lead to knowledge that “takes the form of explanations of how others interpret and make sense of their day-to-day life and interactions (ibid., p. 16). Therefore the method is an appropriate methodological approach in this study that sees the life-world of the participants and the social dispositions surrounding them as major stepping-stones in understanding adult migrants’ language development after migration. Shoshana Zuboff argues that “behind every method lies a belief. Researchers must have a theory of reality and how that reality might surrender itself to their knowledge-seeking efforts” (Zuboff 1988, p. 423). For me it was important, with a starting point in research questions, to hear what the participants wanted to tell and to, as stated by Rubin and Rubin, use myself in terms of coming up with flexible and less formal questions to encourage the participants to tell and elaborate their opinion and express their experiences in a more uncontrolled way (see Rubin & Rubin 2005, pp. 37, 40).

I used semi-structured interviews, which are frequently used in qualitative studies. Semi-structured interviews are non-standardized interviews that can be used in research without a specific hypothesis (David & Sutton 2004, p. 87). This kind of inter-

view is built upon a series of topics, issues, and questions that must be discussed during the interview. In semi-structured interviews an interview guide is used, but the researcher can change the order of the questions or add new ones if necessary (Corbetta 2003, p. 270). I used semi-structured interviews because I wanted the opportunity to be able to explore the opinions, thoughts, and attitudes of the interviewees and discover issues that appeared to be significant in the process of interviewing, issues that had not been considered from the beginning (emerging issues) (Gray 2004, p. 217). In semi-structured interviews, by having key themes and sub-questions the researcher has a sense of order but is still given the opportunity to ask questions based on “unplanned encounters” (David & Sutton 2004, p. 87).

Informal Conversational Interviews

Informal discussions and conversational interviews have been used in this study. An informal conversational interview is unstructured and open-ended. It is flexible and the direction of it is determined according to what appears to be right during the interview. “Most of the questions will flow from the immediate context” (Patton 2002, p. 342). Informal conversational interviews are constantly related to the interviews conducted earlier and are shaped according to what has been worth building on in the previous interviews. In other words, in informal conversational interviews data and the respondent have a considerable impact on shaping the interviews (ibid.). Conversational, that is, informal or unstructured, research interviews comprise a “complex and fraught context” (van Enk 2009, p. 1266). In this context, the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee, and also the power aspect, the question of ethical responsibility, and the emotional connection, play a crucial role (van Enk 2009, p. 1266). Informal conversational interviews constitute social situations “framed as local enactments of historically regularized but flexible discursive forms” (van Enk 2009, p. 1266). In such situations the source of information is what the interview in general reveals and what the interviewees tell us (van Enk 2009, p. 1267). Since group interview methods are seen as a situated social interaction, the interviewer and the inter-

viewees collaboratively construct the meaning and together negotiate what must be in focus (*ibid.*, p. 1269).

Informal conversational interviews can be explained as a setting where one immerses oneself in another situation and constructs questions as one moves forward (Turner 2010, p. 755). Conversational interviews are “designed to assure that all respondents understand questions as intended”. According to this approach, it is important that interviewee and interviewer understand each other correctly and therefore a discussion (between the respondent and the interviewer) about the meaning of the questions is a common aspect (Conrad & Schober, p. 1).

Methodological Considerations

Sometimes the unclear principles for qualitative research make it difficult to make a detailed design, which may result in the researcher being “tempted to work in an ad hoc rather than planned, systematic manner” (Brown 2010, p. 230). Due to the “frustrating” situation that some of the participants at the BAE had to deal with, such as worries about the homeland and the future, along with the fact that most of them had difficulties in expressing their feelings and opinions in Swedish, a somewhat unplanned and informal approach was sometimes necessary in order to make the interaction possible. However, in order to ensure a proper approach I had two ‘controlling methodological features’ as starting points. The first feature was related to reliability. Could I choose other methods in answering the questions of the research, such as structured interviews? As mentioned above, due to the fact that most of the participants at the BAE had difficulties with the Swedish language, informal conversational interviews were the most appropriate method. Individual interviews, in the case of the participants at the BAE, would not have led to an effective collection of data. The second feature was based on what Brown calls transparency, which means that the researcher is reflexive and explicit about what the ideals and theories of the research are. Here it is important that the researcher explains how the data were collected and interpreted, and what difficulties were faced (Brown 2010, p. 244).

One problem with the collection of data was that the participants at the BAE could not fully concentrate on the interview questions. The responses obtained from the participants indicated that they were so occupied with dealing with different aspects of life after their migration to Sweden that the importance of achieving better language ability, and a deepened discussion about the importance of that ability, became subordinated to their personal thoughts about a series of things that they had to handle in Sweden. It was especially this finding that made me realize that there are a series of indirect inputs outside the classroom that influence the participants' attitudes and motivation for learning and communicating in the Swedish language. The participants' strong anxiety with respect to how their future would be in Sweden reduced their interest in the meaning and the importance of the interview questions. The most important thing for them was to find solutions to 'life problems' in Sweden. Such problems of course restricted the possible achievements of the research and created some doubts on my part. On the other hand, these kinds of uncertainties are more or less common in conducting qualitative studies and, as van Enk expresses it (2009, p. 1280), despite all the handbooks and careful methodological considerations, there are moments when the interviewer must deal with hesitation and contradiction, and perhaps it is in such moments of hesitation during research conversations or interviews that the researcher has "to step out of this interview talk and facilitate the conversation with laughter, explanations, corrections, bracketing rituals, and so on" (van Enk 2009, p. 1274). In order to get more fruitful details, I had to be 'friendly' with the participants by, for example, drinking tea with them, letting them ask me about things which were totally irrelevant for the study, laughing together with them, and using questions that I from the beginning had no intention of asking.

'Helping the Participants to Deliver'

One of the most difficult processes in conducting this study has been interpreting the collected data. The process of interpretation consisted of several steps, where I had to confront my own text and question its validity. As stated by Miller and Crabtree, "the

dance of interpretation is a dance for two, but those two are often multiple and frequently changing, and there is always an audience, even if it is not always visible. Two dancers are the interpreters and the texts” (1999, pp. 138, 139).

One major problem with regard to using group conversation interviews was to collect understandable information from those informants with lacking language ability. The problem was not only to get ‘clear statements’ but also to ‘turn’ them into something comprehensible. In their study *Cultural Competence in Qualitative Interview Methods with Asian Immigrants*, Suh et al. elaborate on a significant subject, which might be left unnoticed or unproblematized in social studies conducted in the age of globalization and migration. They emphasize that linguistic and cultural attributes hidden in what an interviewee says will “not be captured” if the transcripts are “immediately translated” into the research language, because they lose “important cultural aspects and culturally specific expressions” (Suh et al. 2009, p. 198).

The direct translation does not depict linguistic characteristics as well as contextual differences between Korean and English. The words in parenthesis are added for grammatical purposes. The words “I” or “me” were added because the respondent did not make any reference to herself in the Korean language. This is consistent with the collective aspects of Korean culture as well as of Korean linguistic styles. Such a linguistic and cultural device would not be captured if the transcripts were immediately translated into English, losing important cultural aspects and culturally specific expressions. (Suh et al. 2009, p. 199)

In line with Suh et al.’s emphasis on a cultural and linguistic consideration of the material, and as Billy Ehn (1996, p. 92) also points out in his own research, it was occasionally necessary for me to find a way into the empirical labyrinth, to go back and double-check what had been said and find new openings. Since some of the participants were not able to produce coherent sentences in Swedish, it became my job to use what they told me and their confidences, perhaps with a slight ‘disrespect’, in order to turn their

experiences, by interpretation and analysis, into comprehensible theoretical themes and problems.

In working with and transcribing the informal conversational interviews, I was inspired by the method Billy Ehn employed (1996, pp. 139-141) when he worked with the interviews he had with former Yugoslavians. I saw his approach as an interesting way to use the informal conversational interviews in the present study. I read the texts from the group conversations with the students from the BAE. I collected all the short sentences expressed by the language learners at the BAE and rewrote them so that they became understandable units. I read short sentences many times and turned them into two or three. Occasionally, I had to ask for more complementing information when I met the participants the next time, so that I was sure if I understood correctly what they said. One of the participants at the BAE, Zeynab, originally from Iraq, had grown up in Iran and could speak Persian fluently. Sometimes I asked Zeynab to translate in certain contexts, so that there would not be any question marks about what had been said. I did not try to standardize the process of transcription or justify the way I organized and used the informal conversational interviews, but I tried to acknowledge the problems the situation implied and take responsibility for my scholarly practice, in terms of making the process of transcription visible and secure a construction of knowledge (Bucholtz 2000, p. 1463).

Interviews with other participants at Malmö University and the teachers at the BAE were taped, transcribed precisely, and used exactly.

The Hermeneutic Approach

Hermeneutic research seeks to understand how individual experiences construct the world. Gaining insight, seeing themes in what is being said by individuals, and analyzing a phenomenon based on an understanding of what may be relevant across a group of individuals – those are some of the most important approaches in hermeneutic research methodology (Patterson & Williams 2002, p. 49). The main reason for choosing a hermeneutic approach in this study was its emphasis on the meaning of history/historicity in interpreting research data. The hermeneutic understanding is based

on changing conditions and on the fact that human understanding is related to the history within which she/he lives in a certain time (Wachterhauser 1986, p. 7). Hence, the term historicity is central in hermeneutic theory of understanding:

/.../ who we are is a function of the historical circumstances and community we find ourselves in, the historical language we speak, the historically evolving habits and practices we appropriate, the temporally conditioned problems we take seriously, and the historically conditioned choices we make. (ibid., p. 9)

The hermeneutic statement of a historically conditioned positioning of people, as I see it, indicates the importance of those theoretical aspects and concepts that are used in this study. A sociocultural perspective on adult migrants' language development in this study is built upon the conception that learning occurs in a sociocultural context (see, for example, Oldfather et al. 1999, p. 8) and relates learners' past learning experiences to their future development (Lantolf 1994, p. 41; Lantolf 2006). In the same way, Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, social capital, symbolic capital, and game illustrate the existence of a life history and individuals' positioning based on an attachment to a social position inherited from the past but changeable over time (see chapter 3).

From the beginning, hermeneutics involved clarifying obscure, ambiguous passages in texts from the past, especially religious texts. In the nineteenth century a discussion was started with regard to whether the hermeneutic methodology could be used in the interpretation of any kind of texts or in understanding people's social life (Hammersley 2012, p. 22). The contemporary hermeneutic philosophy involves people's understanding of their life experience that "always reflects broader cultural viewpoints that are implicitly conveyed through language". In other words, people interpret their life in a frame of reference where the cultural viewpoints are integrated into the unique life conditions of an individual. Hermeneutic research seeks to illustrate how people standing on a shared social platform experience different things and adapt the cultural viewpoint to their unique life situations (Thompson et al. 1994, p. 432).

Hermeneutic research with its *interpretivist* approach sees all versions of truth as constructed by the viewers' perceptions and understanding of their world. The challenge, though, is to "uncover what these versions reveal about the people who tell them, their positions in the social structure of their communities, and their cultural understandings" (Roth & Mehta 2002, p. 132).

This study employs the methodology of the hermeneutic circle, which refers to a relationship between the parts introduced and discussed in the study and to what is accomplished as a whole. The hermeneutic approach provides the ability to see the interdependence of different aspects of realities and narratives, and it thereby shows the whole (Wachterhauser 1999, p. 102). This means that the parts cannot be grasped without understanding the whole and vice versa. The preconceptions about the parts and the whole are consequently intertwined (Patterson & Williams 2002, p. 26). In this way each single statement can change the general understanding of, and the approach to, the whole study. This aspect is one of the most characteristic aspects of the hermeneutic circle. In a study based on the hermeneutic circle, after each interview the researcher can analyze the text and determine how to continue and if new aspects need adding. This lack of standardization can be criticized by the traditional methodology, while in research based on the hermeneutic circle not to ask the same question in the same way can be seen as an advantage.

The hermeneutic circle as a methodology allows an earlier state of analysis based on data collection drawn from individuals, instead of relying too much on waiting and analyzing the data on an aggregate level. This means the opportunity to improve the interview process and taking into consideration that it is likely that new emergent themes will be possible during the research process (Patterson & Williams 2002, p. 27).

In accordance with the hermeneutic principle, my interpretation of the interviews, the conversations, and the observations has been developed and modified over time to better highlight the broader sociocultural viewpoints that I propose underlie the participants' expressed meanings and positioning with respect to language learning and language use. In doing so, the hermeneutical circle as a

philosophical proposal has created a context in which assumptions and beliefs shaped by culturally situated perspectives have been the source of knowledge (Thompson et al. 1994, p. 433).

Data Analysis

In order to analyze research data one has to understand the data first. One of the major elements in understanding things is presupposition, without which understanding cannot exist. At the same time understanding cannot be achieved without our “being-in-the-world”. So by our “being-in-the-world” we shape pre-understandings that “function as landmarks” in a world we are unfamiliar with and this results in reality being established upon our preunderstanding (Wachterhauser 1986, p. 16 ff). In hermeneutic research analysis, the researcher’s task is to show how knowledge can be created from a circular process (Wachterhauser 1986, pp. 22, 24).

The hermeneutic approach to analysis is based on the metaphor of a circle. This means that the informants’ narratives, and even their nonverbal expressions, can be significant in the process of analysis and meaning making, where the details will be explored rigorously in order to be connected to a whole (Patterson & Williams 2002, p. 45).

In accordance with the hermeneutic analysis, I identified and marked meanings within the transcript. What is vital is to define aspects that can be understood by taking into consideration other features of a system. These gathered aspects are called meaning units that “are not words or phrases but groups of sentences”. In this way the researcher can make a general definition of separate but still interdependent units of the interview narrative “that expresses an idea complete and coherent enough that it can be focused on separately” (Patterson & Williams 2002, p. 48).

There is no specific procedure and there are no specific rules for identifying and defining a meaning unit other than a careful reading and focus on those parts that can be meaningful for the phenomenon studied. At the same time, the researcher must be aware that a comment can appear as meaningless at the beginning but turn out to be relevant later. “Therefore it is important to occasionally go back and read an entire interview over again” (ibid.).

The hermeneutic analysis, as stressed earlier, rests upon the researcher's insightfulness. Anchored in a "feeling for the nature of the meaning units" the researcher develops thematic labels under which meaning units can be categorized. The meaning units are, in other words, the participants' actual statements that help the researcher to influence the reader, while the thematic labels are analytical tools that, by the interpretation of meaning units, indicate what the meaning units actually can reveal about the phenomenon being studied (ibid.).

In the process of analysis, the interpretation of data should not be limited only to identifying topics. What is important is to see, understand, and explain what relationship exists between different themes; that is, to construct a holistic interpretation. The hermeneutic analysis advocates developing a "visual aid that helps organize the themes and their inter-relationships". By doing so, the researcher can interpret the data more insightfully than if just reporting it. Since the hermeneutic analysis is strongly based on the researcher's interpretation and insightfulness, the reader must be led through the study with the aid of introductions, transitions, and summaries. At the same time, the empirical findings must be introduced as clearly as possible, so that they allow the reader to make, perhaps, an interpretation of her/his own (ibid., p. 49).

Researcher Bias

My biases derived from the fact that I am myself a migrant who has experienced, and even during the process of research was experiencing, some of the thoughts that were expressed by the participants. My biases are also based on the fact that I have my 'opinions' about language, communication, society, and culture. It means that there is a possibility of position bias, as I am a researcher with more or less the same cultural background as the participants but academically trained in Sweden. This perspective is explained by using the term "intellectual authority" for interpretation by Pickering (2008, pp. 10-11). Intellectual authority refers to authorial power which might allow the researcher to presume the experience and feelings of research participants (ibid.).

Barbara Myerhoff, the writer of *Number Our Days* (1978), conducted an ethnographic fieldwork about elderly Jewish people in a *Social Centre* in a South Californian city. My work is in one way similar to Myerhoff's. Both of us enter a field with mixed feelings, a slightly forgotten shared background, and an inner understanding of our participants. Myerhoff saw a connection between herself as a Jewish woman at a later stage in life and those elderly people that she studied. She writes: "someday I will be a little old Jewish lady like one of those". Consequently, we both "know" our participants not through socializing but through roots of origin. Besides an abstract understanding of what we experienced during the fieldwork, we also have a lived feeling for some hidden futures tied to ethnic belongingness and alienation. In the past, I had experienced what my participants were going through, while Myerhoff thought that she would experience a life similar to that of her participants in the future.

I myself was a migrant and had undergone the process of second language learning and social integration. I saw a connection to the participants, but at the same time I felt detached by my 'professional' interests. After having finished the fieldwork, I met both the teachers and other participants that partook in my study on the streets of Malmö several times. We stopped and talked to each other for a few minutes. My impression was that they believed that I had forgotten what they had told me during the group conversations and interviews. I wondered if they knew that I read what they told me several times every week and tried to be smart and use what they told me, as I believed it would upgrade my dissertation. This concentration on my own ends was difficult to deal with, as I saw the participants as my "own people".¹⁴ Accordingly, I had to deal with thoughts of closeness and distance constantly; it was about sharing a certain past with the participants, yet knowing what they felt and 'where' they were at the same time reminded me

¹⁴ Most of the participants and I came originally from countries in the Middle East. Besides a common religion, there is a kind of interconnectedness between the history, language, tradition, and worldview of our countries. In other words, we are familiar with each other's lived experiences and we, in one way or another, have always tried to perpetuate closeness to each other. Since I have a good grasp of the reality from which my participants came, I felt very close to them. They were like my own people.

that we had not actually shared the same conditions either before or after migration to Sweden. My attachment to the participants was about a sense of peoplehood rather than a total identification and devotion.

My presence in the field evoked many questions about what significance my pre-understanding had in comprehending the field-work. It seemed that at the same time as I investigated the lives of others, I meditated upon my own existence (Ehn & Klein 1994, p. 10). Having an insider view turned out to be more complex than I thought. That was why my and the participants' behavior and thoughts were underpinned by expectations of similarity and feelings of solidarity. At the same time, my 'sub-culture'-related ideas of how life and human existence should appear in its social context emerged as a surprising feature that eventually opened a road to a deeper understanding of what I was studying. I am not denying a kind of inner subjective conflict between myself and the field, but, firstly, I constantly questioned my own pre-understanding and subjectivity, and, secondly, to be subjective is human. Not even the most serious scholarly work can liberate itself from a mental process that is subjective, irrational, and culturally restricted (ibid., p. 40).

Stranger, Friend, or Traveler?

The grey corridors, the discrete pictures on the wall, and the blue office furniture reminded me that nothing had been changed since the eighties, besides the separate toilets for men and women. I stood there pretending to look for 'my classroom' and remembering the position I had left many years ago. Or did I ever leave it? Studying the physical characteristics of the school reminded me of a familiar past similar to the present of the participants, and I wondered about the consequences when the researcher herself is involved in the same hybridism of identity and positionality that she attempts to explore within the frame of her own research. James Clifford (1997) uses the concept *the traveler* in order to explain how a researcher might experience the field.

The field is a home away from home, an experience of dwelling which includes work and growth, the development of both per-

sonal and cultural competence. Ethnographers, typically, are travelers who like to stay and dig in. (Clifford 1997, p. 22)

However, I was not only a traveler. I experienced a state of uncertainty in the fieldwork that, at times, brought to the forefront the stranger in me; a stranger that could be defined in terms of George Simmel's stranger (1950): a stranger who does not fit in despite all her efforts; a stranger who has difficulties in seeing and understanding new patterns which cannot be interpreted with reference to her previous understanding. Simmel also discusses a perspective of the stranger that could be applied to a researcher who lingers between two roles, being the friend or the stranger. Simmel's explanation can easily be used in a research context when the researcher studies an earlier self-experienced context. He argues that the stranger is part of the group, but at the same time she/he has the freedom to leave the group and travel away. She/he is present and absent. The stranger is not tied to any predetermined apprehension; she/he is free to develop her/his own opinion on various phenomena and can stand outside relations and other collective bonds (Simmel, cited in Hallerstedt & Johansson 1996, p. 13). A friend, however, has a 'responsibility' and cannot stand outside the relations; she/he thinks of other features, such as feelings, solidarity, shared experiences, and so forth.

Consequently, I hovered between three positions, not only when I was in the field but also when I worked and wrote down the material, namely, between being the traveler, the stranger, and the friend. For the traveler, it was the journey itself and the discovery that were interesting. I, as the traveler, was the worldly cultureless adventurer who searched for new detailed clarifications. For the stranger, the situation and the final goals were central. As a stranger, as Ehn and Klein point out, I used other people's ways of living for my own purpose (1994, p. 37). As a stranger I was blind to friendly relationships, but as a friend I wanted to help them. Hovering between these three positions changed my perception and the content and direction of the dissertation. Eventually it became obvious that despite a shared background, social constructions distinguish all of us in many ways and, consequently, our social be-

havior could not be generalized on the basis of a shared background. Social aspects attached to boundaries of 'roots and belonging' showed the importance of the unique individuals and understanding them on their own terms. The fact that I and the participants had partly similar experiences, but on distinctly individual terms, finally created a new understanding, as I, in a state of confusion, understood that affiliations can be conditioned by the social environment surrounding us.

Van Maanen states that the researcher is the professional stranger who creates understanding from participants' ways of existing, by sharing problems, milieu, background, language, ritual, and social relations with them (Van Maanen 1998, pp. 2, 3). The purpose of fieldwork is to construct understanding and contribute with a new way of understanding the world (*ibid.*, p. 77). Spending time and talking with the participants showed me that despite a similar past, our ways of being were characterized by socially constructed dissimilarities. Seeing the contrast between my 'social matrix' and the participants' different 'social matrices' made me realize that the differences and similarities between the participants' conditions and mine were actually a subordinated issue. The main task was to construct understanding and to contribute with a new way of seeing the world existing in a small fieldwork. This could be conducted by constructing a multi-perspective that could, to a degree, explain coexistence, multiplicity, and distinctive worldviews (Bourdieu 1991, p. 3).

With regard to my research, as the participants' sociocultural attachments were discovered I discovered my own too. It became a challenging situation. The challenge involved trying to put aside my own worldview and ideals. The daunting task was to realize that, despite a somewhat common social and cultural platform, the participants and I did not necessarily share 'values'. Consequently, the fieldwork came to mean research on identities and connections related to a kind of hybridism that is entailed by migration for both the participants and me. The processing of the fieldwork proved that my focus should be directed at understanding the phenomena involved rather than justifying them.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

When reading the empirical material, I noticed some tendencies or regularities among the narratives and my observations. These regularities were above all related to social changes, and to understanding and dealing with them. Since part of these changes, and coping with them, was performed in the institutional body of a school, school became not only the stage of performance for the students but also an agent that triggered thoughts, actions, and reactions. The students and teachers at the BAE and the students at Malmö University all had their affiliations. The students were trying to make sense of their life in the Swedish society and the school/teachers tried to do their best to teach a language based on certain premises. Given this material, and in order to understand language teaching as well as language learning and language use in a sociocultural context, it is vital to theoretically clarify a number of issues:

- a) the meaning of the absence of the prior life and the social position before migration (symbolic honor),
- b) sociocultural experiences within an everyday life context and the way they influence the participants' thoughts and conducts (life-world),
- c) the meaning of social dispositions (habitus),
- d) the meaning of becoming a member of the society they live in, perpetuating membership, and connecting with other members (social capital), and
- e) the meaning of knowledge and aptitude as related to participation in new social and communicative contexts (game).

The use of these theoretical concepts has been ‘tailor-made’ for this particular study. This means that understanding the material by using these concepts is conducted within the specific context of the present study. For example, the way the concept of habitus helps to illustrate language learners’ attitude towards second language learning and language use in this study is built upon a hermeneutic understanding of the material. In the same way, using the concept of symbolic honor to understand the continuity of self from life before migration till the present time is also an understanding that is specific for this study, and so forth. In using theoretical concepts, it has been important to illustrate the ongoing process of my reflections and analysis (theorizing the research inputs) rather than producing a product (theory) (see Weick 1995, p. 390). According to what is specific for theorizing, I have been interested in “abstracting, generalizing, relating, selecting, explaining, synthesizing, and idealizing” (ibid., p. 389).

Migration-related issues, such as migrants’ social background, their access to different kinds of resources, their living environment, their educational background, and the socio-cultural language used in schools, are some of the most critical points of departure in this study. Therefore, it is important that the theoretical framework can help, so that the work of the school, learning in a migration context, and the migrants’ own influence can be understood in a larger socio-cultural context. It is also important, especially with regard to the purpose and the research questions of the study, that the theories can help to create a more comprehensible understanding of learners as part of a group and a society, yet able to act as independent individuals with a will of their own. What determines the influence of the group and of society on learning a second language and communicating in it, versus individuals’ power in the same process, is most interesting from a theoretical viewpoint.

In the introduction, I wrote that one could examine the issue of adult migrants’ lack of language ability as if it were a triangle. The top of the triangle is the migrants, their background, the sociocultural setting they exist in, their mind, and their way of handling life situations. School as an institution, with all the teaching attitudes

and approaches, and the standards that the teachers and school want to convey, is another corner of the triangle. And finally, adult migrants' sociocultural experiences of the migration society, consisting of people, ethnic networks, and communicative and social rules and codes, are the last corner of the triangle. Therefore, I have chosen theories that can shed light on the interplay between individuals' life experiences, their relations to and understanding of groups around them, school as a socially constructed institution, and society as it appears to the participants (their subjective imagining).

Life-World

In this section I shall seek to show the importance of the concept of life-world – originally adapted from the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl – for studying adult migrants' second language development in Sweden. My claim is that there is a structure in adult migrants' life after migration, called diasporic existence in this study, that, using Alfred Schutz's words, makes them experience the socio-cultural world by a common-sense thinking that is connected to "relations of interaction". Adult migrants, like other people, are born into "the world of cultural objects and social institutions" within which they know how to behave (Schutz 1962, p. 53).

Berger and Luckmann (1966, p. 1) write that reality is socially constructed. "The man in the street", according to the authors, knows that the world has certain characteristics, something that constitutes the man in the street's knowledge of the world and his reality. The concept of life-world deals philosophically with the perception and consequences of humans positioned in the landscape of experiences in their everyday life. Husserl's idea of *Lebenswelt*, or world of lived experience (Carr 1970, p. 331), has been followed and developed by many other scholars. One of the many rather complex explanations of Husserl's life-world as the pure experience of an individual is formulated as follows:

The life-world is primarily a world of perceived "things," "bodies." He speaks of the perspectival character of perception, of

outer and inner horizons, placing more emphasis than before, perhaps, on the role of the living body and its kinesthetic functions and on the oriented character of the field of perception around the body. (Carr 1970, p. 334)

Thus, perception and lived experience of “bodies” is considered as significant in understanding the concept of life-world. The sociologist and philosopher Alfred Schutz is most known for his work in developing Edmund Husserl’s concept of the life-world (Dreher 2010, p. 489). The life-world, as explained by Schutz, is about the “world of daily life”, the way it is experienced by people, a process by which people become able to recognize their fellow human beings and, in a state of consciousness, accept the reality of everyday life (Dreher 2010, p. 493). In everyday life our actions are modified by the world, at the same time as the world is modified by our actions, which “indicates a pragmatic motive toward the world of daily life” (ibid., p. 495). Existing in the life-world we reflect and relate ourselves to our surroundings. This “*perspectivity-intentionality-reflection*” is the basis of the philosophy behind the concept of life-world (Måseide 1986, p. 46). It is the intentional relation “between intending subject and intended object” that structures the life-world (ibid., p. 58). The life-world is “the milieu of an individual”; it is when an individual, on the basis of “a collective mental life”, perceives, experiences, reasons and acts upon an objective. “The life-world, then, besides its pertinence to individual consciousness, has historical duration and social relativity” (Ashmore 1969, p. 48).

Schutz outlines the life-world as a reality that the conscious adult experiences and acts upon when being together with other people; she/he intentionally accepts the reality of everyday life as given (Dreher 2003, p. 143). The life-world is explained as a “province of meaning”, as a sphere in which people act in ordinary (mundane) life contexts, repositioning possible doubts and experiencing life; the life-world is about the existence of a normal, ordinary, unquestioned everyday way of life (Costello 1996, p. 251). On the one hand, people by existing in everyday experiences rearrange doubts (take stands), and, on the other, they cope with the world

as unquestionable “until further notice” (Costello, pp. 251-252). Human relations and closeness to other people are a basic requirement for human experiences. The fundamental element of the life-world, subsequently, is that people are bound to each other and that they know about “their native constitutive intentionalities” (Costello 1996, p. 253).

Different and Multiple Life-Worlds

A significant aspect of the Schutsonian theory of the life-world is that the everyday life-world includes layers of cultural meaning (Dreher 2003, p. 143). Here, Vygotsky’s ideas on the understanding of sociocultural influences on learning become relevant. He emphasized that learning is about the whole person, the whole social environment, and the human emotions (Vygotsky 1997). Seeing things from Vygotsky’s point of view, it is imperative to address more carefully the relationship between human beings and their environment, both in physical and social terms, and how it affects the human cognitive and learning development (Vygotsky 1978, p.19). Examining adult migrants’ second language development based on an understanding of sociocultural influences helps us to understand how individuals use their capacity to move within a space composed by dynamic cultural and social influences. Along with the historical changes “social humans change the way and means of their behavior, transform their natural premises and functions, elaborate and create new, specifically cultural forms of behavior” (Vygotsky, cited in Wertsch & Tulviste 2005, p.68). This perspective reduces the risk of attributing essential premises to learners and instead explains that “everything that is cultural is social”. Since “culture is the product of social life and human social activity”, the cultural development and social development become interrelated; they precede each other in dynamic settings of interaction (Vygotsky 1981b, p.164).

Similarly, Cohen and Arato argue that the life-world is “the reservoir of implicitly known traditions, the background assumptions that are embedded in language and culture and drawn upon by individuals in everyday life” (1992, p. 427). As I understand it, this definition of the life-world is in a way similar to the definition of

the concept of habitus as pre-existing external structures (Throop & Murphy 2002, p. 186). Here cultural relativity becomes interesting, in the sense that “different historical periods and social groupings” might have different life-worlds (Carr 1970, p. 336). The reason that this aspect is appealing in the context of this study is that seeing the life-world as connected to “things that are familiar to us through experiences” (Ruggerone 2012, p. 182) underscores the meaning of migrants’ previous experiences and their influences on social processes, such as second language learning and communicating in a second language in migration societies. In other words, if “experiences lead to situationally ordered social practices” (ibid., p. 184), then understanding migrants’ life-world should be one of the key points in comprehending the process of language learning after migration, since this process is shaped and conducted together with other people that possibly share other kinds of social realities. In relation to this context Schutz asserts that:

The fact that the everyday life-world is not a private, but rather an intersubjective and thereby a social reality, has a series of extremely important consequences for the constitution and structure of the subjective stock of knowledge. Because an individual is born into a historical social world, his biographical situation is, from the beginning, socially delimited and determined by social givens that find specific expressions. (Schutz & Luckmann 1973, p. 243)

The question here is if the intersubjectivity of life can be multiplied, in the sense that migrants must deal with various intersubjective relations due to their mixing and communicating with different social groupings, for example, when being and communicating with other migrants, with the majority, and with people from their own country. In the life-world setting, Husserl speaks of “idealization”, which refers to people’s beliefs that help them to see and construct an expected world, a world where things can be done again and again and people share mutual perspectives. Idealization signifies trust in a familiarity of experiences in our ordinary world (Meisenhelder 1979, p. 22). This leads to another question: how is

this expected world maintained or reshaped after migration, and how does this affect the language development and the communicative interaction of adult migrants?

The life-world becomes possible through the intersection of subjective interpretations based on culturally shared knowledge. According to Schutz, the life-world is “formed in time through numerous processes of abstraction carried out by predecessors and contemporaries and eventually flown into one’s knowledge at-hand. So described, the life-world emerges mainly as a cognitive domain in which action and interactions are seen as the results of cognitive processes” (Ruggerone 2012, p. 187). With respect to the meaning of sociocultural and cognitive influences on the life-world, Jochen Dreher argues that “we act and operate solely within the world of everyday life, in our world of working in which we communicate”. This social world involves collectively shared ideas illustrated in religion, art, politics, and people’s dreams and fantasy world. This perspective indicates that it is the everyday life which holds an overriding reality that enables communication (Dreher 2010, p. 501).

Another aspect of the life-world that makes the concept vital to this study is how migrants’ “experiences of multiple realities” organize/reorganize their life-world (Dreher 2003, p. 142) and how this process can shed light on aspects of learning and using the language as an activity built upon everyday experiences of one’s communicative progression’. Referring to Schutz’s conception, the main problem for human beings (in this case migrants) is to position themselves in a rather complex and new social sphere as “working individuals”, who might act and think according to earlier systems of thinking that order their realities (see Dreher 2003, p. 144). It is the confrontation between the structures of everyday life that I aim to highlight. How these confrontations create meaning for the establishment of a life after migration is crucial for the mental state of migrants and how they reason with regard to studying a language, seeing profit in it, and communicating in it actively and comfortably as well as developing a perception of their own language development.

The life-world is shared with our fellow humans, it is experienced and interpreted, and we find ourselves constantly within “a historically given world” illustrated in the social and cultural world. What is significant in this context is that we can reach some of our fellow humans’ world and that sometimes we cannot reach their world (Dreher 2003, p. 147). It is this ‘accessibility’ which partly makes a closer investigation of the life-world stimulating. How do migrants and educators reach each other? How do migrants reach the life-world of the people surrounding them in a new society? Can the life-world and how people ‘reach’ each other communicatively be connected to group belongingness and the sense of belonging to a society? Dreher widens this horizon and argues that life-worlds can cross each other and intersect:

/.../ there is an intersection between my world within reach and the other’s world within reach. But there are necessarily zones within my reach that do not lie within the other’s reach, and vice versa also in reference to our manipulatory spheres. In this sense, the other’s world transcends mine. (Dreher 2003, p. 147)

So the life-world as an outcome of everyday life experiences that “emerge as a cognitive domain in which action and interactions are seen as the results of cognitive processes” (Ruggerone 2012, p. 187), and as a scene where, depending on certain elements, we reach some people and do not reach other people, raises one substantial question: do the intellectual processes and the migrants’ ability to reach people in the Swedish society play a role for migrants’ language development?

Benita Luckmann speaks of the small worlds of humans, something that I find utterly noteworthy in understanding the possibility of adult migrants’ existence in more than one life-world and the consequences of such a phenomenon in the migration society. Luckmann argues that the life-world is the close experiences of each minute of our life; moments that include all we see and feel, such as nature, beliefs, and values. “It is a world of practical interest to man, a familiar world, a world taken for granted. The everyday life-world extends indefinitely in space and time”. The life-

world comprises small sectors of people's lives; these small sectors, however, are connected to the larger "outside world" (Luckmann 1970, p. 580). One of the reasons that I insist that the concept of life-world can play a central role in understanding adult migrants' language development is above all related to an idea formulated by Luckmann that stresses the hybridity of modern existence (in the case of this study, the hybridity of a post-migration existence and the ambiguity it might lead to):

In late industrial society the segment of the life-world actually "inhabited" by man consists of many small worlds. These are located within the "private" as well as the institutional spheres of existence. Though of different degrees of importance and necessity to man's existence, none of them represents a "whole" life-world in which all of man's life unfolds. One can rather speak of man's part-time existence in part-time societies. To describe tentatively the multi-dimensional nature of everyday life in contemporary society I shall speak of the small life-worlds of man. (Luckmann 1970, p. 581)

These small life-worlds might receive a new meaning in the migration society for adult migrants in terms of there being a possible conflict between these worlds and other life-worlds existing in the migration society. Claiming that migrants, like 'modern man', live in small life-worlds raises thoughts about belongingness and its meaning for what can be seen as the "biographical coincidence" of membership (Luckmann 1970, p. 590). Luckmann's discussion of small life-worlds becomes even more crucial when she develops this idea and speaks of people's part-time existence in part-time societies and argues that:

Instead of being a full-time member of one "total and whole" society, modern man is a part-time citizen in a variety of part-time societies. Instead of living within one meaningful world system to which he owes complete loyalty he now lives in many different structured "worlds" to each of which he owes only partial allegiance. (Luckmann 1970, pp. 587-588)

Individuals are part-time members because they have a membership in many small life-worlds (*ibid.*, p. 590). This account of part-time existence is valuable for understanding the earlier mentioned hybridity of positioning after migration, which I aim to relate to adult migrants' language development. Furthermore, the idea of small life-worlds is interesting, because as citizens in our homelands we might have different life-worlds. Taking these small worlds with us to the migration society, and adding some other small worlds to our already existing small worlds, means that migrants must deal with complex multiple life-worlds that without doubt must have an impact on language development and communicative interaction.

However, it must be mentioned that our life-worlds do not exist in isolation; they are intersubjective, interpreted, and shared with other humans (Dreher 2003, p. 147). Despite the existence of a reservoir encompassing, for example, background assumptions or preexisting structures, people modify the world by their actions and their actions are modified by the world (Dreher 2010, p. 495). This interrelatedness is extremely interesting in this study, because language and communicative competence are significant premises of this relation between the individual and the world, the quality of the relation, and the outcomes of the relation. Since "the life world is a stock of knowledge composed of basic assumptions which function as an implicit or tacit horizon in everyday processes of communication" (Wildemeersch & Leirman 1988, p. 19), it has major implications for adult migrants' second language development.

By adopting a life-world perspective, I will try to show that individuals' lived experiences are constantly linked to their outer world (see Ruggerone 2012, p. 190; Eberle 2010, p. 131), and in this process the life-world as an analytical tool can explain the participants' orientation and to some degree their decision making in everyday life. Returning to the most significant reason for using the concept of life-world, I will build upon Luckmann's idea of individuals (in this study migrants) being part-time members of small life-worlds and argue for the consequences of multiple existences for adult migrants and their language development. The concept of

life-world can be used in many different ways together with the concepts of habitus, game, and symbolic capital, and create an analytical basis for the understanding of migrants' second language development. Empirically speaking, using Eberle's words, "the petites perceptions" of actors can be understood by analyzing "an act of choosing in everyday life". Therefore, an exploration of the life-world can suggest "a fundamental awareness of the complexity of subjective meaning constitution and social meaning construction" (Eberle 2010, p. 136).

Life-World and Diaspora

Harris et al. argue that concepts such as diaspora and globalization have changed the way the language education of migrants is conceptualized. The authors discuss the importance of "the reality of life in schools, and of the failure of current policy to engage with this" (Harris et al. 2001, p. 2). This indicates a new theoretical understanding of adult migrants' language development.

As stated by Cohen, "members of diaspora are almost by definition more mobile than people who are rooted in national spaces" (Cohen 1997, p. 168). However, this mobility might have certain consequences for the formation of everyday life and settling down in the migration society. Cohen gives a rather positive illustration of migrants' competitiveness as a result of a diasporic existence, in terms of migrants' flexibility to adjust to different social contexts. However, this study sees diaspora as a dimension of migrants' life that can construct a huge complexity with regard to language development, identity negotiation, and social integration. As diasporic identities become more evident and signify diversity and belonging to places (see Gupta 1992, p. 62) the concept of diaspora also becomes more related to differences and searching for/claiming an identity. In this way, diaspora as constant transformation and hybridity has a significant part in migrants' everyday life, both as a constant reminder of alienation and changes, and, as Hall expresses it, as a conception illustrating the eternal process of producing and reproducing a self:

The diaspora experience as I intend it here is defined, not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference. (Hall 1997, p. 235)

Diaspora in this way, besides its significance as mapping out the current position of migrants, might have a linguistic dimension in terms of influencing the outcome of language learning in the same way as the life-world. The concept of life-world, viewed within a post-migration context, in many ways addresses the concept of diaspora. Diaspora as a concept that refers to people who are dispersed and displaced, people who live on memories of the homeland, who dream of returning, and who share “a consciousness and solidarity as a group through a continuing relationship with the homeland” (Safran1991, pp. 83–84), can play a crucial role with regard to the motivation to carry on living in the migration country and learn its language. The above-mentioned characteristics of diaspora are vital for the formation of post-migration experiences embedded in the everyday life context of migrants.

Habitus and Reproduction

Another theoretical framework of this study consists of some concepts introduced by the French theorist Pierre Bourdieu. The first of these concepts is habitus. Loïc Wacquant, professor of sociology, outlines the concept as follows:

As the mediation between past influences and present stimuli, habitus is at once *structured*, by the patterned social forces that produced it, and *structuring*: it gives form and coherence to the various activities of an individual across the separate spheres of life. This is why Bourdieu defines it variously as “the product of structure, producer of practice, and reproducer of structure,” the “unchosen principle of all choices,” or “the practice-unifying and practice-generating principle” that permits “regu-

lated improvisation” and the “conductorless orchestration” of conduct. Habitus is also a principle of *both social continuity and discontinuity*: continuity because it stores social forces into the individual organism and transports them across time and space; discontinuity because it can be modified through the acquisition of new dispositions and because it can trigger innovation whenever it encounters a social setting discrepant with the setting from which it issues. (Wacquant 2006, p. 7)

Habitus, according to this definition, is structured by patterned social forces; what people do takes shape and becomes coherent by habitus. It is a product of the structures at the same time as it produces practices. But most importantly, habitus, as much as it stands for allowing social forces in people’s mind across time, can also be changed over time when people acquire new dispositions. According to Bourdieu, habitus integrates individuals’ past experiences into every moment when they perceive and appreciate something; it makes it possible for individuals to conduct different tasks (Bourdieu 1977, p. 83). The influence of habitus is not necessarily permanent, because the importance of the past, present, and future in “constraining and enabling the changes to social structures” cannot be ignored (O’Mahony 2007, p. 480). So, despite the fact that habitus can be hard to change in terms of overcoming social conditions, it is changeable (Broady 1991, p. 190).

Habitus is about ‘knowing how’; it is about individuals being the “trace of an entire collective history” (O’Mahony 2007, p. 481). Habitus is also explained as a civilizing process of the human being (Reed-Danahay 2005, p. 104). This civilizing process, as it was conceptualized by Bourdieu, as habitus, was seen by him as being in opposition to free will. How people live their lives and make decisions is, according to Bourdieu, restricted by habitus and the factual conditions of social fields. Along with our educational history, our habitus reproduces the conditions of our social lives from which it is a product itself (Reed-Danahay 2005, p. 22). Habitus as a personalized disposition is formed in early childhood by ‘unplanned’ teaching and learning and operates towards the world. This non-deliberate process of manipulation of our mind through a

repetition of instructions is “associated with immersion in a particular sociocultural milieu – the family and household”. In adult life, habitus as a personified disposition operates as a concealed guideline. Accordingly, this process of civilizing and preparing helps societies to reproduce themselves and construct what is normal (Reed-Danahay 2005, p. 46).

The concept of habitus has been useful in explaining education and the idea of reproduction within the school context. The notion of reproduction can be explained by referring to how two kinds of socialization affect a person’s educational development. Children’s primary habitus is formed by their families and the social position of their families. Later they are introduced to school, which is a “state apparatus”. Schools provide a secondary habitus, the “cultivated habitus”, which favors the cultural capital, such as “world views, linguistic codes, certain types of knowledge of a particular social class, the dominant social class” (ibid, p. 47).

Bourdieu’s theory of habitus, the market, and cultural capital places the primary knowledge of the social world of certain members of society in brackets. He states that there is a market which values what is being delivered through people’s linguistic ability (people’s language and how they use a language). This market appreciates communications on the basis of power relations related to a kind of linguistic competence that signals highly accepted cultural competence (Bourdieu 1991, p. 67). David Corson (1998, pp. 9, 10) refers to Bourdieu’s theory of cultural capital and argues that schools perpetuate the idea of a dominant culture, and by reproducing the concept of an elitist culture they ascribe higher status to some and lower status to other cultures. Accordingly, the status of people who learn to acquire these highly valued aspects of a culture increases, something which goes from generation to generation. In this way power is constructed and transformed. This so-called cultural capital distinguishes people by assessing their way of speaking, their style, and their way of presenting themselves. The problem, however, appears when the cultural capital valued in schools differs from the kind of cultural capital students have brought from home. This is a problem, because society prefers, or requires, the kind of cultural capital advocated by schools. In situations like

this, when cultural groups lose their cohesion, they need to find other forums, outside the formal education, in order to fulfill their identities. It is during this process that *we* and *they* are created, often in the sense of being superior and inferior. Ethnic groups acknowledge this condition, and if they or their children fail, they may perhaps relate their failure to a lack of intelligence (ibid.).

Bourdieu uses the concepts of habitus and capital to illustrate power and manipulation. He asserts that “the capacity to manipulate is greater the more capital one possesses” (Bourdieu 1991, p. 71). Manipulation, from Bourdieu’s point of view, is related to and integrated into social processes, such as the notion of acceptability, which according to him is found not in the situation but in the relationship between a market and a habitus: “/.../ we have not learned to speak simply by hearing a certain kind of speech spoken but also by speaking, thus by offering a determinate form of speech on a determinate market” (ibid., p. 81). Another reason why Bourdieu’s approach to language and society is interesting is his emphasis on “a linguistic sense of place”, which “means that competence which is acquired in a social context and through practice is inseparable from the practical mastery of situations in which this usage of language is socially acceptable” (ibid., p. 82).

Expanding on Bourdieu’s theory of habitus, it is obvious that these structured structures (habitus) both consciously and unconsciously influence the way we think and act. However much habitus, this “scheme of action”, can provide order and disposition, it can also be an obstacle in understanding and accepting new systems of action or acquiring new social dispositions. Habitus is significant, because it suggests that people’s dispositions determine the individuals’ social actions and that these dispositions are socially shaped (Bourdieu & Passeron 1990, p. 156). There is, however, one aspect that might be understood as problematic when discussing the idea of habitus. An emphasis on habitus as a constantly powerful disposition reduces the role of people as autonomous thinking individuals. Richard Jenkins argues that Bourdieu portrays a world where things happen to people rather than a world where people have power over their destinies (Jenkins 2002, p. 91). Bourdieu’s answer to these kinds of critique seems to be his em-

phasis that individuals have their special habitus, which means that there are as many habitus as there are individuals. So, on the one hand, habitus is constructed by the collective, but, on the other hand, it can be so individually related that there might exist as many habitus as there are individuals (Broady 1991, p. 161).

There is no clear-cut solution to the discussion about individuals' ability to be autonomous and individuals' powerlessness in being habitus-dependent robots. Bourdieu frequently returns to the idea that individuals are subordinated by, as he says, a collective history, but he is careful in using the concept of culture. Considering the sociocultural approach to education, Reed-Danahay (2005, p. 155) poses the following question: "Does habitus refer to a concept akin to 'culture,' as some have suggested, or is it best thought of as a form of 'identity'?"

Bourdieu had a pre-understanding of social dualities and of the significance of habitus in understanding these kinds of dualities. He addressed these dimensions, especially within the educational context, in terms of "ethnic and cultural differences, the issue of social class" (Reed-Danahay 2005, p. 6). In the context of educational development, he wrote about the "invisible barrier", which referred to the separation from the social origins which he himself had great experience of and which created his need to rehabilitate himself every time he had to meet his social origins (Reed-Danahay 2005, p. 31). Bourdieu himself had experiences of in-betweenness when trying to approach a new social context in France and "spoke of his habitus clivé (split habitus), which resulted from his elevated social position in academia and his low social origins" (ibid., p. 3). In other words, this invisible barrier (the split habitus and feelings of in-betweenness) involves a socialization process into something one is not born into but needs to learn. For Bourdieu himself it was a transformation from a rural background into "elite institutions" (ibid., p. 38).

Social Capital

The use of terms like "game" or "symbolic capital" as analytical concepts was shaped during my analysis of the empirical material. I discovered how some of the participants tried to perpetuate a sense

of selfhood through symbolic actions. These symbolic actions were performed by constructing meaningful relations to the past and by the maintenance of the past through the establishment of socio-ethnic relations. I have used Bourdieu's concepts of symbolic capital and social capital in order to illustrate that these concepts can be used as analytical concepts in understanding and discussing some of the empirical findings. The following quotation indicates clearly the relevance of the concept of social capital for this study:

Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition. (Bourdieu, cited in Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 119)

Social capital not only regulates the relations within a group, but it also influences the social and economic status; social capital involves social contexts which form the actions of individuals. "Norms, interpersonal trust, social networks, and social organization are important in the functioning not only of the society but also of the economy" (Coleman 1988, p. 96). Coleman later identifies social capital as "an important resource for individuals", which "may affect greatly their ability to act and their perceived quality of life" (*ibid.*, p. 118). Bourdieu's definition of social capital is interesting, because it emphasizes the weight of recognition and membership (two notions that will play a vital role in interpreting the empirical findings) as significant pillars of one's social capital. According to Bourdieu, social capital consists of strong networks of organized relationships that provide "mutual acquaintance and recognition" and give entry to membership in a group that supports a collectively acknowledged capital. By belonging to a social network people receive the license to act (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 249-50).

Bourdieu describes social capital as "connections", such as relations to relatives and friends, or the kind of support provided between people that once knew each other. Social capital cannot be defined in material terms, such as institutions, texts, degrees, and

titles (common within the frame of cultural capital); rather, social capital is rooted in bonds which unite the individuals within a group. All people within such a group take some positions; they develop cultural or economic capital and networks. The sum of these kinds of conduct is a special kind of resource that all the members can benefit from (Broady 1991, p. 128).

Bourdieu was interested in examining how social capital was mediated and accumulated and how it could be modified into economic and cultural capital. Social capital for him was a tool in examining the resources of the individuals and groups in educational and other contexts. He argued that social capital structures things that otherwise can be hard to discover; it is a special kind of economy with its own mechanisms for investment, development, and conversion of resources. Social capital as this special kind of economy is not similar to economic capital or cultural capital, but it can help one's understanding of other kinds of capital (Broady 1991, p. 129). Besides explaining the kind of access and resources that people and different groups possess, social capital can also indicate how an individual's possession of such capital determines his/her opportunities to enjoy his/her education as capital (ibid., pp. 131, 152).

Another aspect that makes the concept of social capital useful, with regard to the analysis of the findings of this study, is Bourdieu's emphasis on social capital as a capital that requires strategies and investments:

/.../ the network of relationships is the product of investment strategies, individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term i.e. at transforming contingent relations into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations selectively felt (feelings of gratitude, respect, friendship) or institutionally guaranteed (rights). (Bourdieu, 1986, pp. 250-51)

The cornerstones of social capital are, according to a Bourdieuan definition, institutionalized relationships, reproduction, recogni-

tion, membership, and durable obligations. In understanding this Bourdieuan definition, it is vital to see social capital as classified into three fields, namely, social institutions, social relations, and social order. Social institutions convey rules of behavior among social members; they create freedom and constrain freedom. Social relations refer to:

/.../interpersonal relations among families, friends, neighbours, and co-workers, contacts between people and organizations they belong to, and the relations between an organization and its outer organizations or the organization it belongs to. (Zheng-dong 2010, p. 28)

The social order is built upon social institutions (rules of behavior) and social relations (interactive patterns). In this way, the social order means upholding “obligations and expectations generated among acting individuals” (ibid., pp. 29, 30).

Symbolic Capital

Bourdieu’s term “capital” can, roughly, be interpreted as value, access, or resources, and these can be of a symbolic or an economic nature. The most familiar concept in Bourdieu’s theory of capital is *cultural capital*, which refers to the kind of symbolic capital which dominates in different societies (it must be noted that Bourdieu’s work has mainly focused on French society). Cultural capital consists of access and resources in terms of degrees from respected academies and institutions, familiarity with classical music or literature, and the ability to express oneself in a cultivated way. In other words, cultural capital is an aspect of symbolic capital. Symbolic capital is what is recognized as valuable by a social group (Broady 1991, p. 123).

The symbolic capital has significance for interactions in migration societies, because “it is symbolic capital that defines what forms and uses of capital are recognized as legitimate bases of social positions in a given society” (ibid.). Furthermore, what makes symbolic capital a crucial theoretical tool in interpreting the empirical findings of this study is that symbolic capital is realized within

the context of communication and cannot be institutionalized; it is constructed within, and as a result of, relationships where people know and acknowledge each other.

Another interesting interpretation of Bourdieu's symbolic capital is made by Lauri Siisiäinen, who explains that "symbolic capital exists only in the 'eyes of the others'" (2000, p. 13). In this way, Bourdieu's discussion about symbolic capital as "the logic of knowledge and acknowledgment" (Bourdieu 1986, p. 28) receives a deeper meaning; people's knowledge about other people leads to acknowledging them. This means that symbolic capital is understood and recognized by more than one person, based on an intersubjective reflection which is probably shared by a specific group, who understand well a specific kind of symbolic value, access, or resources that, in contrast to cultural and economic capital, cannot be measured or seen in the same way by other groups. As I read the following quotation, symbolic capital can be understood as what other people accomplish during a lifetime:

Symbolic capital, for Bourdieu, designates the wealth (hence implicitly the productive capacity) which an individual or group has accumulated—not in the form of money or industrial machinery, but in symbolic form. Authority, knowledge, prestige, reputation, academic degrees, debts of gratitude owed by those to whom we have given gifts or favors: all these are forms of symbolic capital. Such symbolic capital can be readily convertible into the more traditional form of economic capital. The exchange value of symbolic capital, while it cannot be stated to the penny, is continuously being estimated and appraised by every individual possessing or coming into contact with it. (Bourdieu 1987, p. 812)

According to Bourdieu, symbolic capital is the idea that certain people, institutions, and conducts gain credence, respect, reputation, and prestige, which, in turn, leads these people to be seen by 'specific others' as honorable, truthful, respectable, and superior.¹⁵

¹⁵ The term *specific others* is my own formulation based on my understanding of the original text.

This recognition is not an individual act; rather, it rests upon the beliefs of the group and, therefore, symbolic capital is what the group recognizes as valuable (Broady 1991, p. 123). What I see as important to consider, when Bourdieu rightly emphasizes specific forms of symbolic capital, such as degrees from eminent schools, familiarity with art and music, etc., is what kind of symbolic capital is recognized within different ethnic groups and what power this has on migrants' second language development and communicative ability in a Swedish context. As argued by Broady, based on the works of Bourdieu, symbolic capital is a rational concept in the sense that whether, for example, certain conducts in a traditional society, or a title within the academic world, are recognized and valued depends on whether there is a market for such conducts or titles. In other words, the symbolic connotations involve relations between individuals', groups', or institutions' resources and quality, on the one hand, and the dispositions of those who understand and assess these qualities and resources, on the other; it means that there is an agreement between resources and dispositions.

In the context of sociology of education, Bourdieu discussed the ability of teachers to point out certain students as talented as a crucial starting point for discussing the role of symbolic capital in the context of education and society. He argued that those students pointed out as talented possessed symbolic resources in terms of 'inherited' cultural capital that school encourages, fosters, and rewards. Teachers' own dispositions are also formed according to, and based on, the kind of symbolic capital that is appreciated in school and that the teachers attempt to carry on (*ibid.*, pp. 123, 124).

I saw an elaboration of symbolic capital as fundamental for this study, primarily because of how the concept can operate as an underlying, almost invisible, but still significant component for understanding what might motivate language learners' behavior in a learning and communication context.

Furthermore, symbolic capital as a concept that internalizes the meaning of terms such as honor, glory, prestige, decency, authority, and reputation in everyday contexts of life, can help us understand what is needed in order to be able to carry and maintain a

social position in society (in the case of this study in a new society). This 'thing' that people need in order to master their society was labelled by Bourdieu as symbolic capital. Symbolic capital does not contain material resources; it provides the ability to require respect from the rest of society. This position is built over time and by honorable relations (Broady 1991, p. 141). Consequently, in the context of this study, it becomes important to examine in what way the need for, and the maintenance of, symbolic capital can play a role for language development and communicative interaction.

Game

In using the concept of game, I was partly inspired by how Bourdieu elaborated such a simple concept in such a way that it could explain and illustrate a symbolic link to people's everyday life and their efforts to master social situations. The other source of inspiration has been the conversations with the participants of this study, my earlier studies, and my own educational and professional background in the field of language and communication. Based on my empirical observations, it became evident that in order to become a part of the community in another country through using the language of that particular country, a special kind of awareness (migrant awareness) about the connection between language, communication, and society is required. Learning about Bourdieu's idea, I realized that Bourdieu conceptualized this special kind of awareness by using the concept of *game*, which explains elegantly the efforts required in order to become a meaningful part of a language community. This means that, as discussed earlier, language learning is a sociocultural act; knowing how to play the social game of a society is a part of acquiring a language and communicative ability.

For Bourdieu it was extremely important to explain and discuss the rules of entering a certain social field in order to be able to play its games, and, therefore, understanding the idea of field is the first step in understanding the idea of game.

One of the theoretical cornerstones of Bourdieu's sociology is the idea of society as a plurality of social fields. Forms of capital

(economic, cultural and social) are the core factors defining positions and possibilities of the various actors in any field. Each social field has a profile of its own, depending on the proportionate importance within it of each of the forms of capital. The forms of capital controlled by the various agents are trumps that define the chances of winning the stakes in the game. (Siisiäinen 2000, p. 11)

In this quotation, Siisiäinen may not clearly explain what a game is in Bourdieuan terms, but he explains perfectly what precedes the social games. Various capitals determine what kind of possibilities and positions people can gain, based on the quality of the capital they own. But it is not only individuals' possession of a certain capital that provides them with the ability to play the game; they must be interested in and motivated to play the game. Bourdieu called this interest *illusio*. *Illusio* is about taking and playing the game seriously; it is about believing in the game and believing that it is worth playing.

Illusio is in the fact of being interested in the game, of taking the game seriously. *Illusio* is the fact of being caught up in and by the game, of believing the game is "worth the candle," or, more simply, that playing is worth the effort. In fact, the word interest initially meant very precisely what I include under the notion of *illusio*, that is, the fact of attributing importance to a social game, the fact that what happens matters to those who are engaged in it, who are in the game. *Interest* is to "be there", to participate, to admit that the game is worth playing and that the stakes created in and through the fact of playing are worth pursuing; it is to recognize the game and to recognize its stakes... [I]*Illusio* is the enchanted relation to a game that is the product of a relation of ontological complicity between mental structures and the objective structures of social space. That is what I meant in speaking about interests: games which matter to you are important and interesting because they have been imposed and introduced in your mind, in your body, in a form called the feel for the game. (Bourdieu 1998a, pp. 76-77)

Here Bourdieu points out several key components that can be crucial for finding ways into a migration society and using its language satisfactorily. As discussed in the introduction, it is not only about mastering a language, and being included in a social and communicative situation; it also involves the way in which migrants believe in the interaction, are motivated to interact, admit and recognize the rules of interaction, and acknowledge that the interaction is worth engaging with.

Accordingly, playing a game requires passion. The game involves “intense composition” and the recognition of the player as part of something larger. In playing the (social) games, it is not enough to know the rules; one needs to have ‘a sense’ of the game, a sense of how to play. “This is a social sense and requires a constant awareness of and responsiveness to the play of one’s opponent (and in some cases one’s teammates)” (Calhoun 2000, p. 5).¹⁶ Knowledge about the whole field within which one plays, knowing when to make a move, and when to expect an action, and being able to see the strengths and weaknesses of the other players as well as one’s own, are necessary ingredients in knowing the strategies of the game (ibid.). One of the central perspectives in understanding the significance of the (social) game is that a player needs to learn to acquire confidence to play the game, but the problem (as I see it) is related to Calhoun’s statement that the confidence needed for playing the game is learned “in a thousand earlier games”. In the context of this study, what makes the idea of the social game significant is the influence of “these thousand earlier games” that a group of people know by heart and other groups need enough knowledge and time to learn. Calhoun explains that games are strategic and playing them requires strategic thinking. He uses an interesting metaphor to explain the significance of strategic thinking in playing a game:

¹⁶ Referred to a word document pp.1-37 that I received from Craig Calhoun. The original article: Calhoun, C. (2000) ‘Pierre Bourdieu’, in: George, R. (ed.) *The Blackwell Companion to the Major Social Theorists*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, pp. 696-730.

A good rugby (or soccer or basketball) player is constantly aware of the field as a whole, and anticipates the actions of teammates, knowing when to pass, when to try to break free. A good basketball player is not simply one who can shoot, but one who knows when to shoot. (ibid., p. 5)

Using Bourdieu's concept of habitus, it can be discussed in what way the habitus of the participants can play a role in knowing about the game, learning the game, and getting motivated to play the game. Here, as pointed out in the following quotation, the idea of man versus what has made him into what he has become has a central function in playing the social games, without denying the possibility that habitus can be changed over time and under certain circumstances, as already mentioned:

/.../ we do not invent the games by ourselves; they are the products of history, of social struggles and earlier improvisations, and of impositions by powerful actors with the capacity to say this, and not that, is the right way to make love, create a family, raise children. (Calhoun 2000, p. 5)

The ability to play a game is related to one's habitus. Habitus as a frame of reference includes strategies which provide people with a certain latitude to play; it gives them a kind of conditional freedom. How people act is a result of their active behavior; people play games with reference to their habitus and therefore their ability to play the game should be discussed by referring to their habitus (Broady 1991, p. 163).

Bourdieu saw a significant link between self-reflection and the ability to master the game or, as he put it, not to become the prisoner of the field/game. According to him, in order to master the game one needs to analyze the field where one exists; one has to analyze how to claim something when being together with others, one needs to analyze what investments and efforts are needed to participate in the game, and one needs to analyze how to orient oneself and how to discover and understand the symbolic and material profits. By acquiring knowledge about all these perspectives

and one's own dispositions and placement in the field, the individual has a chance to survive the game (Broady 1991, p. 381).

Managing the game is, accordingly, synonymous with accomplishing social interaction with people who do not necessarily share the same cultural characteristics. This act per se is a result of a certain determination on the part of language learners to really admit the need for the Swedish language and to engage with it. If we say that, through using its language and communicating in it, social interaction in a migration society can be similar to an act of wanting to play a game consisting of rules, then the question is: is such interaction (such games) important for migrants to partake in and how do they approach such an idea? Since "it is not the cultural characteristic that makes social groups distinct but rather it is the social interaction with other groups that makes that difference possible, visible and socially meaningful" (Barth 1969, p. 13), the whole issue deals with the importance of social interaction and what impedes such interaction, or facilitates it.

INTERPRETING THE EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4. THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK: LANGUAGE EDUCATION FOR ADULT MIGRANTS

Figure 1. Three major elements in the sociocultural understanding of the second language learning and use of adult migrants

Introduction

Second language learning in a migration context can be seen in many different ways: as a fantastic challenge or as an impossible task. It is a challenge because people with different frames of reference and backgrounds from all over the world gather in a class-

room with a teacher in order to learn Swedish. At the same time, teachers get the opportunity to discover what is common and what can be perceived as shared universal values among people, to find similarities and use them in the school context (Lindberg 1996, pp. 225-226). According to the findings of a study based on the answers from more than 1000 adult second language learners, adults attempt to study a second language in a new society for the following reasons:

1. access: To gain access to information and resources so that adults can orient themselves in the world.
2. voice: To express ideas and opinions with the confidence they will be heard and taken into account.
3. action: To solve problems and make decisions without having to rely on others to mediate the world for them.
4. bridge to the future: Learning to learn so that adults can be prepared to keep up with the world as it changes (Merrifield 2000, cited in Bailey 2006, pp. 117, 118; see Magos & Politil 2008).

To gain information, to express ideas, to solve problems, and to develop the ability to connect to the future are, then, what most of the second language learners desire. Good language ability has occasionally been explained in terms of linguistic or communicative competence, which means that the language learner gains good language ability when he/she can interact with other speakers and understands the sociocultural context of language use. Thus, here language use becomes a social behavior (Savignon 1991, pp. 264, 267).

The very idea of assessment of the language proficiency puts a question mark on what is perceived as good language ability. Alderson and Banerjee assert that “an understanding of what language is, and what it takes to learn and use language” and the “characteristic of test takers” is central to language testing (Alderson & Banerjee 2002, p. 80). With this in mind, in what follows I will discuss the idea of good second language ability both from a participants’ point of view and as reflected in relevant literature.

The Perception of 'Good Swedish'

In this study, phrases such as language use, language development, and language ability are frequently used. Therefore, a brief discussion about the perceptions of such concepts among those who study a second language and those who teach a second language is necessary. The very idea of the assessment of language proficiency puts a question mark on what is perceived as good language ability. Alderson and Banerjee assert that “an understanding of what language is, and what it takes to learn and use language” and the “characteristic of test takers” are central to language testing (Alderson & Banerjee 2002, p.80). In a document published by the Swedish National Agency for Education (2013), the purpose of the adult language education for migrants is to develop

- “their ability to read and write Swedish,
- their ability to speak, talk, read, listen to and understand Swedish in different contexts, and to acquire a good pronunciation,
- their ability to use relevant tools,
- their ability to adapt their language to different audiences and situations, while at the same time getting insights into how language is learned, and
- learning and communication strategies for their continued language development”.¹⁷

In what follows I attempt to discuss if these goals are consistent with the existing perceptions of some of the participants, and of researchers, with regard to good second language ability, which in this section is referred to as ‘good Swedish’. When I asked the participants what constitutes good Swedish, most of them gave similar answers:

According to me, good Swedish is a simple way of talking. The most important thing is to make yourself understood; to say what you want to say. I think people should not judge each other on the basis of language proficiency. (Sahar, BAE)

¹⁷ Skolverket, Utbildning i svenska för invandrare, 2013

Good Swedish to me is correct grammar. You do not need to use difficult words; talk simply but understandably. (Farida, BAE)

Good Swedish is the ability to communicate without making the receiver wonder what you mean. (Nadir, BAE)

Good Swedish is a developed vocabulary, the ability to understand other people and make yourself understood and to be able to correct your own language errors. (Wahid, BAE)

Good Swedish is to be able to speak correctly. (Salima, BAE)

Good Swedish is good vocabulary; the ability to make yourself understood and have good knowledge in Swedish grammar. (Asra, BAE)

Good Swedish is when listener and speaker understand each other. (Zeynab, BAE)

Good Swedish is a language use that is easy to understand, with a varied vocabulary. (Hamid, BAE)

Good Swedish is when you can speak fluently. (Hana, BAE)

Good Swedish is when the message reaches the receiver and the receiver has understood the information sent by the speaker. (Mustafa, BAE)

Thus, in defining good Swedish, the participants emphasize the ability to convey a message, and the importance of making oneself understood and understanding other people as well as having a developed vocabulary. Annika, one of the teachers at the BAE, defines good Swedish as follows:

Good Swedish is when one can sit and speak without restraint, when there are no misunderstandings or grammar errors that affect the understanding. One must also be aware of the social

and cultural codes. It means, for example, that when I say “phew”, it does not mean that my “phew” is negative and directed at you but you need to understand that I am not happy for some other reason. It actually happened to me that immigrants thought that I was unhappy about them when I said “phew”. (Annika, teacher at the BAE)

Annika wants to see more cultural and social awareness among the learners when using the Swedish language. According to Annika, it is the responsibility of the language learners to find out that certain expressions cannot always be found in dictionaries. In this context, how knowledge about expressions such as “phew”, or other idiomatic expressions, can be acquired by the migrants is not taken into consideration. Here, good Swedish from a teacher’s point of view is more about cracking the codes of a foreign language, compared with what the participants themselves recognize as good Swedish, namely, the ability to understand and to be understood. Even if there might be a clear interplay between what Annika sees as good Swedish and how the participants perceive good Swedish, it is essential to problematize how two different kinds of interpretation might influence learning and teaching behavior. In the book *Good Swedish (Bra svenska)*, Annick Sjögren discusses the fact that there are specific people (she does not mention exactly who) who demand good Swedish. Instead of facilitating migrants’ “adaptation” to the new situations, these people are more concerned with ‘language norms’, namely, what good Swedish should be like. As a result, other perspectives, such as how migrants think and how their thinking is influenced by and influences the Swedish system, become irrelevant. Sjögren states that migrants, who usually are in subordinate situations, are confronted with a strongly organized institutional world that represents right and wrong to them (1996, p. 31 ff).¹⁸

¹⁸ I have chosen not to discuss how a communal identity can be formed and expressed through a language and through belonging to a nation, and what consequences this has, seen from a power point of view. Chambers, for example, argues that “nation building is not a natural conduct and upholds particular societal culture through language. The language promoted by state gives equal access to social institutions promoted by liberal states (Chambers 2003, p.304). Accordingly, a particular language, despite recognition of and respect for diversity, becomes the language of power.

In the following quotation, Nila, one of the students at Malmö University, highlights another aspect of good Swedish and sees her own linguistic position as subordinated compared with English-speaking migrants, who, according to her, are considered as less challenging as second language speakers in Sweden. Her experience is that the mother tongue and the nation of origin have an impact on how the migrants' way of speaking Swedish is perceived by the majority.

When I listen to different debates about the migrants' bad Swedish I think of hundreds of migrants from England and the USA. Their Swedish is not better than ours from the Middle East, but I am convinced that when the majority talks about good Swedish they refer to us, not to them. Most people even enjoy when people from England and the USA speak Swedish with a strong accent. We from the Middle East must speak Swedish perfectly, but people from nice countries are cute no matter how they speak Swedish. (Nila, MU)

The national status of migrants and its influences on different social settings in migration countries have been illustrated by other researchers as well. Andersson-Brolin (1984) discusses the high level of social status among people from the USA, England, Germany, Scandinavia, Italy, and some other nationalities. The author argues that the favorable attitude that Swedes have towards these nationalities leads, for example, to positive discrimination on the housing market. Polek et al. take into consideration three other features and assert that "host societies may have a hierarchy in preferred immigrant groups related to cultural distance, length of residence, and visibility" (Polek et al. 2010, p. 81). In a similar context, Hosseini-Kaladjahi argues that the basis on which migrants are ranked (the degree of industrialization or the culture of the country of origin) is crucial for migration-related studies and indicates that migration should be studied in a global rather than a national context (Hosseini-Kaladjahi 2002, p.131). Matti Similä, the Finnish

People who speak this language and are aware of its social grammar are people with 'power' (ibid., p. 305).

migration researcher, asserts that, despite the quality of their human capital, people from some countries are more highly valued and perceived as more important. The majority's opinions about the migrants' country of origin have an impact on how they receive migrants and treat them (Similä 2002, p. 118). In the same way, the participants' relation to the Swedish language can be understood in a broader context, a context within which the history and sense of affiliation become important components. Farida, who worked as a teacher in Iraq, reflects on good Swedish and sees it as being a part of the history and social norms of the migration country:

I know that I will be able to speak Swedish well when I am allowed to learn about the country in everyday life. As I see it today, we live our lives and they live their lives and the opportunity for learning the language through contact with Swedes does not exist. Our children laugh at us when we speak Swedish and I say to my children "Is it strange for you that we cannot speak the language well? We do not have the opportunity to come out and learn. We only read and write in classrooms and speak Arabic during the rest of the time, even during the breaks".
(Farida, BAE)

For Farida, speaking good Swedish is a result of being out there with people who speak Swedish fluently, while Nila experiences that she is a target because of her ethnic or national affiliation. Nila speaks of different kinds of "we" and different kinds of "they". In this categorization, as Nila understands it, people from countries with lower status feel marginalized.¹⁹ Nila's feeling, expressed in the quotation above, opens for many considerations regarding the importance of the link between identity and second language development. In this context, speaking a second language becomes not only a result of personal efforts and motivation, but

¹⁹ Everett Stonequist (1937) explains a similar process in order to show how moving from one place to another entails powerlessness and marginalization. He uses the concept *the marginal man* and explains how globalization underrates individuals. Globalization, according to him, marginalizes people and, as a result, people in exile live a two-edged marginalized life.

also of what status is given to migrants' 'language performance' based on their nationalities. Bourdieu eloquently develops a similar thought:

Just as, at the level of relations between groups, a language is worth what those who speak it are worth, so too, at the level of interactions between individuals, speech always owes a major part of its value to the value of the person who utters it. (Bourdieu 1977, p. 652)

But not all the participants identify their particular background as a 'discriminating' factor with regard to the majority's perception of their language ability. While Nila accentuates the background of migrants as a vital component in determining good Swedish, Farida perceives social isolation as the main reason for her 'bad Swedish'. Wahid was a lawyer in Iraq. During the interview, he expressed many ideas about language and education. But he admitted that learning and speaking good Swedish turned out to be more difficult than he expected.

For me, speaking a language well cannot be possible without knowing about the soul of the country. You can never come to Iraq and speak the language well if you do not know about the people, traditions, culture, and simply what is important for those people. The problem is that the gap between us from the Middle East and Swedes is so huge that we cannot find each other, and consequently we cannot learn to speak the language in a natural way. Good Swedish is when you speak and you are relaxed, you can laugh, you can tell stories and influence people's feelings. I can do that in Arabic but not in Swedish. (Wahid, BAE)

Wahid believes that there is a gap between people from the Middle East and Swedes, and that due to this gap some groups of migrants will not be able to achieve 'good Swedish'. This gap prevents Wahid from being confident in communicative situations, something that he sees as necessary in order to speak a language comfortably.

According to him, good language ability is about being comfortable and being able to influence other people's feelings by using the language. Here, the lack of the feel for the language (as compared to, for example, Wahid's way of mastering Arabic), lays the first stepping stones towards feelings of otherness. In a way, Wahid, Nila, and Farida all see their background factors as an impediment for achieving 'good Swedish' or being perceived as a migrant with good language ability. According to the participants, these background factors, in terms of cultural and national affiliation, restrict their chances for linguistic and communicative development.

How otherness is perceived and created in Swedish schools is what interests the researcher Ann Runfors. She asserts schools are strongly ideologically directed and that as organizations they have certain functions, such as qualifying and selecting certain types of students (Runfors 2003, pp. 7, 54). According to her, the lack of 'good Swedish', as formulated both in schools and by educational authorities, is related to class issues, such as the lack of social opportunities, and the domestic conditions of students. What happens, she emphasizes, is a dichotomization in terms of normal and deviant, that is, using a system of hierarchy in order to locate individuals in superior and inferior positions based on their class belonging. Individuals, as a result, are ascribed categories and belongingness which normally end in the people who determine the criterion for the categorization exercising power. (Runfors 2003, pp. 16, 32, 33). Note that while the above-mentioned participants cite their national and ethnic background as a contributing factor to (linguistic) otherness, Runfors speaks of the construction of a (new) class as the result of school's dichotomization. The same aspect is discussed by Åsa Bartholdsson (2008), who asserts that studentsocialization, power relations, and control methods are used to create normal students. Schools strengthen the involuntary powerlessness by believing that migrants' earlier habitus, knowledge, and experiences must be replaced by a set of new ones. This power transition begins in the language policy texts and continues at an institutional level in society and classrooms. Gibb suggests a closer investigation of policy texts and asserts that:

Examining the language within policy texts can give the reader some clues of the power relations and the dominant discourses situated in the policy-making process. Finally, power circulates through social relations within employment and educational institutions (Gibb 2008, pp. 320, 322).²⁰

Sjögren argues that ‘Swedish society’ decides what knowledge is and what the rules of interactions are (Sjögren 1996, p. 26 ff). This means that there are some social expectations that function as the criteria for interaction among people and to which the migrants must adapt (*ibid.*, p. 31 ff). Sjögren, in this context, stresses that there is a traditional tendency towards homogenizing which results in migrants perceiving Swedes as strange. Consequently, the majority’s message, by advocating a forced homogenization, and the migrants’ reaction in becoming alien, exist as a hidden agenda in the school context. As long as we have this situation, Sjögren claims, no pedagogy will function.

‘Good Swedish’, with the stress on a uniform accent, is another area of concern. A foreign accent is a threat to the homogeneity, which explains the demand to speak the language like the “mainstream”. Thus, the idea of good Swedish has become a collective idea of correctness (Sjögren 1996, p. 31). Furthermore, a technically oriented discussion about language ability prevents us from seeing the importance of socioeconomic and political barriers involved in the process of language acquisition. Sjögren argues further that the significance of speaking the Swedish language correctly has made Swedes too sensible to how migrants speak. To speak Swedish like the majority has, as a result, become a marker of how different ‘we’ and ‘they’ are. However, Sjögren also sees this approach as a method to keep away competitors. By disqualifying migrants based on the idea of ‘good Swedish’, it becomes easier to exclude

²⁰ In her analysis of school and power, Nieto uses Michel Foucault’s concept “regimes of truth” (1980), which refers to the type of truth that every society produces, transmits and keeps by “systems of power such as universities, the military, and the media”. “The result of these ‘regimes of truth’ is that perspectives and realities different from those that are officially sanctioned tend to remain invisible. For teacher educators, it is a matter of including such perspectives in courses and other teacher preparation experiences” (Nieto 2005, p.13).

them and safeguard the old system of cultural and institutional thinking by demanding good Swedish (ibid., p. 36).

To decide what good Swedish is, why the definition is needed, and who has the right to define it, is a difficult task. For the participants, in general, good Swedish is about a technical ability to understand and to be understood. However, this ability is, according to one of the participants, measured based on the migrants' national background rather than their real language ability. It is significant that various viewpoints are taken into consideration when we speak of good Swedish. In the United States, for example, the learners themselves are asked to value their own language proficiency:

The English language proficiency question of the U.S. census questionnaire is: "how well does this person speak English?" Respondents can choose between four possible answers: "very well," "well," "not well," and "not at all." In this study, the first two responses are categorized as being proficient in English.²¹

In discussing language ability, an approach based on the learners' understanding can be resorted to, because, firstly, it gives a picture of, for example, how many of the language learners perceive their language ability and, secondly, it engages the migrants in the issue of language proficiency on a subjective level. While questions like those in the quotation above are built on a learner's perspective, another way to understand what is seen as good Swedish within the frame of the educational system is to observe what schools teach and how they teach what they teach. The goals of language ability as defined by the Swedish National Agency for Education, and referred to in the beginning of this chapter, provide valuable guidelines, in the sense that those goals emphasize getting insights into how language is learned and the ability to adapt the language

²¹ Discussion paper, CDP No 03/12. *Living and Working in Ethnic Enclaves: English Language Proficiency of Immigrants in the U.S. Metropolitan Areas*. Julia Beckhusen, Raymond J.G.M. Florax, Thomas de Graaff, Jacques Poot, Brigitte Waldorf.

to different audiences and situations. The question, however, is if these ideas can be implemented fruitfully in a teaching context.

In what follows, I will try to portray what happens in the selected classroom at the BAE and in what way the teaching and learning process in the classroom can be connected to a wider understanding of 'good Swedish' and second language learning.

The Monocultural Classroom in a Multicultural Society

It is March and I have one of my observations in the classroom. The teacher asks if the students have read chapter sixteen in their textbook. The students reply, "Yes, we have". "But it is a strange chapter", comments one of the students, while others agree. The teacher says, "But it is an important chapter". The students begin to laugh and one of them says, "It is strange that the couple in the chapter married after six years of living together" (the chapter was about a couple who decided to marry after having lived together that long). The teacher answers very briefly that this kind of behavior is normal in Sweden and goes on with the lesson.

Two months later I am observing another class. The students are required to listen to a tape and afterwards retell the content. The first episode is about a police officer who stops a woman on the road and asks her why she was driving so fast. The second dialogue occurs between two friends, one of whom is planning to sell her apartment; they discuss what the advertisement should look like and what it should contain. The third conversation takes place between two women gossiping about other people. After listening to the tapes the students are confused. They have no idea what the dialogues are about. Judging from the students' dialogues with each other I perceive that they understood that in the first episode a policeman and a woman were involved, but they did not understand the content. The second episode was even more difficult to follow. The special terminology involved in selling an apartment and putting out an advertisement made it almost impossible for the language learners to understand the content; they seemed very confused and their dialogues with each other became more questioning. The same confusion was expressed with respect to the third conversation between two gossiping women, since it contained a

particular social jargon that the participants did not seem to be familiar with.

Here, to use Bourdieu's term, the school attempts to inform the language learners about how the social game is played in Sweden, that is, to socialize the adult language learners.²² Talabani and Hasanali (2000) argue that many migrants undergo acculturation stress and try to adapt to the new society, while many of the family structures, such as gender roles, remain traditional. According to the authors, the adjustment to society does not mean a change of those values that govern a migrant's life. What the authors stress is that cultural distance might keep its influence despite the adaptation to the host society. Another angle, discussed by Lisa Lowe, in her book *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (1996), is that the distance between some migrants' cultural background and the national culture (the culture of the migration society) illustrates the original culture of the migrants as something that contradicts the national culture. The failure of the integration of migrants into the cultural sphere of a country (in her study, the USA) leads to the migrants being perceived as displaced, as "foreigners within".

The confrontation between the existing cultural sphere of a country and the idea of multiculturalism becomes visible when looking at what is being taught within the school walls. In his study, Mattlar illustrates how schools have a clear programming

²² Lestinen et al. argue that during the last few years, as a result of the effects of globalization on educational systems, many researchers use the concept of 'hidden pedagogy' in order to discuss the hidden curriculum, which refers to unspoken and informal aspects of the educational process. This hidden curriculum cannot be discussed openly nor evaluated, but what can be done is to make the hidden curriculum more visible through pedagogical awareness and openness. For this reason, the authors suggest a critical analysis of "everyday practices, knowledge construction, interaction and communication in classrooms, which may hide more than might be expected" (Lestinen et al. 2004, p.10). This hidden pedagogy, in more specific terms such phenomena as "common values, beliefs, conceptions, myth, expectations, norms, roles and rituals", unconsciously results in the abolishment of authentic learning. Furthermore, this hidden pedagogy, which can also be called "hidden operational structures or a 'social grammar'", has a major impact on social practices in multilingual and multicultural settings (ibid., p. 10). The authors argue that the official curriculum and the actual studies do not have the same aims. It is the same problem that many Swedish researchers have also pointed out, namely, that the interpretation of the curriculum into the actual practices is different at different schools by different teachers. Furthermore, Lestinen et al. point out that, as a result of not being treated equally, students put their energy on finding survival strategies instead of "developing their own critical thinking and reflection, and creating new knowledge" (Lestinen et al. 2004, pp.10, 11).

agenda, which is built upon what has been associated with Swedish contemporary history and educational ideology. Here, there is little place for multiculturalism. Mattlar presents another interesting discourse, where he contrasts the Swedish values against the perception of what has been presented in the textbooks as non-Swedish values. In this discourse, Swedishness stands for modernity, democracy, justice, socioeconomic welfare, peace, equality, rationality, secularism, and knowledge. The non-Swedish groups, in contrast, are associated with backwardness, dictatorship, oppression, segregation, misery, war, oppression of women, irrationality, chaos, religiosity, and ignorance (Mattlar 2008, p. 193). What textbooks attempt to illustrate is that there is a need for a movement from superstition, religiosity, and poverty towards a society built upon rationality and knowledge, which constitutes the ground of welfare (*ibid.*, p. 191). Mattlar argues that what is mediated by the textbooks is that it is the migrants' responsibility to contact Swedes, learn the language, and be diligent and find jobs. In the same way, by using teaching materials explaining how Swedes sell their apartments, speak and behave when meeting a police officer, and so forth, 'school' mediates a migrant responsibility for engaging in how the social construction of the Swedish society is formed and operates. The classroom, consequently, becomes a place for learning new social dispositions, a new habitus. The question is if the old habitus of the migrants can be replaced, if it is wise to replace it, and if replacing the old habitus has anything to do with language development and communicative competence.

Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004, p. 1) see the dominant mainstream language policy as a means for social control that contradicts what society otherwise tries to mediate (referring to British society). They argue that:

This language ideological debate is not a struggle over language alone, but over the kind of society that Britain imagines itself to be: either multilingual, pluralist, and diverse or ultimately English speaking, assimilationist, and homogeneous. (*ibid.*, p. 18)

The idea of teaching good Swedish is in this case the same as telling people about a good society. By not discussing how things might be conducted in different societies (for example, how people sell their houses in Iraq), other ways of conducting things become subordinated to the Swedish way, represented by school. Here, language teaching does not signal the importance of a plural society but encourages an assimilationist and a monocultural approach. In the same context, Carlson asserts that schools that work with adult migrants advocate a deep knowledge about the Swedish society, that is, about laws and rights, equality between men and women, the labour market, and the norms and values which are central in the Swedish society. As a result, the education demonstrates an ethnic Swedish history and not contemporary issues of multiculturalism. The fact that Swedishness is frequently discussed in textbooks, that is, how Swedes eat, what Swedes do in their spare time, and similar issues, creates a dichotomy based on a 'we'-and-'they' kind of thinking (Carlson 2002, pp. 96, 98).

It is October and I am observing yet another lesson. The students are nervous because they are having an oral presentation. The first student to present is Salima. Her paper is about Ven, an island off the coast of Scania in southern Sweden. She reads from her notes and uses difficult words, pronouncing them wrongly. She struggles with words (I have a feeling that she does not really know the meaning of the difficult words she uses). The second student to present is Zeynab. She has written about a famous sculpture, the Peace Pistol, outside the central station in Malmö. She also reads from her notes and she has exactly the same problems as Salima. She stops and laughs when she cannot read her own text or pronounce the words she herself has written. After the presentation the students seem to be relieved. They tell me during the break that they devoted much time to this project and have been taking it really seriously, but that it was very difficult to present because the subjects required knowledge and a good vocabulary. I asked if it would be easier to have an oral presentation about a subject that they knew from, for example, their childhood or their life now in Sweden. Zeynab, Salima, and Mustafa answered:

It would be easier because I know about my life. It is also more fun to talk about one's everyday life and the challenges involved in it after migration. (Zeynab, BAE)

I don't know. I suppose for someone like me who is so bad at speaking Swedish it would help if the subject was easier. My problem is that I do not have any talent for language learning and I do not know, actually, what can help me. (Salima, BAE)

It would perhaps be more fun to talk about our life but we have to learn about the Swedish society; it is important in order to get out into society and in order to get a job. (Mustafa, BAE)

The participants have different ideas regarding what subjects would motivate them and make it easier to make an oral presentation. But what is common in their statements is a kind of uncertainty, which shadows their perception of their language achievement. They agree that it is a challenge to learn the language and to find the way to a better life and into the migration society.

As we saw earlier, most of the participants at the BAE do not understand the content of the tapes presented to them. This might be for two different reasons. The first reason might be that the content of the teaching material does not correspond to the level of language ability that most of the participants have. The second reason might be that the teaching content does not relate to the participants' everyday life, and therefore the participants, perhaps unconsciously, are not receptive or cognitively prepared for what is being presented or taught. Relating this discussion to Bourdieu's idea of game, the participants are not motivated to learn the game of selling an apartment, speaking to a police officer, or gossiping, as this is represented in the classroom. What is needed here is to find out what matters to the participants, because, as stated by Bourdieu, games which matter to people "are important and interesting because they have been imposed and introduced in your mind, in your body, in a form called the feel for the game" (Bourdieu 1998a, pp. 76-77).

The participants in the above-mentioned classroom examples are required to understand the Swedish context within which Swedes are exposed to different social events. The participants are also asked to respect and to recognize the importance of what is being mediated to them in the classroom (for example, when the teacher remarks on the importance of the specific chapter in their book and does not open for a discussion). The participants are the objects of the symbolic power imposed by school since they are not given the opportunity to discuss or question what is being taught. Group work methods are not used and critical questions are not addressed to the students; students are seen as the passive receivers of what school believes to be important knowledge. The language learners are expected to play a game that they do not have knowledge about. Playing the game, however, is contingent upon the participants' possession of symbolic capital and the recognition of it.

Given this context, I believe that it is important to consider the symbolic capital of the language learners as a crucial factor. Accordingly, as discussed in the theory part of this dissertation, one's past, one's education, and one's surrounding social network are crucial components of symbolic capital. The learners' possession of different kinds of capital helps them understand and play familiar games, but the capital possessed by the participants cannot help them in understanding the Swedish game played in the classroom. As stated by Bourdieu and Wacquant, institutions determine the quality of the appreciated capital and they legitimize what can be reproduced (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1996, p. 76).²³ The reproduction of dominant and accepted values, jargons, and worldviews in classrooms is perhaps a natural part of socializing the participants

²³ "The field of power is a *field of forces* defined by the structure of the existing balance of forces between forms of power, or between different species of capital. It is also simultaneously a *field of struggles for power among the holders of different forms of power*. It is a space of play and competition in which social agents and institutions which all possess the determinate quantity of specific capital (economic and cultural capital in particular) sufficient to occupy the dominant positions within their respective fields [the economic field, the field of higher civil service or the state, the university field, and the intellectual field] confront one another in strategies aimed at preserving or transforming this balance of forces... This struggle for the imposition of the dominant principle leads, at every moment, to a balance in the sharing of power, that is, to what I call a *division of the work of domination*. It is also a struggle over the legitimate principle of legitimation and the legitimate mode of reproduction" (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1996, p. 76)

into the Swedish society, but the question is if it is the most satisfactory method of providing language ability and communicative competence in a way that motivates the learners. Those participants who have little education, or do not have access to a Swedish network, are disadvantaged and, therefore, the possible losers of the game.²⁴

The Lack of Connection between Teaching and the Learners' Social Reality and Cognitive Condition

It is November and I have one of my observations at the BAE and the learners are required to write about Easter. Some of the learners ask me about Easter and are worried. They say that they know nothing about Easter and want me to help them.

We have a difficult task. We have to write about Easter. But the problem is that I have never celebrated Easter. I do not know what people do at Easter and what it means. I know nothing about Easter. What should I write? (Zeynab, BAE)

I first asked my children if they could help me write about Easter but they don't know more than that it is about chickens, eggs, and yellow feathers. It is not enough. I need to know more, but I don't know how to gather material (Amir, BAE).

Here the expectation of the school is for the language learners to write about a Swedish custom that they cannot actually connect to what they are interested in or to their needs. This results in passive participation in the classroom. The adult language learners with their great life experiences become like lost children searching for new truths, instead of using their already existing capacity to ac-

²⁴ Lisa Delpit in her book *People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom* (1995) asserts that often there is a "culture of power" that shapes conflicts and relations between teachers and students in the classrooms. She argues that there are codes or rules for participating in power relations and that these codes are shaped according to a "culture of power". These rules are enacted by those who have the culture of power. What is interesting in Delpit's reflection on culture and power is that those belonging to the culture of power and having that power are often not aware of it, while those with less power are aware of their own 'powerlessness' (Delpit 1995, p. 24).

quire communicative competence and discover society according to their own abilities.

It is September and I am observing one of the lessons at the BAE. The learners are supposed to use the words *perspective* (*perspektiv*), *focus* (*fokus*), and *distant* (*avlägsen*) and write three sentences that include those words. The learners start talking to each other and searching in their dictionaries, but the dictionaries cannot help. Those who sit near me ask me “What do the words *perspective* and *distant* mean”? I try to explain, but I need more than my own understanding to help them.

It is difficult to understand the purpose of the task, that is to say, why the learners were supposed to make sentences using words they hardly understood or could use in their daily interactions at the time. Most of these learners had a low educational background and had studied between 5 and 9 years at primary school in their home countries. Would the learners not have benefited more if the words had been related to the different contexts of their everyday lives? How would a recognizable or, for the students, interesting teaching context affect their motivation? The participants had repeatedly emphasized that they had difficulties in managing conversations, for example, when they had meetings with their children’s school authorities. They usually said that they felt powerless when they had different kinds of meetings and when they, for example, needed to discuss things related to their children’s situation in school, or to medical care. The participants would probably have appreciated it more if they could have focused on words and phrases that they could use during such meetings. Hana, one of the language learners at the BAE, describes the gap between the everyday life situation and language ability as follows:

I lived in Turkey three years before we came to Sweden. I worked there and I could speak better Turkish in three years than I can speak Swedish after six years. We learned so much, even how to talk to authorities. What we need in Sweden is to know how to talk to these authorities we meet in, for example, our children’s school, nursing staff, day care staff, and likewise.
(Hana, BAE)

One of the biggest impediments in introducing a more adequate learning situation at the BAE seems to be that the content of the courses is isolated from the social reality of the participants' lives. One explanation of this can be that the teachers try to mediate what is obvious to them. Marie Carlson argues that, despite the differences between educational authorities, they are "children of their time" and strive to mediate a message that is well-known to them. According to her, what defines truth creates power relations. Obviously, people's actions are based on their pre-understanding of and knowledge about their world. However, this fact, in the hands of school authorities, plays a major part in imposing a system and a worldview that are not in accordance with the students' reality (Carlson 2002, pp. 29, 96).

The participants assume that they are in school in order to learn a language as 'linguistically' as possible. The grammar, the tests, and the written papers have a high priority, not only to the students but also to the teachers. Textbooks are significant and teachers have, as their most important task, to convince the learners of what is written in textbooks or what are the common perceptions in the Swedish society. Methods for developing students' self-understanding, critical thinking, and engagement play a minor role, if any at all. The major problem in this context is that school attempts to engage the students in what they see as useful for them, namely, to learn the language at the same time as they learn about how to live a life in Sweden, which might be perceived as abstract and rather strange to the learners at that time in their lives.²⁵ Learning right and wrong, and the Swedish way of living, in a classroom, especially when the learners do not have good language ability, seems to be a waste of time. By doing so the learners are expected not only to acquire linguistic knowledge but also to acquire knowledge about norms, thoughts, social codes and values.²⁶

²⁵ Giddens states (1990, p.102) that in modern societies abstract systems function as means of establishing relations in contrast to other societies where members rely on familiar relations.

²⁶ Lorentz and Bergstedt advocate *intercultural teaching*, where the different cultural behaviors, norms, values, knowledge, and thoughts of various individuals with different ethnic or cultural backgrounds are communicated through social interaction between learners and the school/teachers (Lorentz & Bergstedt 2006, p. 29).

The classroom examples indicate the strong influence of the Swedish social and cultural norms on language teaching. Another example that indicates that the school lacks a student-centred approach is when the participants at the BAE are asked to read the novel *The Guy in the Grave Next Door*.²⁷ Note that these are the same language learners who had difficulties in understanding the meaning of the words *distant*, *perspective* and *focus*. Leila says:

Our task this week is to read the novel *Grabben i graven bredvid*.²⁸ It is a very difficult book. I read the novel but I do not really understand it. I understand some words in it, but I do not understand what they mean. Then I read again and have to use a dictionary. I know that I am not going to be done in time. It is too difficult. (Leila, BAE)

Using fiction reading has been discussed as an overrated method in the teaching context, as fiction reading is not always the most effective way of teaching, depending on surrounding facts (Årheim 2005, pp. 5 ff). Moreover, novels can be deeply rooted in how specific societies are constructed socially and culturally. In this case, a combination of Leila's lacking knowledge about the host society and her restricted language ability makes the task into something time consuming. Reading the novel becomes a task that cannot be connected to the social reality or the language ability of the participants; the novel prevents the actual learning. Based on my conversation with the participants at the BAE, reading this particular novel was an 'impossible task' for most of these learners. I read the novel myself and discovered that the novel was not only complicated from a linguistic point of view, but that it also contained several

²⁷ In Katarina Mazetti's funny novel *The Guy in the Grave Next Door* the two contracting parties, children's librarian Desirée and dairy farmer Benny, tell their respective side of their common love story in every other chapter. In the introduction of the book, we see Desirée making espresso in her airy, white-painted bar kitchen, while Benny stirs powdered coffee to wash the brush in a drab 50s-decorated house. Soon the reader will be led into a deepening discussion. (Reviewed by Svenska Dagbladet Kultur). Desirée is sitting at her husband's grave, embarrassed by her lack of grief. On the bench next to her sits a vulgar man with no style. The grave he sits at is studded with embellishments, and he plants and arranges it as if it were an exhibition garden. This is the prelude to a very special relationship drama. Two seemingly incompatible personalities manage to meet. And then a spark is struck. (Book description on bokus.se)

²⁸ Katarina Mazetti, 2008, *The Guy in the Grave Next Door*

cultural and social underpinnings which, without language ability and social awareness about the norms and values among different social classes in Swedish society, seemed impossible to understand. Asra and Ali have also tried to read the novel and say:

I read the novel and sometimes I actually understand many words, but then I cannot talk to my husband or anyone else about it, because I really do not know what the story is about. (Asra, BAE)

I hoped to be able to read and understand the novel, but it is very difficult. No one in the class understands the novel, so it is not only me, everybody has the same problem. (Ali, BAE)

Using novel reading can be very motivating and useful in a teaching context. However, novels are about telling a story, often using a rather complicated set of phrases, and they involve cultural factors that might confuse language learners, because understanding a description of a scene, for example, a banquet in a British context, is not the same as knowing what it is like (Caixia 2013, p. 87). Collie and Slater argue that the language used in a novel “incorporate[s] a great deal of cultural information” and is intended for native speakers; it contains irony, exposition, argument, narration, and so on (Collie & Slater 2009, p. 4).

Given this context, if, according to what the participants say, the majority of them do not really understand the content of the novel, then it becomes vital to examine if it is the linguistic composition or the social context of the novel that is hard to grasp. What I call the social context in a novel is called its “underlying ideology” by Tricia Hedge, who argues that “texts are constructed in certain ways by writers in order to shape the perceptions of readers towards acceptance of the underlying ideology of the text” (Hedge 2000, p. 197). The novel *The Guy in the Grave Next Door* is not only a literary work; it also involves the representation of a bigger shared social reality. Novels which mirror a ‘recognized common space’ also create a form of national belongingness. Describing certain persons in particular contexts, such as fiction, also represents

the ideas of nation and place (Wright 2004, p. 40). This means that in order to understand a novel and use it as a teaching aid, the teachers need to be sure that the premises for comprehending the novel, and what it represents in terms of social representations, are clear and understandable for the language learners. Otherwise, using such novels becomes yet another method for practicing symbolic power and indicating what counts as valuable knowledge from the majority's point of view. According to David Leavitt, language, songs, traditions, and culture become an indicator of membership and a password to enter the game and play it correctly. This can be linked to Leavitt's statement that "the language one speaks tends to guide one's thinking along certain lines" (Leavitt 2006, p.65). Leavitt describes this aspect as follows:

The understanding of a simple poem, for instance, involves not merely an understanding of the single words in their average significance, but a full comprehension of the whole life of the community as it is mirrored in the words, or as it is suggested by the overtones. (Leavitt 2006, p. 63)

As I discussed earlier, based on my classroom observations, by being exposed to teaching contents associated to the Swedish culture the language learners are positioned in a situation they lack knowledge about. The energy needed for learning the language might, consequently, be divided between learning the language and acquiring knowledge about the Swedish culture.²⁹

Mattlar asserts that the exercises conducted in multicultural classrooms in Sweden indicate that the Swedish classroom circumstances and textbooks have a propaganda purpose which is based on the political ideal in Sweden, and which attempts to function as an arena for the production of ideologies about gender, equality, and other values. Textbooks strive to construct hegemony and a

²⁹ Anna Lundstedt, the Swedish researcher, describes culture in terms of sharing something that unites people, such as memories, associations, moments of insight and awareness, reflexes, scents, feelings – a kind of agreement that excludes other nationalities. It is more about a cultural heritage than about culture itself; culture is the feeling generated, for example, when Swedes hear the song "Den blomstertid nu kommer" (Lundstedt 2002, p. 37; see also Risager 2007, p. 8).

coherent political ideology production (Mattlar 2008, pp. 11, 181, 182).

My main argument in this context, however, is not about proving whether the teaching context should be based on Swedish cultural and social norms and values or not, but about creating an awareness of the importance of the question whether the existing teaching methods are efficient enough to provide the participants with adequate language ability and communicative competence.³⁰

The Role of the Teachers

The work of teachers is not easy. Teachers are, in the everyday life of school, confronted by a diversity of students whose learning and welfare to a great extent are determined by the way teachers personally and professionally are able to ‘read’ the classroom, and the student identities within it. They are expected to manage diversity, act promptly in a variety of situations and must be able to solve a variety of conflicts. (Arnesen 2000, p. 157)

Many researchers within the field of education and diversity agree that there are certain competencies needed by teachers in order to teach culturally different students, and that teachers are not trained to consider these competencies as vital (see Rubinstien Reich & Tallberg Broman, 2000; Gibson 1994). John Elliott in his article *The Teacher’s Role in Curriculum Development*, based on Stenhouse’s pedagogical ideas, discusses the role of teachers as “researchers of their own practices in schools and classrooms”. Elliott’s point of departure is that in realizing a pedagogical aspiration teachers need to “reconstruct the view of knowledge implicit in their traditional practice” and consider in what way knowledge

³⁰ With regard to this perspective, there is another aspect which needs to be brought to the fore, namely, how to provide the students with methods that can encourage them to think critically and express themselves in a more ‘structured’ manner. Below you can see some questions (developed by Abriam-Yago et al. 1999, p.146) that are useful in fulfilling this purpose.³⁰ Antonia Darder, professor of education and cultural studies, develops the above-mentioned aspects thoroughly and emphasizes the fundamental role of curriculum development in multicultural societies in relation to students’ awareness, their ability to reflect, their social situation, and motivational and relational issues (1995, p. 334 ff; see also Detaramani & Shuk Im Chan 1999, p. 125, and Gay 1995, p. 162).

should be represented to students (Elliott 1994, p. 50). Elliott argues that teachers need to be better at developing the ability to be innovative in their teaching. It means, partly, to develop the ability to use open questions instead of trying to transmit knowledge. What Elliott attempts to underline is that Stenhouse's invigorating critique from 1975, based on the idea "no curriculum development without teacher development", is still a significant starting point in discussing learning outcomes. On getting insights into what the process of teaching is like at the BAE, I asked Mats, the principal, how they used to select material for teaching. He answered:

Teachers choose the material. We try to have a reality-based perspective and not only 20th-century literature, but our ambition is to show what our society is like today. The society of the 20th century is not the same as today's society. In the end it is the teacher who decides; we do not have any directives regarding materials. (Mats, principal BAE)

Teachers and curriculum determine what a course must contain and what material is to be used, but how the participants at the BAE perceive different tasks does not play a major role (if any at all). The lack of transparency with regard to what is taught in the second language classrooms is something of an international problem. Catherine Cornbleth, professor of Curriculum and Instruction, states that a curriculum can be changed or ignored in what the writer calls official chambers and in school classrooms. There is not necessarily a common agreement between curriculum policy and classroom curriculum practice. This means that politics and policies can be transformed, actively undermined, or ignored in the classrooms (Cornbleth 2000, p. 222). Margareta speaks of this problem as follows:

I have students who struggle and struggle but nothing happens, and then there are other students who make it. The question is if we can use the same pattern of learning for all students. Of course we can have a better pedagogy; we can make the situation better. (Margareta, teacher BAE)

Jim Cummins asserts that the “classroom is the microcosm of the society”. If students are not affirmed in the classrooms, if their experiences are not part of the curriculum, and if not all actors in the learning process are allowed to contribute to the process, then students “will seek affirmation on the street” (Cummins 1997, p. 89). In the case of the participants of the present study, this point of view, namely, that the reality of the classroom is isolated from the reality of the language learners, plays a major role, which I will return to in the following chapters. Schools, Cummins states, can recognize their students by choosing a new approach. This approach is built upon “the triangular set of images”, that is, a) an image of our own identities as educators, b) an image of the identity options we highlight for our students, and c) an image of the society we hope our students will form. The critical teacher discusses with her students what causes what; she goes behind the facts, investigates together with her students and seeks answers and solutions. She relates and expands the students’ reality and provides the students with tools to think for themselves (*ibid.*, p. 95 ff). One of the main problems, with regard to the language difficulties of adult migrants, seems to be the perception of the language learners as persons who do not take responsibility for their own learning. The individual learners are seen as isolated from what drives them to act in a certain way. In this way the individual learners become depersonalized, which results in the image of the students as the others, who do not fit within the educational system of Sweden because they are different.

I asked Annika at the BAE why she believed that some of the learners performed worse than others and I referred particularly to one of these students, called Salima:

Salima is a weak student who has participated in the same course (course D) twice. Some of these students borrow money from CSN³¹ and some of them receive a social allowance for participating in the course. There are no studies about what

³¹ The central study board in Sweden

happens to these students later or what they do after their studies here. (Annika, teacher BAE)

Annika points out that as a teacher one needs more reliable knowledge about the students' life conditions and how these might affect their learning outcomes. So, knowledge about in what context learning occurs is elevated as a vital aspect here, something that is even stressed particularly from a research point of view (Richards 2011, p. 4)³²

In the same setting, Inger Gröning, researcher in Swedish as a second language, asserts that there are classroom rules which are concealed for many students with a foreign background. These rules contribute to students' underachievement in schools and marginalize them outside school. She argues that if teachers openly discuss the hidden rules of the curriculum, students from ethnic minorities would acquire those norms and rules that can provide them with power and influence (Gröning 2006, p. 13). The powerful social and political conditions which govern classroom interaction and schools as institutions, are undervalued. The interaction process in the classroom can be understood as related to the interaction processes at the societal level. The connection between the micro level and the macro level reveals how historical, political, and cultural differences between the minority and the majority shape different discourses and power relations in classrooms (Gröning 2006, pp. 13, 240).³³

Despite the existing research that indicates how different mechanisms, social, political and cultural, can contribute to minority students' underachievement, the failure of language learners is explained by individual factors at the BAE. Irene explains language learners' failure in the following way:

³² "The notion of *context* here is hence a very broad one, since it includes issues such as the school's goals and mission, its management style and *school culture*, its physical resources, including classroom facilities, media, and other technological resources, the curriculum and course offerings, the role of textbooks and tests, as well as the characteristics of teachers and learners in the school. Learning to teach means becoming socialized into a professional culture with its own goals, shared values, and norms of conduct. This *hidden curriculum* is often more powerful than the school's prescribed curriculum and teacher learning involves learning to teach within the constraints of the hidden curriculum" (Richards 2011, p. 4).

³³ There are many discussions in this context with regard to how to face this complex. One good example can be read in Rowe & Paterson's article (2010).

They give up so easily. One tries to explain that it does not work like this if they have to work some day. Then you have to go to work whether it rains or is windy. This concerns both men and women. One should learn such things in order to function and 'blend' into society. I had a very weak student who really wanted to pass the course. But I couldn't pass her. I suggested that she write a diary. I told her: "It does not matter what you write about, write a few sentences every day. You may as well fantasize; it is only I who will read it". How many pages do you think she wrote totally after ten weeks? Only a few pages. I told her: "Oh, my God, is that all you have done during these weeks?" I know that she does not like it here in Sweden and has no study plans. This is fulltime study, but one notices that the students do not study as fulltime students. (Irene, teacher BAE)

Later, Irene says, "I have seen that some of them try too much but do not succeed". "Do you have any idea why?" I ask her. She replies:

I believe that it is everything around them that bothers them. News from the home country, for example, that someone has been killed and then they feel very bad. And there is of course the uncertainty about the future because they do not want to be here; they think of the day when they will return. I understand that it is hard to study when you think and feel like this. They study for many hours but they cannot take it in. And they believe that they have studied a lot. (Irene, teacher BAE)

According to Irene, the language learners give up so easily, they do not study as fulltime students ought to do, have no plans, and cannot integrate into and function in society. Irene makes a connection between the study achievement of the students and everything around them, which is an interesting observation and can reinforce the idea of the influence of other inputs, outside the classroom, on learning achievements. Irene refers to the idea that the students might study for hours yet cannot take it in, and this might (as I see

it) also be related to the influences of their social life outside the classroom. But the former quotation also indicates the encouragement of a study approach that does not correspond to some of the participants' earlier study habits. To write a diary is indeed a great method in encouraging some students to use their language and their cognitive ability to think and write, but when it comes to most of the participants at the BAE it seems to be a task that needs the kind of autonomy and ability that they, in general, lacked at the time I met them. When I ask Irene what she would change if she had the power, she says:

It is a difficult question. One cannot hypnotize people. You have to study four hours at home, you have to work. You have to come to school more than 75%. Perhaps it would help to inform the students that if they are not present (to a certain percentage) they cannot receive their degree. At the same time there are students who have a bad presence but they study a lot, do the tests and succeed. But for those who fail because of bad presence it would be good to participate in an information meeting, for example, in order to hear that it is obligatory to come to school 75% of the time. (Irene, teacher BAE).

According to Irene, the participants must study four hours each day and participate in classes more than 75%, in order to succeed. The reason that I choose to use this particular quotation is partly in order to highlight the fact that adult migrant's language learning is a complex issue that can be scrutinized from several different perspectives. While Irene rightly reflects upon the participants' engagement in terms of participation, it is more relevant to examine how the teachers at the BAE interpret language learners' development, and this seems to be rather context-dependent, which allows for arbitrary interpretations of and an overlooking of pedagogical issues. For example, another student's underachievement is explained by Margareta as follows:

We have a student who is very messy. Despite the fact that he is an adult he does not want to grow up. He sabotages the think-

ing in the class. I want him to think and come up with the answer, but he does not. It has to do with their educational background. Those who are uneducated, in some cases, take much of the time in the class. The majority of students are very motivated to study, but the rest are influenced by various things. During Ramadan, they are very tired and then there is the family situation. They have sick children and then it is not easy to sit and study. I see them come and they are tired. It is rarely the case that they are not interested, but it is about other factors. (Margareta, teacher BAE)

Here Margareta assumes that the learners' failure, or lack of engagement, is a result of other factors than lack of interest. It is obvious that the teachers need more knowledge about the specific context in which they are teaching the language and who they have as language learners. I asked all the teachers at the BAE if there are any possibilities for the teachers at the BAE to discuss issues related to their students' language learning situation in an organized way. The teachers said that there are no forums for teachers to discuss such issues critically, exchange ideas, or be involved in discussions based on previous research. Since the existing global changes create tensions and change the traditional way of working for the teachers (Weber 2007, p. 229), we need to see the development of the teachers' professional role and their identity negotiations as teachers from new viewpoints.³⁴

Furthermore, Marilyn Cochran-Smith, education researcher, discusses two other important and rather unique perspectives that can change the traditional understanding of teachers as only transmitting knowledge within a certain field. She encourages teachers to devote themselves to self-studies, in order to be able to critically reflect on their role as teachers and the role of social justice in a

34 Everard Weber, in his article "Globalization, 'Glocal' Development, and Teachers' Work: A Research Agenda", investigates critically the need for a new approach to the teachers' role in the age of globalization. He argues that migration and globalization affect educational systems, curricula, and pedagogies. New teacher identities are formed, which means a change of teachers' influence on the educational framework. These changes, accordingly, call for a new approach to human resource development in educational contexts. (Weber 2007, pp. 288, 289; see also Richards 2011).

teaching context (Cochran-Smith 2000, 2003; see also Gay 2010, p. 144).

Milner (2010), in his article “What does teacher education have to do with teaching?”, advocates an extended focus on teachers’ perception – their approach, thinking, belief systems, mind-set, and general conception of the teaching and learning exchange. We might believe that much has been done within the field of education and diversity, but still, as late as 2010, Milner sees a reform within the educational system as necessary, mostly because teachers, in the time of globalization, have multi-layered professional needs that cannot be ignored (Milner 2010, p. 118).

Learning Good Swedish Out There in Society

Most of the educators and students involved in this study constantly emphasized the importance of having contact with Swedes for improved language ability. The BAE offered some internship placements, which gave the learners the opportunity to get out and meet other people and practice their language. I was interested in seeing how the teachers at the BAE would reflect upon the relation between the participants’ language learning and being out there among people, so I asked Annika what her opinion about language learning in the classroom and language learning as a part of a placement was. She said:

A combination of practice and theory would be best. However, it is also possible that students lose their concentration on their language study or gain negative experiences from the placement. They can feel that they have been used during the placement. But I suggest a form of contact with society. (Annika, BAE)

Annika has been an SFI teacher for fifteen years. She points out that she has not been involved in policymaking issues. She recommends “a form of contact with society”, but she does not develop the idea. I asked Mats, the principal of the school, about what methods were used in order to integrate theory and practice, and he answered:

Sometimes these students live in a segregated area near their own people and then they do not want to transport themselves far from home in order to take up an internship in the city. I believe that students have some kind of resistance and do not want to leave what they are used to. We have a study counselor who tries to arrange internships. She noticed that some of the students have a tendency not to want to go very far for their internship. There is also a resistance against going to a placement far away from home. Then they usually claim that they are needed because they have to take care of the children. One wonders how it will be when they have to work for real. (Mats, BAE)

Mats' presumptions about the students' attitude towards internship is mostly based on what the study counselor has reported to him. According to his understanding, students are, in general, seen as a homogeneous group who do not go far away from their home for jobs because they are needed at home. Three broad forms of ideas can be postulated here. The first one is that the school authorities, by predicting students' behavior, generate low expectations, which per se can lead to stereotyped ideas about the students. Secondly, in such situations, if or when the students become aware that the school might have negative perceptions about them, this can lead to a decreased motivation to get involved and learn the language. In other words, there is a risk that particular expectations of or perceptions about the students at the BAE lead to a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy on the part of the students. Thirdly, study counselling, the most important goal of which is to find out possibilities, turned out to be a mechanism for categorization. In such cases student counselling could have a crucial role in constructing a bridge between teachers, education, and students. When I asked the head of the BAE if they had student councils he said:

It is a flaw, but we do not have any student influence. The person who held the post before me had a system with student influence, but the problem was that so few students were engaged. When we had a student council, not many participated.

There were no discussions, so the whole idea became a failure. Yesterday we were actually trying to formulate our activity; we must be able to describe what we do. We must formulate and document our ideas. I think if other persons who come after us decide to do it in another way, then all we have done here would disappear. We have to document what we do. We want to give the students a kind of influence. (Mats, principal BAE)

By not having student influence, the BAE fails to seize the opportunity to investigate how students interpret their situation and construct knowledge and attitudes in the learning context. The lack of focus on the students' perspective indicates how invisible the language learners are in the whole process, from sitting in the classroom and reading and writing things they do not have any impact on, to being sent out there in order to practice the language. What the participants themselves perceive as hindering factors in learning and using the language is not a relevant issue. Courses are designed, developed, changed, and taught without any student influence or dialogue with the students (see also Eriksson-Sjöo & Ekblad 2009, p. 5). Sunaya from Singapore, one of the students at Malmö University, explained that she had huge difficulties in finding the right way through SFI and she wished to be helped out by a study advisor, but no one offered her that kind of help.

When I studied Swedish, our group was a mix of different people with different abilities and educational backgrounds. It took several months before they could place me properly in a course in SFI. I went from one teacher to another only to be sent to yet another. If one qualified person, for example, a study advisor, had talked to me at the beginning, she would have understood where I belonged within the frame of SFI. (Sunaya, MU)

One of the participants at the BAE, Farida, was a teacher in her home country Iraq. Ever since she moved to Sweden, she had tried to find her way back into her old profession. When I asked Farida if she had talked to a study advisor, she said that once she talked to a study advisor and she told her that she needed "more language

ability". I asked if the study advisor told her more concretely what to do or if she could take extra classes, and so forth. Farida said:

I could never have imagined that it would be so difficult to learn the language and begin to complete my grades in order to become a teacher again. The strangest thing is that nobody listens to me. I have a feeling that they do not really believe that I was a teacher in my home country. The way it seems today, it is impossible to become a teacher again and it is so sad. (Farida, BAE)

Asra, another participant, said:

Once, the study advisor arranged so that I could work at a restaurant. But when I said that it was far to go and that I had small children, she became irritated and then she ignored me totally. Then I did not know how to continue. I did not know what was best or who to talk with. (Asra, BAE)

The participants' statements indicate a state of general confusion; they do not know how to obtain help in finding the best solution to achieve their personal goals. The empowerment of migrants, and providing opportunities for their self-realization, are aspects that have been discussed by many researchers. Banks suggests an establishment of a new institution that can guide students with diverse backgrounds. He states that institutions can crystallize a more realistic disposition of migrants' situations and take a step further towards multicultural education. Today we have institutions that work against discrimination and in the same way we need institutions that work with counseling and individual guidelines. By designing concrete methods, such institutions can even help migrants with their social integration, as well as helping them figure out what may be the right education for them and find a job. Banks sees this approach as a part of multicultural education and stresses that it is necessary to have ethnic institutions and self-determination with a focus on the establishment of institutions that can help migrants achieve their unique needs in multicultural socie-

ties. These needs are related to social, cultural, and educational goals (Banks 1999, p. 58ff). In order to see the complexity of adult language learners' situation a conscious school leadership is required. I asked Mats, the principal at the BAE, what he would change if he had the power to. He answered:

First, they need internship, out in the real world at the same time that they study here. One should not only study in the school and go home. If the goal is integration, then one should know how it works. There is only one way and it is to come out. Then there are a lot of nuances that we want to focus on here in our school. We have an open door to society. We work as mentors; we encourage them to conduct the tasks themselves. They have to be able to function independently in the future.
(Mats, principal BAE)

Mats's argument here indicates the school's two-edged purpose, that is, a) fulfilling the goal of society, which is to integrate the participants into "the real world" and making good citizens out of them, and b) teaching them the Swedish language so that they can speak without difficulties. One could argue that both purposes are important, but the issue I am addressing is that the students' perspective and the motivational factors are still disregarded. More specifically, why the students need to, and should, be integrated, and why some aspects of taking up a placement are problematic for the students, are concerns that are not thoroughly discussed at the BAE. What the teachers at the BAE express indicates that the issue of second language learning in Sweden is at a crossroads. Despite the fact that the BAE has as its most significant aim to help the students to improve their language ability, the discussions with the participants (teachers included), and the observations of the teaching methods, do not only involve a concern for language ability or communicative competence but also for the need to assimilate the students into certain social patterns. So, following the discussion raised by Broady (1991), technical competence (knowing how to use a language to get what one wants and to say what one wishes to say) cannot be exchanged for symbolic capital (such as

the knowledge valued in a specific market). What is central at the BAE, perhaps unintentionally, is to represent what the Swedish society has access to, without taking into consideration what the participants have access to. So school (here the BAE), as stated by Bourdieu, becomes a categorization apparatus which does not take into account that the majority's symbolic capital and the participants' symbolic capital have been shaped during a whole life but under different circumstances, and that these capitals are valued differently in different contexts (Broady 1991, pp. 123, 124).

The classroom observations illustrate that presenting the kind of symbolic capital that is valued in the migration society is central in language education. The curriculum, its implementation, and the teachers' understanding of their role include efforts to integrate the participants into society. In other words, providing the language learners with methods to acquire communicative competence, so that the participants will be able to integrate themselves into society on their own terms, becomes second priority. Again, learning about society becomes more vital than learning and communicating in the Swedish language. What has to be highlighted here is the need to construct a curriculum that recognizes how theories of learning, teaching practices, and the idea of integration can be understood as related to adult migrants' existing conditions, abilities, and desires.

When I asked Irene if she believed that integrating theory and practice would help the participants in learning the Swedish language, she said:

I do not believe at all that the idea of integrating theory and practice suits all. Because, firstly, they need a certain degree of language ability in order to be able to communicate. I do not believe that there is someone in the field who holds foreigners by the hand and shows them everything. Not in the beginning, but perhaps after a while internship would help. Think how difficult it would be if I would do an internship among people where I could not understand what they were talking about around me. I am a bit sceptical. (Irene, teacher BAE)

Then Irene referred to a group of foreign doctors who attended her language course and stated that:

Those doctors said that internship didn't give them much in the beginning compared with later when they could speak Swedish better. They told me that in the beginning, when one doesn't know many words and tries too much, it is a stressful situation. (Irene, teacher BAE)

Irene believes that there is no one in the field who holds foreigners' hands and shows them everything and therefore they need more language ability before being sent on internships. Furthermore, she believes that insufficient language ability can cause a stressful situation for the participants. Earlier, Mats was convinced that the language learners should be sent on internships, "to the real world", so here we have two teachers (one of whom is the principal of the school) who perceive the issues of learning language by taking up a placement quite differently. The question is whose idea, from a pedagogical point of view, is more appropriate to implement (a question for further research). The other question is if the absence of a cohesive pedagogical approach can lead to an arbitrary understanding of what works in the context of second language learning for the adult language learners.

The Role of Teachers in Understanding a Diverse Classroom
Teachers have a crucial role and need to go beyond the present understanding of second language teaching in order to cope with the complexity involved. Recently, the aspect of teacher awareness of diverse classrooms has become more fundamental in the field of education research.³⁵ In relation to the issue of diverse classrooms, I

³⁵ Jason G. Irizarry coined the term "culturally connected", which refers to the idea that "teachers can become active participants in one or more of the socially constructed groups of which their students are a part and, thus, learn to represent for their students" (Irizarry 2009, p. 500). He states that in order to achieve this ability teachers need to be interested in their students' background and present situation. His study indicates that the teachers he interviewed were seriously reflecting on issues of education in a socio-political context. They were interested in discussing and exploring whether the students were oppressed in the educational settings and in what way student-teacher relationships and social justice could be further developed (ibid.).

asked Annika if she believed that there is any difference between students from different countries with regard to learning the Swedish language. She answered:

Yes, there is a difference. People from collectivistic³⁶ societies have so many other things to think about. Their priority is always family and therefore their studies suffer. Religion also plays a role. Sometimes they are so religious that they do not want to discuss an advertising poster which is not consistent with their religious beliefs. (Annika, teacher BAE)

Later Annika says:

Culture plays a role, but not religion. I have had some extremely religious students who learned Swedish in a very short period of time. (Annika, teacher BAE)

Annika gives contradictory answers. While in the second statement she believes that religion has nothing to do with the outcome of learning, in the first statement she says that religion is important. When I ask Annika if they usually discuss such issues in school, she says that they do not really reflect on these questions in a structured and systematic way. Irene, another teacher, says:

I had a group of Somali students and it did not go well for either women or men in the group. They did not take it seriously and had huge problems. They continued every semester without succeeding. They were bad at being on time in the classroom, bad at doing the homework, and bad at keeping their papers in order. We in Sweden are very organized. When I ask them to write in their calendars, just a few have calendars. I say to them, "Oh, my God, how do you manage? I would never manage without my calendar". I believe it has to do with cultural differences. We live with our calendars. Most of the foreigners do not

³⁶ The day before I was talking to Annika about my research and I mentioned one of my focuses based on the theories related to collectivism and individualism. I do not know how much this discussion influenced Annika's thinking and her use of the concept the day after.

have calendars. They don't have their papers in order. They don't have their papers in a folder and must look for it in their bags. It is not good for learning. (Irene, teacher BAE)

Here, besides interpreting the behavior of the language learners in general terms, Irene uses a Swedish frame of reference. She relates the participants' study technique to the fact that they are not Swedes and lack order. If they were Swedes they would have calendars and folders and would be better learners. Here learners' earlier social dispositions are related to study underachievement. One possible interpretation of the quotation is that the school achievement is unsatisfactory due to the learners' cultural background. Here students' study technique and the social impacts involved in the process of second language learning and teaching, or implementing certain pedagogical methods, receive an inferior role. The lack of a connection between teaching experiences and new forms of pedagogical approaches might be one explanation of why some of teachers see the language learners' background as the key factor for their failure, instead of using a holistic approach to adult migrants' second language learning in the migration context (see also Lindqvist 2002, p. 60).³⁷ The prominent position that some of the teachers impose on culture in order to understand the language learners' language development, can, accordingly, undermine a holistic approach to understanding the process of second language learning of adult migrants:

Students interrupt each other. It varies from class to class. We lose lots of time when they interrupt. I was in Gothenburg when they had the book fair and listened to a lecture about cultural differences. The lecturer explained that in certain cultures it is

³⁷ Hall and Gieben (1992) discuss this problem and refer to two theories within multicultural education, namely, *the cultural deprivation paradigm* and *the cultural difference paradigm* (see also Banks 2005). Cultural deprivation theorists simply imply that social background, such as low income, causes bad study results. These theorists mean that poor and disorganized family circumstances make students experience "cultural deprivation" and "irreversible cognitive and intellectual deficits". Therefore, this paradigm sees the culture of the student as a hindrance for learning. Students' cultural and social backgrounds, according to this paradigm, are the reason why several students fail in their education. So theorists who believe in this paradigm suggest that the students must be changed, not the school (ibid., p. 51 ff).

impolite not to interrupt. In other words, something that Swedes comprehend as impolite is polite in some other cultures. In France, for example it is impolite not to interrupt and not to question what people say. Therefore we have to explain that in Sweden we do not interrupt. Taking, for example, the issue of turn-taking, we have to say the entire time: wait for your turn, hands up before questioning. Swedes are experts in turn-taking, taking queue tickets, and so forth. (Margareta, teacher BAE)

Annika, the other teacher, had also been in Gothenburg and had listened to a lecture about cultural differences. While reflecting on the lecture she listened to in Gothenburg, she told me that she knew that things can be perceived in different ways in different cultures. But the empirical material of this study indicates that the issue of diversity is hardly discussed and problematized in classroom teaching contexts. Ideas about certain cultural differences, which explain why, for example, some of the language learners do not have calendars, are late to class and do not have their things organized, are put forward without any deeper discussion. How language learners themselves would reflect upon these opinions is another angle worth examining.

Conclusion

According to the participants, 'good Swedish' is achieved by more contact with Swedes and consists of being able to make oneself understood. Good Swedish, as some of the participants assert, is an ability which grows if you are a part of the migration society and not perceived as the other. One of the participants mentioned the national background as a hindering factor in being perceived as a good speaker of the Swedish language. However, in the eyes of the BAE, good Swedish is more about learning to live a life in Sweden and understand the social and cultural circumstances as Swedes do. Language is seen as a key to the Swedish way of living and not a key to individual achievements based on the kind of realities that the participants have access to, or the kind of life they want to create.

With a starting point in various situations, for example, how Swedes sell their apartment, or celebrate Easter, or what happens in a Swedish novel, the BAE language learners are taught to think like Swedes. This means that learning the language of gossiping, or selling an apartment, aims at learning not only words and phrases but also the social and cultural jargon, which in turn means that the language learners are required to learn how to gossip or sell an apartment as this is done in Sweden. Here the ultimate goal is not to create learning situations in order to achieve communicative competence, based on what the learners need to communicate, but to have the students acquire a cultural awareness about how things are done in Sweden.

The classroom teaching methods, and the material chosen, symbolize what is perceived as right by the (school) teachers. Since the purpose of the school is to teach the right way of doing things by speaking good Swedish, symbolic power is exercised by the school. The language learners are forced to acquire knowledge about things that might not interest them or might not be useful in the everyday life of the participants in that particular phase of their life. The Swedish way of doing things is idealized, which perhaps, in an unconscious way, denies the existence of the adult learners with their set of dispositions that cannot be made to disappear only through their sitting in the classroom and learning how to think like Swedes.

The teachers' reflections indicate that the BAE's way of approaching adult migrants' second language learning needs to be investigated from a student perspective. Some arbitrary statements, and too much emphasis on student responsibility, give the impression that the language learners are seen as having themselves to blame. Here I emphasize the idea of the importance of actively constructed knowledge, which opposes the idea of a simple transmission. This means that the minds of both teachers and students are activated in constructing strategies for education (Kafai & Resnick 1996, pp. 1, 38).

The lack of student influence at the BAE is another issue which indicates the role of the language learners as passive receivers with a responsibility to take in whatever the school aims to mediate.

What is most worrying is that these adult language learners do not have enough language ability to discuss what they think of their language education, and since it should be their right to be able to influence the teaching context, the school should find alternative ways of communicating with the language learners.

Crabtree and Saap pose a fundamental question: “Your culture, my classroom, whose pedagogy?” (also the title of their article). With this question one of the most obvious (but still somewhat obscured) paradoxes is formulated: if the classroom belongs to the teachers, whose culture governs the content of teaching, and what kind of pedagogy should be relevant? Crabtree and Saap argue that the assumption that it is the students’ responsibility to adapt to the learning environment, which is created and controlled by the teachers, is an unexplored issue within multicultural education (Crabtree & Sapp 2004, p. 107). According to the empirical findings in this chapter, and as concluded by Crabtree and Sapp, the confrontation of cultures in a classroom controlled by teachers, and anchored in a certain cultural affiliation, constructs reinforced ethnocentrism, generalization, and stereotypes without really taking into consideration that “the nature of cultural identity itself is highly contested and increasingly in flux within the macro- and micro-processes of globalization” (ibid.).³⁸ So, in answering the question “Your culture, my classroom, whose pedagogy?” we need to reflect seriously on what it means to teach students with different personal, ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds and on how the school’s and the teachers’ own worldviews, and the prevalent worldview in the teaching material, influence the learning outcomes. What we need is more serious reflections regarding the purpose of education and language learning and the kind of society that exists outside the walls of classrooms. The lack of such reflections is expressed by Eva Sæther as follows:

³⁸ Mikael Hjerm argues that most educational systems are characterized by the values and experiences of majorities. At the same time as it mediates the values of the dominant group, the educational system creates the myth of the hegemony of the national state and institutional discrimination. That is why Hjerm suggests that the educational system, instead of an ethnocentric teaching approach, should teach democracy and pluralism (Hjerm 2000, p.23). Hjerm draws the conclusion that “there is always a correlation between the institution of a country and the attitudes found in it” (ibid., p.24).

I was surprised, and curious to understand why there was no trace of music from the cultural background of these students. Did this imply that the music teachers had not reflected at all on the multicultural situation in the classroom/school? Or was there a gap between the ideological level in the governing documents and the practical level of pedagogy? (Sæther 2008, p. 27)

The question here is if a possible “gap between the ideological level in the governing documents and the practical level of pedagogy” might have a consequence in terms of teaching designs without a proper understanding of students’ life conditions. As discussed earlier in this chapter, there is a weak connection between the classroom teaching and the reasons why the language learners want to learn the language (the motivational factors). The basic reasons for migrants to learn a language is to have access to information in order to be able to orient themselves, to express what they want to express, to solve problems, and to be able to use the language as a bridge to the future (Bailey 2006, pp. 117, 118). Based on the empirical evidence of this chapter, it is difficult to argue that the purpose of the second language education at the BAE corresponds to the above-mentioned needs. But above all “structured educational contexts” and an “expanded view of pedagogy” need to be discussed (Van Compernelle & Williams 2013, p. 278).

Teaching Swedish as a foreign language has, instead of providing language and communicative ability, to a large extent become a matter of how to think and express what is perceived as right and wrong in the migration society. Therefore, as stated by Janet Field, curricula need to be designed in a way that promotes intercultural awareness. She lists concrete strategies for achieving this goal, based on the understanding of a global manifestation of culture, plurality, and multiple perspectives. She also points out other interesting aspects, such as the underlying process rather than the content, and enabling the students to critically examine their own cultural knowledge (Field 2010, p. 19).

Given this context, it is evident that teachers need more knowledge about and interest in what the learners have access to,

that is, the learners' conditions and the degree of their language ability/awareness, as well as the motivational factors, the relation between theory and practice, the content of teaching materials, teaching methods, and how to construct a pedagogical connection between the learners' world and the world advocated by school.³⁹ Furthermore, teachers must acquire intercultural competence. Intercultural competence has been explained by Davis and Cho as follows: "In order to survive today's complex world, people need to understand different cultures. Understanding different cultures helps people adjust to unfamiliar environments in which they meet, work and live with other people who have different cultures. Adjustment and positive attitudes toward different cultures prompts people to take active roles in the diverse society. Therefore, acquisition of intercultural competence, which is the capacity to change one's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors so as to be open and flexible to other cultures, has become a critical issue for individuals to survive in the globalized society of the 21st century" (Davis & Cho 2005, p. 4).

Furthermore, the work of language policy in Sweden should more clearly examine a majority-based ethnocentric approach to second language teaching, as opposed to the individual learner's chances of being communicatively competent. As stated by Wright (2004, p.169), power relations and a one-way approach to language development indicate that schools implement second language teaching methods isolated from the impact of the negotiation of identity after migration.

Another vital aspect in concluding this chapter is to critically discuss the consequences of what Goodlad et al. (1979) call the "curriculum of the mind". By using this concept, the authors try to illustrate how teachers interpret the curriculum in their own way

³⁹ The sociocultural approach to learning underlines the cultural-historical study of mind. The cultural and historical background influences the development of mind (psychological phenomena) and occurs with reference to a historical thinking which involves a link between past, present and future (Portes & Vedeboncoeur 2003, p.373). Over time the individual's dynamic participation in societal development accompanies the interplay between her/his past, present and future; her/his development will be determined by society, biological traits and "cultural development progresses" (ibid., p.384). Portes and Vedeboncoeur explain this process and assert that "the point is then to understand the historical dance whereby the hourglass is been slowly rotating over cultural and individual timelines and histories that constrains or promote development" (ibid., p.385).

and in their own mind (see also Sjögren et al. 2005). Goodlad et al. attempt to warn about the consequences of an implementation of the “curriculum of the mind” and argue that by interpreting policies as they wish, teachers might influence the substance and outcome of learning and teaching in the wrong direction.

Perhaps what is needed is a deeper focus on what Jessica Pykett calls “theories of pedagogical power” (see also Rivera & Poplin 1995, pp.233, 234, 241):

Teaching is what happens in schools, but pedagogy involves thinking about teaching, strategizing, discriminating for/against the particular demands of specific students, and consideration of the interplay between a teacher’s intentions, the social conditions in which students and teachers interact and the desired outcomes of each actor within the pedagogic event. (Pykett 2009, p.105)

5. LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE WHILE DEALING WITH POST MIGRATION ISSUES

Figure 1. Three major elements in the sociocultural understanding of the second language learning and use of adult migrants

Introduction

While the previous chapter focused on teaching approaches at the BAE within a sociocultural context, the present chapter will discuss what kind of influences the participants' own life conditions might have on their attitudes towards second language learning and their language development. The main goal of this chapter is to discuss the complexity of learning a second language as an adult migrant while, at the same time, dealing with the consequences of migration in terms of memories from the home country, negotiating one's identity after migration, and coping with the challenges of constructing a meaningful existence in the migration society.

According to Refaie Shirpak et al., "international immigration is a major life episode that forces redefinition of self". Migration involves changed realities and facing different new realities. Individuals' perception of their roles in a society must be modified in order for them to establish themselves in the new society. Coping with these challenges varies depending on different background factors. Migrants must usually deal with identity-related issues, such as gender roles, family systems, and values and beliefs. Consequently, depression, family conflicts, and anxiety become some of the negative outcomes of migration (Refaie Shirpak et al. 2011, p. 751). The post-migration life (transnationalism) means that many migrants transfer money to their home countries, "engage in frequent travel and communication back and forth" and "create informal associations" (Heisler 2008, p. 96). At the same time as they are detached from their origins and fear not being accepted by the host society, "they maintain a memory, vision or myth about their original homeland". This kind of diasporic life is usually embedded in dreams of returning to the home country, and people who share this life, "share a consciousness and solidarity as a group through a continuing relationship with the homeland" (Safran 1991, pp. 83–84). Upholding a relation to a prior home, harbouring feelings of alienation in the host country, and establishing a collective identity based on the above-mentioned relation, all this has become a significant part of the life of "political refugees, alien residents, guest workers, immigrants, expellees, eth-

nic and racial minorities, and overseas communities” (Shuval 2000, p. 42).

Another aspect of diaspora includes long-distance nationalism that involves a complex human existence with new components of contemporary transnationalism. Due to memories and experiences of oppression some migrants enrol in the victim diaspora. Victim diaspora, which actually refers to involuntary “patterns of out migration”, can be seen as related to oppression (Khayati 2008, pp. 4, 105). What is new in this context is the idea of transborder citizenship and membership in two countries; it involves a new way of thinking of the concept of diaspora.

Examining the features of life after migration is vital, because the conditions ingrained in a post-migration existence might mean dealing with a series of sociocultural inputs in relation to which migrants must position themselves. This chapter aims to discuss if migrants’ attitudes and achievements with regard to learning and using the Swedish language might be affected by such sociocultural inputs, derived from their existence after migration yet embedded in their earlier habitus and life-world.

Feelings of Displacement and Longing for the Familiar

Farida is one of the students at the BAE who showed a great interest in learning the Swedish language. Farida has been in Sweden for four years and was a teacher at a primary school in Iraq before moving to Sweden. She invited me to her home for lunch and agreed to let me write about her and use our discussion in my study. Farida is 33, she is married and has two children. Farida’s husband was politically involved, which caused them problems in Iraq. “As many other Iraqi people we wanted freedom and a better life for our children. So we decided to move to Europe”, she said. When I asked her if she was happy in Sweden, she said:

I don’t know really. Sometimes I am happy, but most of the time I am not happy. The only thing that I know is that my children have a future here. Me and my husband, we are between two worlds. We believe that this country is full of opportunities and we have to fight to succeed. Sometimes, when

things don't turn out as we wish, we feel tired and then we miss Iraq even more. For example, I want to be a teacher again, but right now it seems impossible. I don't know what to do to be a teacher again. My husband was a clerk and politically involved, but now he has nothing to do. Our Swedish neighbors sometimes look at us strangely. We know that they believe we get social allowance. It doesn't feel good. (Farida, BAE)

Farida sees her own career achievement rather negatively, but she believes that her children will have a better life. She points out possible negative attitudes from neighbors as disturbing, something that reinforces the feelings of displacement and being the other. She also sees her husband's situation in Sweden as vital while discussing her own difficulties. Due to the social changes, the situation in the migration country becomes so delicate that the participants cannot ignore that their wellbeing is connected to the wellbeing of other family members. However, it is not only considering the family's situation that complicates the participants' life but also a missing sense of belonging. Leaving the home country does not only involve a physical move; it is also about leaving a place that provided belonging. In other words, the worry of several participants at the BAE is displacement and a lost sense of fitting in and affiliation. This perspective has been stressed by other researchers that argue that the issue of displacement and belonging has great meaning for how migrants justify their positioning in the migration society.⁴⁰ The justification

⁴⁰ Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, in their article "Beyond Culture: Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference", stress the importance of country, people, and belonging and assert that a country consists of territory, people, and culture. This combination illustrates the importance of place and belonging and the sense that there is a difference between us and them. The metaphor of roots explains some of the complexity embedded in the reasons why people seek to belong to a nation. According to the writers, there are some assumptions that people can only fully belong to one tree, one root, and one culture. Based on what the authors illustrate, dealing with displacement and issues to do with whom one belongs to after leaving one's home country, positions the migrant in the center of a "moral justification of the existing situation" (Gupta & Ferguson, cited in Dijkstra et al. 2001, p. 59). What makes Gupta and Ferguson's elaboration on 'roots' interesting is that the authors try to accentuate the importance of the concept of belonging; this concept has a crucial impact on the understanding of how belonging might lead to the construction of loyalty to a nation. "The three elements of territory, people, and culture combine to form "the country." The ground is sometimes even literally linked to the people, such as when someone takes along a handful of earth from his country when forced to leave it or kisses the ground upon setting foot again on national soil. People therefore belong to a single culture only. It is for this reason that words such as "autochthonous" and, in relation to certain cultures, "native" and "indigenous" are used. It expresses the relationship

of the existing situation becomes a condition that can affect the adult migrants' actions and their approach to the migration society: do they see integration into the migration society as possible through language? Can they at a certain age become good speakers of the Swedish language? Do they want to live in Sweden for the rest of their lives? Do they see the home country as a potential place to live in in the future? And so forth. All these questions indicate that the issue of where people belonged in their past might have an influence on their present positioning and actions.

Mahalingam and Leu argue that migrants' identity negotiation needs to be understood within a global and transnational context. In such a context, it is vital to consider in what way a "marginalized social location, human needs for a positive self and group identity and psychological costs and benefits of self-representations play a role" (Mahalingam & Leu 2005, p.856). What most of the participants of this study cope with is to measure the psychological costs of how they position themselves (I will come back to this issue in chapter 5). Therefore, an emphasis on cultural essentialism does not function, since the participants constantly have to deal with divergence of different kinds; they have to cope with what is different out there in society and these differences affect not only the way they live but the way they are. It is not only about a culture and the issue of belonging to it; it is about many different social fields that need to be understood after the migration. Therefore, as emphasized by Mahalingam and Leu, an understanding of "intersections of identities within specific social, historical and transnational contexts" is necessary (Mahalingam & Leu 2005, p. 857).

between being born somewhere and the territory. They also convey a we-they distinction: "we" belong here, "they" do not. Migrants may be here, but they do not come from here. The natural place of people and cultures is often described in images derived from nature. Roots are an especially popular metaphor: people and cultures are rooted in the soil, just like trees; a nation is like a great family tree that is rooted in the ground; you can belong to only one tree and thus to only one culture. In this view people should continue to live in the place where they were born and raised, where their people and their culture reside. Displacements only cause problems for those involved. Should they be loyal to the nation and the state they have left or to the one where they have arrived? Significantly, this view of human beings, culture, people, and territory, which holds that people do not merely live somewhere but also belong there, asserts that the description of the "natural" order also establishes a standard, namely, a moral justification of the existing situation" (Gupta & Ferguson 1992, cited in Dijkstra et al. 2001, p. 59).

How the participants reflect on their situation mirrors the delicate relation between the place where they used to live in and their perception of belonging to that particular place. This aspect, besides its romantic significance (the idea of a beloved homeland), also includes a practical aspect. Belonging to and knowing a place, a culture and a country means that one knows how to deal with social life in a specific place, in a specific country, and under specific sociocultural premises. This means that the longing for the home country, besides being a romantic diasporic reaction, is a cry for becoming a competent human being, as the migrants were in their home countries. The feelings of displacement and a non-achieved self-accomplishment give rise to a strengthened loyalty and attachment to the home country and the family. At a micro level, within the frame of family relations, however, the loyalty involves the family, the traditions, and socially constructed expectations. The development of personal goals, the family's plans for the future, and the level of competency about how things work in Sweden go hand in hand.

When I asked Farida if she had been trying to gather information about how to be a teacher again, she said:

Yes, I ask everyone about how I can be a teacher again, but nobody knows. People say that I have to learn the language. Nobody says what happens later. Some friends have told me that the only chance is to become a mother tongue teacher and that I can never be a teacher who, for example, teaches social science. We have plans to go back to Iraq when the political situation becomes stable. My husband is really determined to do that as soon as the situation is better, so I do not know what will happen. (Farida, BAE)

I asked her if she wanted to move back. She answered:

We moved to Sweden, we sold everything and we all tried to adjust to the Swedish society. Now the idea of going back with the children and start all over again seems so frustrating. What can we do if things turn out wrong? Must we move to Sweden

again? As it is today, we have our heart in Iraq but we live here. What if the children become happier here? We are confused and want to do the best we can. (Farida, BAE)

What Farida says indicates a state of uncertainty. While she knows that she wants to be a teacher again, she faces two challenges: Can she learn the language and be guided so that she can teach in a Swedish school? Can she resist her longing for the home country and concentrate on her goals, even if her husband plans to go back? Farida's situation, like that of the other participants at the BAE, is characterized by struggling and being torn between not only the home country and the migration country but also the social norms of the two countries, as many of the participants, according to what they told me, uphold a relation to the home country in the sense that they consider the possibility of going back. Diaspora here becomes the key element for the construction of ambiguity and in-betweenness (Wahlbeck & Olsson 2007, p. 50). Here the participants' search for a better life confronts complicated issues, such as people's fundamental need for recognition, the need to be proud, and the need to have control over one's life. As stated by Geschiere and Meyer, a global expansion of human mobility does not only mean openness in terms of heterogeneity, but can actually lead people into a smaller "cultural closure" and "trigger a search for fixed orientation points and action frames, as well as determined efforts to affirm old and construct new boundaries" (Geschiere & Meyer 1998, p. 602, cited in Dijkstra et al. 2001, p.58). So, in constructing these new boundaries, the participants create a new form of existence. A similar construction is called diaspora culture, something that does not conform to the culture of the country of origin, nor advocates an assimilationist approach; it has its own characteristics rooted in subjects and their positions, which are located in diaspora (Wahlbeck & Olsson 2007, p. 53).

'Between Worlds'

As mentioned earlier, I met three of the participants in their home. The conversations were about their living conditions, their attitudes towards the migration society, and their Swedish language

development. My purpose with the home visits was to try to see how the participants constructed meaning in their daily life and if language learning could, in any way, be affected by the process of this meaning construction or the outcome of it. I was first invited to dinner at Leila's place. Leila was a Christian woman from Iraq, aged 35, who had lived in Sweden six years with her husband and their three daughters. She was one of the students studying at the BAE and participated actively in all group conversations. I was interested in knowing how she, in general, experienced her life in Sweden. She told me this:

We did not feel secure in Iraq any more. So we decided to move to another country. Of course, it is not easy with three girls. We want them to marry only within our people, because we are not many, so it is important to keep our religion and traditions alive. I want to get a job, but it is not easy. I cannot speak the language properly and it is hard to have contact with Swedes. If you do not speak the language, with Swedes it is almost impossible to speak fluently. It is the same thing for my husband. He says "in Swedish I say what I can but in Arabic I say what I want". (Leila, BAE)

Wahid is a male student at the BAE. He is 39, from Iraq, and answers the same question as follows:

Sweden is not the home country...you know. Everything is harder to understand here. It is not only the difficulties with the language, but not really being a part of society. You think about your country all the time and then you are not a whole person, something is missing. (Wahid, BAE)

The feelings for the home country are a recurring topic for most of the participants. The participants are torn between the idea of, and the hope for, a new life in Sweden and the home country that they cannot stop using as an emotional frame of reference. The relation to the past and the home country was clearly visible when I asked

Morad, Amir, and Salima, three participants from the BAE, how they experienced their language studies:

I hope I could learn the language. It is so important. But it seems that I cannot take in what the teacher says and learn so that I can speak properly. My mind is everywhere. It is outside the classroom. There are so many things that I think about, my home country, how our future will be here, and if our children can find happiness here. I do not want to think about these things but I do any way, these thoughts are with me all the time. (Morad, BAE)

Sometimes I get so confused and mad when I sit in the classroom and listen to the teacher. I am 39 years old. I should have a proper life. Not be sitting in a classroom studying language (Amir, BAE).

This great change is unbelievable. From being a housewife with a secure life, where everything was well known, to sitting in a classroom because I have to do it. (Salima, BAE)

Thoughts about the past, how things once were, and the ambiguity about the future, seemed to be three deeply interrelated features. The idea of a home country, and what is associated to it, constantly reminds the participants that something is missing. The main point here is that learning outcomes become a product of what kind of mental and social conditions the complex process of migration entails. Benish-Weisman explains this process elegantly:

The transition from one country to another involves far more than just a physical move and affects all areas of life. The experience of immigration is unsettling—in both a physical and an emotional sense, leading to estrangement from the familiar and the predictable and challenging immigrants with the unfamiliar and the unexpected. (Benish-Weisman 2009, p. 953)

I asked Leila how she believed that such feelings affected her interest in learning the Swedish language. She said:

One thinks all the time that it is too late to start all over again.
It would be easier if we were younger. (Leila, BAE)

Then she explained:

Because it is easier to blend in and find Swedish friends if one is younger. Then one can learn the language faster. (Leila, BAE)

Age seems to be one of the most important features for some of the participants in explaining language and integration underachievement. Since age, according to a habitual perception, is interpreted as a hindering factor in achieving language competency and employment integration, this can lead to participants experiencing stress and anxiety. In the same way, having grown-up children is seen as a token of a certain positioning, in the sense that some of the participants believe that they must focus on their children instead of their own self-realization.⁴¹ Wahid refers to migration and starting over again at a certain age as a complex process:

The feeling that one is old and has no knowledge about the society and language here makes one less self-confident. How fun is it to be a lawyer and sit behind the desk and learn a language and everything else from the beginning and not being good enough at my age? You compare all the time what kind of respect you would have in your own country if it was not raging with war. I still hope that some day I will return to the life I had in my home country. (Wahid, BAE)

⁴¹ Jun Li (2010) has studied Chinese students in Canada and points out that the contrary realities of immigration lead to psychological distress and affect the school results. He emphasizes that “the psychological functioning of immigrant adolescents cannot be understood in the absence of the situated sociocultural, historical and institutional contexts in which it is constructed” (Li 2010, p. 120). Li argues that without an interactive learning environment and “without sufficient practice and peer interaction, new immigrant students are unlikely to become proficient English speakers”. Furthermore, he argues that it is significant to see how language learners deal with home and school and the issue of acculturation and adjusting to the host culture (p. 132).

The feelings of being emotionally separated from a functioning language, and lack of contact with society, lead to self-pity and a desire for a self-accomplishing return. The existence of a past and of another country that once provided self-respect and participation, places most of the participants in a situation where they compare many different aspects of their social life, such as socializing, working, and communicating with other people, between the migration country and the home country. The diasporic condition, and being away from the beloved home, reminds most of the participants of the idea that “there’s no place like home”, a phrase that the American researcher Emily Ignacio uses as one of the subtitles in her article (2005). The participants seek to mediate the feeling and the attitude that this is not home; the home is a place they used to live in before migrating, with neighbors who understood their language and where the social expectations were clear. Home is the place where the migrants had accepted the climate regardless of whether it was raining every day or the temperature was 40 degrees. Home is where everyone knows one’s name; everything else seems to be a diasporic home.

Indeed, under certain circumstances migrants need to perpetuate their emotional and social bonds by going back, calling, writing letters, and simply romanticizing their relation to the home country. The state of transnational relations affects the whole family, which is why several researchers argue that, in order to paint a more correct picture of migrants’ lives, family conditions should be investigated quite as much as the individual’s situation (Gustafson 2007, pp. 22-23).

Transnational relations contribute in organizing the participants’ sociocultural existence; they create a kind of meaningfulness. Even if the strong feelings towards the past and the home country might operate as an obstacle in terms of creating lower motivation for language learning, it seems to be utterly vital for the psychological wellbeing of the participants. More specifically, with reference to what the participants state, language is better learned when one has frequent contact with Swedes, when one is younger, when one’s pride is not damaged, and when one does not have the same emotional connection to the home country. These ‘conclusions’

made by the participants are based on the idea of being the other, whose life-circumstances are affected by one's experiencing a certain diasporic existence. At the same time, in order to understand the outcomes of such an experience, diaspora should not, as stated by Brubaker, be seen as something maintainable but rather as a category of practice, and it is only then that the concept can be used as an analytical tool (Brubaker 2005, p. 12).

The participants do not see sitting in the classroom and learning a second language as a natural part of their life. There are other things they must deal with as a result of migrating to another country; they experience new things and have to make new decisions that impact both their own wellbeing and that of their families. How they communicate these experiences, and argue about their feelings and the decisions they make, has great importance for their attitudes towards and involvement with the language and the Swedish society. Therefore, recognizing the transnational condition and its consequences for language development becomes indispensable.

The Need to Belong to a 'We-Group'

Most of the participants at the BAE struggle to solve the dilemma of their existence in Sweden at the same time as they try to preserve different kinds of attachment to the home country. It is not actually the home country's constant existence in their daily life that is the problem, but rather what kind of social reality it mediates compared with the social reality that the host society offers. The ambiguity that characterizes the participants' life decisions after migration, and how they experience their existence, is shaped by an 'unconscious competition' between host and home country. As an example here, the distribution of information should be mentioned. Most participants watch cable TV with programs from their home countries. As a result, information given by Swedish TV gets an inferior status, since the participants choose to be informed not only about news but also about other aspects of social life through cable TV. Hence, the social information, norms, rules, and social values of the home country continue to compete with those of the migration society. Some of the participants, despite the fact that they

have chosen to migrate to Sweden, choose to be part of an information and knowledge society which has its roots in the home country or its neighboring countries. When I asked Farida if she watched Iraqi TV, she answered:

Yes, we watch Iraqi and Swedish programs, and programs from other Arabic countries. We have to know what happens, especially in Iraq. Therefore Swedish TV is not enough. I know that it would be better for my language, but it is important to know exactly what is happening in Iraq. (Farida, BAE)

I asked Ali from Iraq how often he watched Swedish TV, and he answered:

Not often. I usually watch Al Jazeera. (Ali, BAE)

When I asked why he watched Al Jazeera and not Swedish TV, he explained:

Because I understand the language, I enjoy the program. It is difficult to explain, but it feels like being home watching Al Jazeera. Everything is different with the Swedish language, do you understand? It is not only the language that I have difficulty understanding; it is also the content that is so unfamiliar. Besides, by watching Al Jazeera I follow what happens in my part of the world. (Ali, BAE)

The need to preserve the relation to the home country and the familiar way of living hampers the possible closeness to the language of the migration society, due to, for example, use of parabola TV. 'Worrying' constantly about the home country leads to the need to know what happens there. The participants' divided attention, their feelings of in-betweenness, and the social gap between most of the participants and the majority, create two worlds. The participants' existence in these two worlds leads to the participants having to struggle to deal with both worlds. This struggle, in turn, leads to less motivation to learn the new language or even to diffi-

culties with regard to seeing the advantages of knowing the new language and the social norms of the migration country. The Swedish language ability gets a secondary status, since another perfectly functioning language already serves as a source of information in an everyday context and in the connection to the home country. Transnational relations and diasporic conditions influence how migrants organize, think about, and understand their life in Sweden. A constantly existing network with the mother country, one's countrymen, and the family creates a new field which can perhaps explain features of the diasporic existence in a new way (Gustafson 2007, p. 15).

One study that investigates similar issues is Mirjaliisa Lukkarinen Kvist's doctoral dissertation (2006), which deals with Finnish diaspora groups in Sweden. She interviewed fourteen Finnish people who migrated to Sweden at the age of twenty. She aimed to show how the participants in her study felt about the old home country, where they felt at home (Sweden or Finland), and if they still, after many years, travelled back to Finland as much as they did in the beginning. Her study indicates that the social and emotional connection to the home country motivated the participants to travel and to keep a continuing contact with the people and the place that they came from. According to Lukkarinen Kvist, what motivates these repeated journeys is the construction of identity and belongingness. However, she also points out that travelling to the home country has decreased over time, while the perception of Finland as the home remains the same. Lukkarinen Kvist's study is interesting, because it shows how, in the first place, a condition (for example, a political condition, and in this case the unemployment in Finland during the 1950s and 1960s) results in people migrating from their home countries, then how the migrants by travelling back regularly perpetuate their ethnic identity when it is needed the most, and, finally, how, after some years, the need to go back decreases, while the emotional ties to the home country remain the same as in the beginning of the migration process.

The same tendency is discussed in Lisa Åkesson's article (2007) about migrants from Cape Verde. She indicates how important it is for these migrants to maintain a certain way of being after migrat-

ing in order to be loyal and preserve their ethnic identity, which helps them construct a picture of who they are and how they should behave. Åkesson argues, by referring to her interviews with relatives to migrants in Cape Verde, how important it is to preserve a certain identity as a person coming originally from Cape Verde. Here we see that the expectations from the home country and the expectations from other countrymen in the migration country play a major role with respect to how migrants uphold and negotiate their identities. Therefore, understanding migrants' emotional ties to their roots might help to understand the mechanism behind identity negotiation, attitudes towards the migration society and its language, and the motivation for language learning.

In understanding the 'negative effects' of the diasporic condition for the language development of the participants, it is necessary to understand that a *diaspora* can also be defined as:

.../a social collectivity that exists across state borders and that has succeeded over time to (1) sustain a collective, national, cultural or religious identity through a sense of internal cohesion and sustained ties with a real or imagined homeland and (2) display an ability to address the collective interests of members of the social collectivity through a developed internal organizational framework and transnational links. (Adamson & Demetriou 2007, p. 497)

Once, during one of my observations at the BAE, suddenly the topic of the discussion in the classroom was 'fish'. This happened without the teacher planning it. Most students from countries with Islam as the dominant religion agreed that fish without scales should not be eaten. The teacher wondered why and the students could not explain it and only said "that is just how it is. Those fish are not good". Nobody explained further what the reason could be. But, coming from a Muslim country, I knew that fish without scales are considered *haram* (forbidden), which means that according to old religious rules you should not eat them, exactly as eating pork is prohibited. One Iranian man began to protest and said that he ignored such beliefs and ate all kinds of fish. Two women

from Iraq, one sitting beside me and one in front of me, smiled and told me that it was just nonsense not to eat fish without scales. They were silent during the discussion but whispered their disagreement in my ears. I asked them why they did not voice their opinion to the whole class. The woman beside me said, smiling, "They would 'kill' me outside the classroom if I disagree with them. They would perhaps not talk to me", and the other woman in front of me agreed with her.

The same type of incident was repeated a few weeks later when the class discussed the rate of divorce and the reasons behind divorces. The majority of the students from the Middle East agreed that a woman should not, in spite of difficulties, divorce her husband. Women should think about their children and the happiness of their children, and not only about themselves. The same scenario was repeated again. Two women did not agree, but they did not participate in the discussion. One of the women coming from the same country as those who argued strongly against divorces told me that "they do not understand. I am married but I believe that you should be free to divorce". However, she did not 'dare' to share her opinion loudly.

What I try to highlight by these two examples is that it seems that, for the participants, in taking a different view, or expressing a deviant behavior, they put the we-feeling in danger. In this setting, generally speaking, what is seen as accepted by the majority of the group, based on the earlier learned disposition, may contradict the individual thinking of some of the participants. The women participants at the BAE who had a different opinion than the other women (with the same ethnic background) in the classroom did not express themselves, because they did not want to be perceived as different and lose the kind of social belongingness that they experienced in school. They needed the relations with the other women outside the classroom. Every time I was there I saw how they ate together, laughed together, and planned further social meetings with each other; they tried to weave the social structure of their being together in a new country by upholding a connection and being close to each other. Here certain norms are defended by some of the participants, and certain norms are silently rejected by

other participants. As a result, a collective opinion is constructed and dominates the rules of social engagements. The reason that this collectively-produced category is important in a language and communication context is partly that such collectively-produced sets of ideas construct a social room where relations, bad and good ones, are determined. This social room can play an essential role for the construction of attitudes towards the majority society. These attitudes and beliefs can influence both the interaction with the majority and attitudes towards using the Swedish language.

Belonging to a collective platform, which, besides recognizing the national, cultural, religious, and social identity of the participants, also provides facilities for living in a 'strange' country, is most valuable for most of the participants at the BAE. Adamson and Demetriou see diaspora as network-based collective identities and argue that it is important to discuss the formation of collective identities in contemporary migration processes and to understand the relationship between states, institutions, and collective identities as "quasi-independent structures of meaning" (ibid, p. 491). Here it is vital to recognize that these participants' social lives do not stop developing in relation to their earlier affiliations just because they move to a new country, but, as argued by Adamson and Demetriou, "the mobilization and formation of political identities" continues and is an issue that needs to be addressed more carefully (ibid., p. 492).

Ambivalence, Ambiguity, and Finding Confidence

When I visited Leila in her home, she went to the kitchen to fetch something and I moved to the end of the living room and looked across the street through the window. The apartment was located right behind Möllevång Square on the sixth floor. Leila came to me and said:

I really miss the garden we had in Iraq. Sometimes I am so tired of all the grey walls and concrete [she points to what we can see outside]. I tell myself all the time that we moved to Sweden for the children to get a better future. (Leila, BAE)

I asked: “Do you mean that you are here for the sake of the children and not for your own sake?” She answered:

It is horrible in Iraq now, you know. It is dangerous there. It is good here, but there are problems too. It is easier for the children and more difficult for me and my husband. (Leila, BAE)

There is a kind of ambivalence about what Leila wants and how she perceives the opportunities that life can offer in Sweden. Leila tries to convince herself that the migration was a good decision because her children will have a better life in Sweden. While I talked to Leila, the TV was on and a program in Arabic problematized, as far as I could understand, how to raise a child. I asked and she confirmed that the program was about how to deal with children. I asked if she usually watched parabola TV and she said:

Yes, we do. It feels like home. We understand everything. It feels so great to understand every word. No questions about what they say or what they mean, as we do when we listen to Swedish. I am never confused when I listen to Arabic programs on parabola TV. (Leila, BAE)

Mozhgan: “How do you do then when you have to communicate with Swedes?”

It’s not easy. Contact with the children’s school feels very uncomfortable; sometimes I do not understand at all what is going on. It is like that with medical care as well. But I buy all the groceries and similar things from Iraqi or other foreign shops, so I have no problem with that. (Leila, BAE)

As I listened to Leila, it crossed my mind that in a sense I was in Iraq. In Leila’s apartment nothing reminded me of Sweden. The Iraqi flag of on the shelf, pictures of Iraqi people on the wall, Iraqi handicrafts, the smell of food, the program on the TV, the “non-Swedish” decoration, and the way she hosted me and was preparing the food – all this bore witness to how precious and natural it

was for Leila to treasure who she wanted to be. I wondered if what I saw and felt in Leila's apartment represented a 'section' of ethnicity and belongingness.⁴² To what degree could the details of Leila's life at that moment be connected to belongingness and a certain way of thinking and being? Did this mode of living, or ethnicity, as Cornell and Hartman argue, predict and organize Leila's life and provide her with an individual self-concept (Cornell & Hartmann 1998, p. 11)? And most importantly, if there was a kind of ethnic organizing in Leila's life, in terms of the need or the desire to belong, illustrated by acts such as watching parabola TV, might that influence her language development? Leila told me that most of the things that she and her friends needed were arranged, organized, or bought from shops with migrant owners. It seems that 'ethnic organizing' (watching parabola TV, shopping from 'ethnic' stores, etc.) makes Leila's life easier. She watches Arabic TV and understands everything, she buys things from Arabic people, or others with similar experiences of migration, and this ethnic identification somehow creates a meaning and constructs belongingness. But on the other hand, this close contact with an everyday life with 'ethnic organizing' reveals how different and difficult it can be to have contact with Swedes. Leila hovers between feelings of discomfort and calmness, between self-confidence and timidity, between understanding and communicating perfectly in Arabic and not understanding much in her communication with the staff at her children's school, for example.

Developing this idea, I asked Leila if she believed that some day she would talk Swedish fluently. She answered: "I don't know. I don't think so. I am too old for that. My daughter is seventeen. I don't think that there is any job for me here". Leila, in answering my question, points out three significant aspects of her life: that she is old, that she has a daughter who is seventeen, and that she does not think that she can have a job in the future. She does not concentrate on the language aspect, because there are other worries

⁴² I refer to ethnicity here in terms of a structure that creates meaning in a 'chaotic' life. Or, as Hale argues, ethnicity in this sense "serves to structure such action by providing people with social radar that they use to efficiently identify or impose social possibilities and potential constraints in a world of immense uncertainty and complexity" (Hale 2004, p.482).

that she prioritizes. Notice that Leila sees her daughter's age as a hindrance for her own development. According to Leila, having a seventeen-year-old daughter means that Leila is a mature and wise woman who is probably too old for school. Leila refers to an already existing disposition, a model of thinking that actually contradicts her opportunities for personal realization. Leila uses her personal values, which are partly a result of her earlier socialization, as 'common sense'. Such 'common-sense' ideas can, due to their pre-given nature, lead to erroneous conclusions and exclusion (Grenfell 2004, p. 69). In what Leila says one can see the trace and existence of her habitus. The kind of symbolic capital that Leila possesses shows the way when it is needed. It is the result of her experiences and her collective memories, which are a part of her (see Broady 1998, p. 6).

Feelings of Imprisonment: "I feel like a bird in a cage"

My third home visit takes place at Nadir's home. Nadir is from Afghanistan and we have no language difficulties, because he can speak Persian. Nadir has lived in Sweden for four years and lives in an area with apartment blocks probably built in the 1960s. He introduces me to his wife and says proudly that her Swedish is better than his. I meet all his six children, because it is a Saturday and they are at home. He shows me the apartment and says: "The apartment makes me depressed. I feel like a bird in a cage".

We had a big house with trees and flowers in Afghanistan. We had good weather and we had our relatives. I was a police officer and things happened all the time and I was always involved in the discussions related to society. Now I do nothing. The children go to school and can speak Swedish. But Swedish doesn't go in here [he points at his head]. I don't know why I cannot learn Swedish. I feel like a child. (Nadir, BAE)

We are sitting in Nadir's living room now. His wife is preparing dinner and I ask if she needs help, but she just smiles and says that "no, you are our guest. Go and sit down. The girls will be coming soon with tea and cookies". Later two of the girls come in with dif-

ferent kinds of cookies and tea. Nadir plays a video film; it is a wedding in Copenhagen, with relatives of Nadir's. He enjoys watching the film and explains all the details, who is who and what the food is, and how they had been in different stores and bought dresses for their four daughters. He is proud. I ask him why he moved to Sweden.

Life was getting harder and harder both economically and socially. We knew that our children had no future there. Our relatives in Denmark used to call and tell us about all the opportunities. So we decided to leave Afghanistan. (Nadir, BAE)

Mozhgan: "What are your plans for the future?"

I don't know. Right now I am so disappointed in everything. I cannot pass the driving test, I mean the theoretical part, and it makes me really frustrated. I cannot manage the language. It is not like a real life any more. I feel so isolated. I know that Sweden is a good country but it is not home. Sometimes it feels that I am doing this for the kids. I am depressed, you know. I am of no use and I wish I could go back to Afghanistan. (Nadir, BAE)

The notion of the absence of a real life had been expressed by Salima as well, when I asked about her life in Sweden.

My life has been changed so much that I sometimes have difficulties in believing that I really moved to Sweden, study language and the children are studying in a Swedish school. Despite all the good things I miss my old life. I cannot stop thinking about my old life and our family there. (Salima, BAE)

Paul Gilroy (1997) defines diaspora as a non-voluntary group of people (a network) who are displaced and must deal at the same time with the bonds of their origins and those processes constructed after the non-voluntary dispersal (1997, p. 328). To investigate the voluntary or non-voluntary nature of the participants' dispersion is a research issue of its own. According to the empirical mate-

rial of this study, Nadir, for example, perceives his situation as a non-voluntary condition, seeing himself captured in strange surroundings with a strange language that cannot be mastered. Life for Nadir, as for some of the other participants, involves shared familiarity with people who confirm their identity. It is the need for this old secure identity that encourages Nadir to go back. In the same context, Minoo Alinia, at the University of Gothenburg, has conducted a study which demonstrates how the complex of a constant identity negotiation, and of constantly considering past and present, complicates migrants' lives. She argues that this yearning for home has become like a social movement in search for identities and affiliation. The participants in her study confirm the idea that longing for home is actually about the need for continuity, community, and belongingness (Alinia 2007, p. 285). These strong feelings become a natural part of everyday life, and a feeling of not being complete leads these migrants to search for something else to complete them, that is to say, the home country. Furthermore, Alinia uses the concepts of collective identity and collective action, which are the foundations of a diasporic field and provide people belonging to the field with a "licence to act". This field includes people with common experiences that unite them. To act like a diasporic migrant, such as reading newspapers or watching TV programs from the home country, strengthens the need for a shared identity. What indicates the need for a sense of belonging here is the experiencing of a life outside the home country, having difficulties learning a new language, and searching for a meaningful life in a new rather unknown society. In this context, relations to one's fellow countrymen, or other people with similar experiences, become crucial. I ask Nadir about his friends.

They are all from Afghanistan. We meet and talk about events happening in Afghanistan and tell each other about what we have read in the newspaper. They have Afghani newspapers in the library. So the library is our meeting place (Nadir BAE).

I relate what Nadir tells me to an earlier discussion between us about reading the newspaper Metro and ask him if he has tried to read Metro:

Yes, but it is so difficult and it takes such a long time to read and even if I read I am not sure that I understand correctly. There are lots of difficult words. It is so different reading an Afghani newspaper because I understand everything. When someone my age migrates to another country and tries to learn a new language, it is not really possible (Nadir BAE).

To read the Afghani newspaper becomes a way for Nadir to do something that he is still good at: reading and understanding; he feels competent. I ask Nadir about his opinion about his school and learning the Swedish language. He laughs and says:

I am 40 years old. I should not be going to school. I don't know. I guess it is OK. They do all they can do, but there is something wrong with my brain [he points at his head] because I cannot learn anything (Nadir BAE).

In the same way as Leila, Nadir sees his age as a frame of reference according to which he knows what he can do and what he should not do. As age becomes an indicator that designates the border between him and the idea of education and language achievement, Nadir must also decide how to find a way out of his depression. According to Bourdieu, in such situations individuals have different goals; some of them seek to preserve the status quo, others to change it. People have different chances of winning or losing, depending on where they are located in the structured space of positions (Bourdieu 1991, p. 14). This structured space of positions or, as I interpret it in the context of this study, the participants' social positioning, is a result of an intersection where several social and psychological features collaborate with or confront each other. Depending on in what way such collaborations or confrontations recognize or reject the participants' needs, they design their further social existence in the migration society. Sara Johnsdotter at

Malmö University discusses similar issues in her study, which shows that migrants from Somalia choose to leave Sweden for England, Canada, and the USA as soon as they have the possibility. They do so because of the cultural distance and their fear of the Swedish authorities interfering with how people from Somalia raise their children (Johnsdotter 2007, p. 121). In other words, it seems that some Somalian people seek to locate themselves in a context where they can receive the kind of individual autonomy that they need or are used to having. With regard to Nadir, the formerly highly respected police officer from Afghanistan, the existing social network around him is restricted and predetermined by geographical premises (that he must live in Sweden now). He cannot change anything right now; he has to preserve the status quo.

The Role of the Past

“Life was beautiful there despite the fact that it was simple”⁴³

It is impossible to compare the first five years when I went to school in Iran and the rest of the years in Sweden. In Iran it was only about being a student like everybody else, while here it was about being a student and handling other things. At home my parents spoke Persian and had some Persian values. In school they spoke Swedish and had Swedish values; it was all the time about a positioning between values, ways of being and thinking. It was never simple, as it was for ethnic Swedes. It was about two different realities and only those who were exactly in the same situation could understand what I was going through. (Safa, MU)

Safa, in the quotation above, like Farida, Nadir, Leila, and most of the other participants, cherishes the past in order to safeguard her identities, her heritage, and the ‘good days’ she had before migration. The past is indeed interfering with their present life, but at the same time the past operates as a social compass which reminds

⁴³ “Livet var vackert där trots att det var enkelt” Aktuellt 2007-12-05. An Iraqi migrant in Sweden says this during an interview in a report about Iraq.

participants of how things were before and can be again. In his book *Race and Ethnicity in Education*, Ranjit Arora emphasizes the importance of the past and refers to L.P. Hartley, who says that the “past is a foreign country. They do things differently there”. Another novelist, William Faulkner, says: “the past isn’t dead and gone. It isn’t even past” (Foreword in Arora, 2005). By referring to these rather poetic quotations I want to accentuate the importance of the past, especially in a migration context. The participants’ lives after migration include emotional dimensions of displacement and modify “the traditional image of immigrants who start a new life in a new country, leaving their past far behind” (Dijkstra et al. 2001, p. 60). In this new emerging situation, as discussed in the previous section, migrants are torn between present ambiguities, hopes for the future, and a crucial attachment to the past. What I try to indicate here is that the participants’ life situation after migration divides, and marks borderlines between, the host country and the country of origin. By constructing a romantic picture of the home country the participants keep the dream of going back alive and thereby give meaning to life; this romantic picture constitutes a substitute for what seems to be missing. So the past becomes a frame of reference in measuring the quality of the present. As stated by Giddens, “past time is incorporated into present” (1990, p. 105). It is this incorporation of past experiences into the present and its continuity that might have a crucial influence on learning outcomes.

The incorporation of the past into the present and the necessity and consequences of this are accentuated in several studies. Maja Frykman (2007) shows how people from Former Yugoslavia endure the same difficulties⁴⁴ year after year, Christmas after Christmas, and summer after summer in order to get to their home towns. For these travelers the existence of a present in Sweden is linked to a continuing visiting of the home country. Lukkarinen Kvist (2007) explains how returning to the home country shapes the identity construction of Finns in Sweden. By systematically

⁴⁴ By difficulties is meant a long journey, uncomfortable seats, etc.

keeping in touch with the places and people from their past, migrants from Finland, she argues, maintain their belongingness.

Even from an identity point of view the past has a crucial role when it is put in a context of continuity over time. David and Bar-Tal argue that the present identity of individuals and society is shaped by a “dialogue with the past and the future”. The past, this culturally collective product constructed by previous generations, determines the condition for existence and reveals the individual’s dependence on what has preceded him/her; “she/he is not born in a vacuum but as part of a particular tradition and culture” (David & Bar-Tal 2009, p. 365). In having this significance, the past includes what is most crucial in helping people to find their way, like a social compass:

Language, collective memory, values, and norms all draw on the past, thus offering society an initial orientation in time. The future, on the other hand, constitutes the horizon of aspirations and possibilities that face a society. It is the horizon that gives human society the opportunity to select the goals toward which it aspires and to change (at least) some of its identity components and their meaning. In the middle, between the past and the future, is the present. Although the present is based on the culture of the past and serves as a basis for future expectations, it is grounded in a particular context. (David & Bar-Tal 2009, p. 365)

This quotation indicates the practical and logical link between the past, the present, and the future of the migrants. It is important to understand this link and see the influence of the “culture of the past” on language and communicative development within the educational system (see Cardona 2004, p. 329).⁴⁵ As the past is the secure point of reference, it is invested with the power to decide future expectations and stands for aspirations and possibilities. The

⁴⁵ Cardona asserts that due to “the Preimmigration and Transitional Experience Before migrating, individuals have a cultural identity and a relationship with their home country. Therefore, it is essential to have a clear understanding of the nature of the sociopsychological and relational dimensions that existed prior to leaving the home country” (Cardona et al. 2004, p. 329).

participants' frame of reference anchored in the past, and their habitus, even if it will change over time, can function as a map in determining, for example, what age is common for being a student in a different society, and how one perceives 'the duties' towards one's family, what self-accomplishment and a good life mean, etc. How the participants, especially in the beginning of their stay in Sweden, think, plan, act, and perceive their roles in society and in the family, is built upon an emotional story which has its roots in other frames of reference learned in the past. It means that a migrant's past can hardly belong to the migration country; their present and future, though, are shared by the home country and the migration country.

Accordingly, the classroom becomes a field which, using Petersson's words, "is characterized as a network of relations between different positions, which are all held by actors possessing different habitus" (Petersson 2004, p. 223). Agreeing with David and Bar-Tal (2009, p. 365) that "human beings are not born in a vacuum but as part of a particular tradition and culture", I claim that the very positioning of the participants as adults in the classroom is a move towards changing what has been so familiar until then. Later, when the content of teaching Swedish as a second language demonstrates the Swedish culture and traditions as what is valued, the participants' past, and what it includes in terms of knowledge and experiences, becomes less compatible with the knowledge that is valued in the migration society. The problem is that although both the participants' and the education authorities' habitus and earlier experiences are brought into the classrooms, it is the education authorities' habitus which will receive respect; here we can speak of a symbolic struggle that needs to be scrutinized in relation to the participants' school performance (see also Petersson 2004). By the education authorities' habitus I refer to a series of valued 'social norms' that are illustrated and brought to the fore in a teaching context.

The past can also have a directly hindering impact on the participants' attitude to the Swedish language and society. The participants have a set of socio-cultural values that they bring to the school. This set of sociocultural values, combined with a constant

emotional attachment to the past, influence their attitudes and motivation for learning the Swedish language. Nader Ahmadi (2003) sees nostalgia, or the need to connect to the past, as one of the key concepts in discussing migrants' positioning in the migration society. He asserts that nostalgia is a strong emotional condition created by being forced to leave one's own country. This emotional memory of the past, which sometimes can be experienced as bitter-sweet, becomes a part of the migrants' identities. When nostalgia becomes so strong that it takes over the individual's emotional life, it becomes a hindrance for adjusting to the existing reality (see Ahmadi 2003, pp. 163-165).

Past as Survival and Blocking Mechanism

It seems that for many of the participants at the BAE the definition of life is contingent upon how the past and earlier habitus are perceived; these two entities are two strong starting points and tools for measuring the possible outcomes of the present life. The past and earlier habitus in this context involve:

- the geographical location, which refers to a specific country and place (city, etc.);
- a physical space, a house that symbolizes a familiar life;
- attachment to certain persons, mostly close friends, parents, and relatives;
- a social discourse which indicates social rules, values, and morals that before migration facilitated socializing and being a part of a certain society.

Disconnectedness from the past and what has been a model for living during so many years (habitus) creates an inner chaos. Leila, Nadir, and Farida reorganize their feelings towards the past and the present and act upon these two perspectives in their everyday life; these feelings influence their aspirations and possibilities in dealing with the future. The past also involves a romantic image of the home country, which evokes memories and belongingness. By referring to the Irish example and the flourishing of the River dance in recent times in the USA, Ignacio reminds us that "the de-

sire to go back to the roots, the nostalgia for one's culture, and the eagerness to learn about the homeland" is a common phenomenon among migrants (Ignacio 2005, p. 34). She continues by saying that "identities are often not contingent upon a physical return (as many diasporic members cannot afford to go home) but on an imaginary return"; here it is the memories which strengthen the wish to return and the ethnic identity (ibid., p. 45). With regard to most participants at the BAE, it is obvious that feelings of being a "stranger" between worlds, and the sense of "incompetence", strengthen the idea of the return. Consequently, the desire to go back home is tied to the participants' mental position. Ignacio argues that:

In the United States, this desire to go back to their roots occurs when members of racially subjugated groups, immigrants, and/or racialised ethnics are placed in situations where they are consistently treated as representatives of their race/culture instead of as individuals. (Ignacio 2005, p. 46)

According to such definitions, diaspora is more based on a sense of displacement, and identity formations are challenged by the fact that both the relation to the home country and the home country itself are constantly changing (Ignacio 2005, p. 55). This fact was obvious when I met Nadir in Malmö in the middle of the street two years after I visited him at his home. I asked him how he was doing. He said that it was better now, compared with when we met last. "How come?" I asked him.

I and my family travelled to Afghanistan last year. It was a total disaster. Nothing worked there, there were lots of social problems. Then I realized that there is no point in longing to go back, because we cannot live there. (Nadir, BAE)

Mozhgan: "What do you do for a living now?"

He laughed and pointed at a bunch of free newspapers he was distributing. "Nothing special", he answered. The negative social, economic, and political development in Afghanistan made Nadir

realize that he and his family still gained better opportunities in Sweden; the emotional longing for the home country here becomes inferior to a better social life in Sweden. The issues of language competency, employment, and integration, however, in Nadir's case remain as unsolved as they were two years ago. The fact that Nadir realizes that the home country is not a safe place to live in does not change his feelings of displacement in the migration country automatically, but it makes him more open to a life in Sweden. The processual nature of how things develop in the migration society and the home country, over time, has helped Nadir to see his life in a different context. This processual adjustment should be harmonized with the work of society and school in order to help the migrants find different strategies at different periods of their language and communicative development. Understanding that processual means processes rather than discrete events, it is significant to see how the language and communicative ability of adult migrants can be seen in relation to a chain of influences that, as a whole, construct a process consisting of coherent and interdependent components.

As referred to above, Floya Anthias raises a series of questions that stress the importance of the interconnection between different emotional components in a migrant's life and their effect on the idea of social interaction:

What happens to 'identity' in the migration and settlement process? Are population movements accompanied by cultural and identity shifts? Are minority groups integrated culturally and do they identify with the country of migration or the homeland? To what extent have they been able to forge a positive identity that retains a sense of roots and yet includes a feeling of belonging to the country of residence? Are the cultural and identity ingredients hybridized? What are the implications for society if minority groups are not able to feel they belong in the country they live? To what extent is the retention and amplification of ethnic identity or ethnicity a product of racism or other forms of exclusion and inferiorisation? (Anthias 2002, p. 491)

The main point to emphasize here is that, borrowing Anthias' words, "what happens to identity in the migration and settlement process" is a question that is inseparable from the idea of teaching and learning a second language in a migration context.

The Dual Push of the Earlier Habitus and the New One

Several researchers have indicated how migrants construct new social fields, which can function as a bridge between the home country and the country of migration. Lisa Åkesson, social anthropologist, has studied transnational relations, and her studies indicate how the connections between people from Cape Verde who have migrated and those who still live there, are constructed according to social norms based on the collective behavior that is specific for Cape Verde. She explains how migrants still after many years of living in migration countries are 'in debt' to their families and relatives in Cape Verde and adjust their life to expectations from the home country. Åkesson's focus on the home country shows how important it is to emphasize that existing social norms in the home country have a huge impact on how migrants organize their lives in the migration country (Åkesson 2007, pp. 92, 93). Asra, a participant at the BAE, points out a similar experience:

I went to school for eight years. One year later I married and that was all. That is why I want my children to get a university education. The way I feel today, you know, sometimes I feel retarded; I believe it would be different if I had a good education. My parents would laugh at me if I begin to prepare for university education now. I am thirty-seven. They would say "think about your children, help them to get an education. You are too old to do something like that". (Asra, BAE)

Asra's familiar world confronts a world which offers new opportunities, but in order to use these opportunities Asra needs to position herself; embracing the new opportunities might mean rejecting the old norms. It is no longer about how her parents believe things to be, and Asra knows that, but she also knows that confronting certain values might mean confronting the group. In order to dig

deeper in this topic, I asked Asra: “Do you remember when we talked in the group about the fact that it would help you a lot to read, for example, the daily paper Metro? Do you do that?”

I really try, I mean it. But there is so much to do. Children get sick, all the chores that must be done at home and school work as well. And then I am worried about my brother, my sisters and my parents back home. I cannot even pass the tests. I want of course to be in the same class as my friends but no matter how hard I try I cannot succeed. I don’t know why. I cannot pass the exams. I have to repeat the same level now again. The teachers are very good. Irene is the best one, but no one can help me. With three children it is not easy and I believe as it is today nobody will give me a job. (Asra, BAE)

I asked Hana from Syria: “Do you want to learn the language and get a job?”

I really want to learn the language, because I need it when I must to go to the medical centre or to my children’s school. I do not know if I will ever be able to learn the language well. Regarding a job, I do not know either. I do not have any education. What kind of job can I have? Besides, I am 32 and have three children. It is a huge responsibility to have three children. (Hana, BAE)

It seems that Asra och Hana feel doomed to adjust their life to the same resources that they inherited socially and culturally. Asra wishes a better future for her daughters. Asra’s hope for her children to have a better future indicates that she does not approve of the life she herself has. She repeats a few times that “it is too late for me, but the children can have a good future”. Hana and Asra perceive their opportunities as restricted, because they believe that they are too old for big changes in life and rather choose to focus on their children. Based on what Asra says about how her parents would have reacted if she had told them about the idea of self-realization, it seems that a kind of inherited social pattern governs

Asra's thoughts at this moment of her life. At the same time she is present in the migration society, and she is aware that she must take action in terms of studying the language and thinking about how she will live her life in Sweden; even if she has never made similar decisions earlier, now it is time to confront a new positioning. Bourdieu argues that "individuals are already predisposed to act in certain ways" and that the "socially structured character of habitus" operates as a mechanism for being (Bourdieu 1991, p. 17). In the case of many of the participants, their old habitus as a socially structured operating mechanism can no longer help them to preserve the status quo or create order in their life. Habitus, as a mechanism for reproduction, has impacts on the language learners' positioning and motivation not only for learning the Swedish language but also for social integration.

Minoo Alinia has written her dissertation about the identity-processes of Kurds in Sweden. She describes identities as constructions formed by sociocultural processes. Alinia emphasizes that migrants maintain their characteristics and reproduce their cultural identity as a strategy against exclusion and isolation from the host society. This strategy is entailed by what she refers to as a double consciousness, which means a feeling of being both an insider and an outsider. Nevertheless, the process of identification, finding strategies, and perpetuating cultural identity reproduction is linked to components such as gender, class, origins, ideology, politics, language, religion, and different generations (Alinia 2007, pp. 277, 278). The double consciousness explained by Alinia becomes visible when the participants in this study describe how they perceive the migration society. They know what distinguishes Swedish society from their societies of origin and what is valued in both places. The problem is that both societies, with their characteristics and realities, exist simultaneously in the participants' life and influence it from two sides. These influences from two sides have psychological costs for the participants in terms of a less confident existence.

I never would have believed that the Swedish society would be so different. They have special rules for everything. Our teacher

criticizes us all the time. She says that we do not do things right. We do not understand what she means. (Hamid, BAE)

Mozhgan: “Can you give an example?”

For example, she looks at our papers and does not like the way we organize them or the way we study. We have always studied and organized our papers like this, but she does not like the way we do things. (Hamid, BAE)

Nicola Ingram uses the concept of *habitus* *tug*, which “implies a plurality of dispositions” (Ingram 2011, p. 293) and which, in this context, means that the teacher’s *habitus* shows her what is the right way of organizing things, while the learners’ *habitus* illustrate something else as the right organization of their studies. This confrontation between different *habitus* is perhaps a natural feature when people with different dispositions meet. In this context, however, the confrontation signals a power assertion. As stated by Ingram, “it is important to note that these are not just two sets of dispositions that carry equal weight within the *habitus* of an individual” (*ibid.*), but that the *habitus* of one individual becomes the superior one in relation to that of others. Teachers here show what is right and accepted, and thereby what is right according to the learners becomes irrelevant. The participants understand that things can be done in different ways and not only according to Swedish norms, but they lack the ability to carry on a discussion on equal terms. Hana says:

Once I was absent and our teacher wanted to know the reason. I told her that my son was sick. She said “ Ohhhh, did you stay at home for five days because your son was sick. Why didn’t your husband help you?” I told her that he works and I would rather take care of my son myself; he is more comfortable with me. She shook her head and said “I don’t understand anything of what you say”. I wanted to say the same thing to her, but I didn’t. (Hana, BAE)

The participants' and the teachers' earlier socialization is a by-product of their past. It is the same as *habitus* and involves familiarity and recognition (Grenfell 2004, p. 57). Simply, the function of earlier socialization or *habitus* is to help people who use a system to recognize it and to help the system to recognize its users. The problem, however, is that "the system will recognize only those who recognize it" (*ibid.*, p. 17). It means that it is not only the migrants who cannot recognize the system, but the system (here the teachers) cannot recognize them either. This occurs due to the system's (mis)interpretation of the social, cultural, and individual features that it (that is, in this case the teachers) ascribes to the participants. This mutual process of recognition or misrecognition is indeed built within the frame of earlier socialization, which functions as an existential map. Both host society and migrants need to learn the process of coding and decoding a set of invisible learned 'experiences'. The participants reflect upon their present life and use certain experiences, emotions, and memories as guidelines that are not recognized by the school. This process can also be seen in terms of how the experiences are operated in the daily life of people; as Grenfell states: we interpret our experiences "by mapping the past (what we know) onto the present (what we are learning)" (Grenfell 2004, p. 58). When the participants and the school authorities map what they know onto the present (what they are teaching/learning), the *habitus* of school and the *habitus* of the language learners collide, but they collide silently and in favor of school.

This dual push, that is to say, on the one hand the necessity to adjust to the host society, and, on the other hand, the contradicting *habitus* from the past, positions the participants in a difficult state. The participants are aware of this and actively seek out methods to facilitate this process and create individual meaning. As Jackson states, humankind does not partake in this world by being passive, but instead produces, modifies, and creates through praxis; "creating a sense that life is worth living, a condition of wellbeing" (Jackson 2005, p. xxii). What the participants strive to achieve is to make their life worth living. However, the psychological aspects of this dual adjustment are considerable and can involve marginali-

zation, or as Jackson puts it, “a present without one’s own presence” (ibid., p. xxiii). Marginalization occurs when the participants’ habitus is no longer valid and they cannot play the ‘game’. The game is played by the rules acquired by earlier socialization, rules which the participants have to believe in. If the earlier habitus suggests that a proper life means living among people who know one’s name, and having a job which provides social stability, then everything else violates the values one has learned. Accordingly, habitus and socialization, with reference both to the past and to the present, are the key words here, because they affect the worldview of the learners and thereby their strategic approach to language learning, as well as their motivation to invest and believe in the importance of language ability. This aspect can be further developed with regard to how migrants’ displacement can end in partial or total alienation. The discussion about foreign students’ disconnection from their learning environment can also be traced to younger students (Li 2010, p. 129) and it is thereby an issue worth looking at more closely.

Social Background, Expectations, and Uncertainties

Naser, one of the participants at Malmö University, is 33 years old and from Lebanon. He worked with media before he moved to Sweden and married a Lebanese girl whom he came in contact with over the Internet. He told me that he had huge difficulties in adapting to his new situation in Sweden, despite having a high level of education. When I asked him if his earlier academic background helped him in settling down in Sweden, he said:

Unfortunately, it is not only about the educational background. It is about a lot of different factors. What kind of education you have has a crucial role, but it is more important if you are educated in Sweden. I worked for TV in Lebanon and in order to be able to work with Swedish TV I have to know about the system and I need proper language ability. There are also other factors involved. My wife, for example, has grown up here and

speaks Swedish fluently and has a job. And I often wonder “what about me”? (Naser, MU⁴⁶)

Mozhgan: “How much do you really want to learn the Swedish language?”

I really want to learn the language, but I cannot see myself in the position that I really want in the future. It feels like wasting my time. I had my identity in Lebanon; do I have to fight for it again? I do not want to do that. I know who I am and what my profession is. I do not win anything by starting all over again. In that case I prefer to move back. (Naser, MU)

Mozhgan: “Do you think that something can change your motivation to learn the language?”

Perhaps if I could begin to work with media, I am sure that then I would really learn the language. A man is his job. Take away a man’s job from him, then he does not want to talk. (Naser, MU)

Mozhgan: “But perhaps you first need good language ability before someone offers you a job, what do you think about that?”

The kind of language that leads to a good job cannot be learned in the classroom only. We must come out, and they have to give us a chance. I have many friends here from Lebanon who have lived here many years. They can speak the language, but they are just performing jobs they do not like, very temporary jobs which come and go. (Naser, MU)

According to Naser, language development is a conditional ability, which means that getting hold of the desired job may be synonymous with language achievement. In other words, according to Naser, it is getting the desired job that will result in language abil-

⁴⁶ MU is an acronym for Malmö University.

ity. At the same time he says that he has friends who speak Swedish well but do not have satisfactory jobs. Most of the participants refer to other migrants in order to explain and justify their beliefs about what kind of future is awaiting them in Sweden. This relying on *what has happened to my countrymen in Sweden* becomes a frame of reference which in some cases forms an imaginary conception of the future.

According to a study conducted in London on a group of Polish migrants, it can be concluded that the kind of social capital constructed in a migration context facilitates issues such as housing, information, and employment, at the same time as this kind of social capital, built on ethnic relations, can lead to ghettoizations. It is also interesting to note that, according to the authors of the study, the trust in, and the dependence on, the ethnic relations also include relatives back home (Ryan et al. 2008, p. 686). Due to the isolation from the host society, “transnational sources of emotional support or advice” can become a significant part of the migrants’ life during certain periods (Ryan et al. 2008, p. 684). The connection to the host society requires a certain process.

Speaking of connecting to the Swedish society and its meaning for the language development, when I interviewed Naser two years after the first interview I asked him about his situation. I was particularly interested in knowing how he had developed his relation to the Swedish society and the Swedish language. He said:

We have a daughter now. We have been in Lebanon three times in two years. Honestly, I am not doing well. I feel I am standing outside society. So I am seriously thinking about moving back. It is perhaps better for all of us. We can have a better social life in Lebanon and my wife seems to agree with me. However, she is not totally convinced. (Naser, MU)

Mozhgan: “Do you think that your Swedish is improving?”

Not as I wished in the beginning. It seems that it is a waste of time. I see now that I need two things: a social network and a high level of language competence. I am 35 and I am wondering

if it is really possible to achieve my goals here. It is rather strange. You move to a first-world country and you suppose that all your problems will be solved now. But, on the contrary, you realize that it is now that you are having real problems. (Naser, MU)

It seems that, with regard to Naser, a 'privileged' social background, in terms of having an academic education, is not enough for employment and language achievements.⁴⁷ Naser had high expectations due to his privileged socio-economic background. He was expecting that the host society would allow him to join the game. Since entering the job market was much more difficult than Naser expected, he doubts if language ability would help at all in entering society on his own terms, and he considers a return to the home country. He sees his lack of social network as one of the greatest barriers and wishes to be met as the competent person he thinks he is. On the other hand, he doubts that Sweden will ever give him the opportunity he is after. He is torn between dreams of self-accomplishment in Sweden and dreams of a better and less complicated life in Lebanon. These doubts, and the social condition it constructs, minimize Naser's chances of concentrating on settling down and learning the language.

Reza, another Malmö University student, is from Iran and has been living in Sweden for eight years. He summarizes his life after migrating to Sweden in the following way:

I moved to Sweden because I met a Swedish girl in the USA and we decided to marry. I had a degree from a university in the USA in Industrial Engineering. I looked for a job and they told me that I must complete my education here in Sweden. The whole system seemed to be weird in my eyes and I was angry. Why should I complete an education which was already approved? Perhaps if someone explained to me or motivated me in another way, I would understand better. But the information

⁴⁷ A study done by Batalova and Fix at the Migration Policy institute in the USA indicates that the occupational circumstances of migrants are influenced by a) migrants' origins b) language ability c) the time spent in the migration country and d) place of education (Batalova & Fix 2008, p. 39).

given to me was very formal and demanding; I felt that they confused me more than I already was. Back in time I had inherited a large sum of money, so I decided, instead of going back to school, to start my own business. But it didn't work out as I wished. Still, I feel bitter sometimes for not being able to work with something related to my education. (Reza, MU)

Mozhgan: "How do you perceive your language development?"

I suppose that when I did not get a job immediately, and due to my frustration, I spoke English all the time. I was not motivated in the same way to learn or to speak Swedish. I still have difficulties with the Swedish language and after eight years in Sweden my English is better than my Swedish. (Reza, MU)

The fact that Reza did not get a job when he wanted to, and that his education was not approved in Sweden, has left him with a 'mental scar'. It seems that Reza's and Naser's disappointment about not having the life that they hoped to have in Sweden changed their goals and motivation. They gave up and do not see learning the language as their first priority; the first priority becomes to find the right context to live in, with or without the language. They believe that getting their desired jobs would help them in learning the language and not the other way around. Wahid and Morad (language learners at the BAE) express the same worries about the link between motivation in learning the Swedish language and the possible chances of practising their old profession (Wahid was a lawyer and Morad a goldsmith). For Morad and Wahid, as well as for Reza and Naser, language skills are needed in order to be able to work in their professions; good language ability is not *per se* the ultimate goal, but it is a tool for preserving one's social and professional identity.

Another student from Malmö University, Nor from Iraq, had just got a job at Sony Ericsson and her version of the impact of the social conditions in which the Swedish language was learned is quite different. She says:

I was twenty when I moved to Sweden. It took me a long time to learn the language, almost five years. But I was raised in a family who valued education very highly and for me it was obvious that I must get educated. I even felt a pressure from my parents to get educated. So I did that. I attended all the language courses in English and Swedish and finally got a university degree in Marketing. Higher education in Sweden helped me with the language ability, because I went through the whole process in Swedish. You know what I mean, I mean both from an educational perspective and from a social perspective. I had to socialize with Swedes at university and learn about their way of looking at life. I think if I had had a degree in marketing from Iraq I would never have got a job at Sony Ericsson. I think that they (Sony Ericsson) believe that I know the Swedish system because I was educated here; I felt that they trusted me. (Nor, MU)

Nor is happy with the situation and sees the Swedish education as the key to getting a good job and better language competency. The difference is that, compared with the participants mentioned above, Nor is younger and she was even younger when she moved to Sweden. Furthermore, she has been trained academically in Sweden, as opposed to Naser, Reza, and Wahid, who already had academic training when they migrated to Sweden. However, all of the participants mentioned here, irrespective of background, have undergone a social and identity-forming process after moving to Sweden. The process begins with an examination of one's own social conditions and personal values. As the participants examine their position before and after migration, they discover new ways of handling various situations that they have to cope with in the host society. One solution in solving the language and integration problem involves the idea of returning and enjoying the uncomplicated social relations and benefits of the home country (in this case for those of the participants who were not asylum seekers). Constantly figuring out which methods to choose for coping with different situations creates an ambiguity in the participants' daily life. Due to the low level of language ability, some of the participants

do not have the linguistic and communicative ability to discuss what they feel and to express their opinions in communicative situations where Swedish is the main language. Shadowed by language problems and 'social disagreements', some of these participants choose to live 'outside society' and find other forms of social existence, which, since they are independent of the Swedish society, have their own social language.

The social position and the kind of cultural capital the participants had before, and have now after migration, also play a crucial role in determining the quality and the process of their language development. At the same time, the participants learn to live with a social capital that in their home country has functioned as a facilitating tool but that does not do so in Sweden. For example, for Naser to be able to work with TV in Sweden, not only language ability but also a totally different procedure, embedded in social knowledge about the host society, are required.

Accurate knowledge about the host society and about how things work plays a major role. Many migrants do not have adequate knowledge about the existing system in the host countries, something that positions migrants in a disadvantaged situation (Reay 1998, p. 65). In a similar way, Reza's lack of knowledge about the system makes him perceive it as abstract, formal, and confusing. Reza has given up, and Naser is considering giving up and moving back to Lebanon. Nor, on the other hand, believes that Sony Ericsson hires her because of her competence with regard to the 'system'. Naser and Reza lack the confidence that Nor has. How the participants perceive their situation, and their attitude towards the language and society, are formed by the accurateness of their knowledge about the migration society. Furthermore, they need this kind of knowledge to be able to play the social games in different situations. The Bourdieuan approach is an important reminder that to play the game one has to be interested and engaged, and not indifferent; one has to acknowledge that the game is worth playing (Bourdieu 1998a, pp. 76-77). Fulfilling these criteria for being able to play the game requires a certain state of mind and knowledge. The participants' preoccupation regarding, above all, identity negotiation and lack of contact with the majority society,

seems to confine their interest in and knowledge about how the social game is played in Swedish society. Most of the participants' earlier social and personal experiences, and the level of their communicative ability, are not enough to find the way into the social 'system' of interaction and to play the game. Bourdieu argues that when peoples' primary habitus is closer to that of a system, their position is more advantageous and they can be a natural part of the society's and school's cultural and social transmission (Reed-Danahay 2005, pp. 49, 50). In the same way, Nor, because of a systematic socialization into 'the Swedish way' and because of her personal attitudes, is more advantaged and has developed a habitus closer to that of the system, which helps her find a satisfactory position in the Swedish society compared with most of the participants, who, at the moment, do not possess a habitus close to the Swedish system nor a positive attitude which can motivate them to learn the language or become a natural part of the communicative situations.

Social Reality, Interest, and Investment: The Question of Motivation

One of the most crucial questions with regard to motivation for learning is what makes the participation in a classroom meaningful for the students (McGroarty 2001, p. 77). Motivation is rooted in our interest and needs, and stimulates how we think or, as Vygotsky described it, "behind every thought there is an affective-volitional tendency, which holds the answer to the last 'why' in the analysis of thinking" (Vygotsky 1986, p. 252). Vygotsky's idea, based on a relation between motivation and what socially surrounds and stimulates the individual, is an interesting yet pragmatic approach to second language learning. Do the participants exist in a social milieu which stimulates them enough to learn the Swedish language? What Irene says in the following quotation indicates the interdependence of some crucial yet somewhat invisible social components that indirectly affect the second language development:

The dream of going back is too strong. At home they had a big house and good jobs, but they have left it and must invest here. I understand them. If I found myself in a strange country and did not choose that myself and had to leave my earlier life behind me, it would be very difficult. Therefore I believe that they have to try to find their goal. If they had a clear goal, a realistic one, I believe that it would work out easier. (Irene, teacher BAE)

As explained by Bonny Norton, the issue of language and motivation is not about whether the learner is motivated to learn a language and what kind of personality the learner has, but rather about what the learner's relationship to and investment in the target language is. The question of motivation involves language learners' social identity and their historically and socially constructed relationships to the target language (Norton 1997, p. 411). The idea that people's social identity, and the negotiation of it, is a vital determinant and that people estimate whether something is interesting enough to invest in, opens an entirely new window to the understanding of the adult migrants' intentions and performances. Salima, in the following quotation, illustrates a crucial problem in this setting:

I sit in the classroom and I think of my family in Iraq. I wonder what they do and if they are safe. Then I think of the weather in Sweden, my longing home and how things really will be in the future. I think about the past and the future. And suddenly I notice that I do not know what Annika (the teacher) says. (Salima, BAE)

As pointed out by Anderson, nowadays migrants can participate in what politically happens in their country while being settled in the migration country and practice long distance politics (Anderson 1992, p.12). This has certain consequences for life after migration, language development of migrants, and language education. According to what has been illustrated in this chapter, most of the participants are emotionally preoccupied with thoughts of the

home country and their loved ones. There is a distance between what goes on in the head of the participants and what the BAE attempts to mediate. It seems that there is a knowledge gap with regard to what might be interesting from a pedagogical point of view for a group of language learners who still deal with post-migration dilemmas and the consequences of this for the motivation to sit in a classroom as an adult and to learn and use a second language.

Studies on motivation as linked to social perspectives indicate that people are interested in learning about things that they already have an interest in (Jarvis 2005, p. 78). Furthermore, people's cognitive development is shaped according to a "socially- and culturally-based exercise", and people define a situation within their own sociocultural setting and decide how to invest in that situation (Syed 2001, p. 128). The school's awareness of the importance of the sociocultural setting is crucial. In this context, Irene says:

Motivation is very important. I have worked with doctors and nurses. You cannot compare them with these students. The doctors and nurses had papers and folders from the first day. Everyone had 100% presence throughout the course and learned a lot during a short period of time. They came all the time with tasks which they wanted me to correct. I could see progress in a totally different way. They said: we want to learn so much Swedish that we can get a job. I believe that the situation would be much easier for students if they had clear goals, for example, "I want to be a cashier". You can tell them repeatedly how they should organize their thoughts but....The study counselors work a lot with these questions, but it is still very difficult to motivate them to decide what they want to invest in. Not all of them, but all too many of them. (Irene, teacher BAE)

Here the learners at the BAE are compared with doctors and nurses. There is a possibility that doctors are more motivated to start working (they have perhaps both integrative and instrumental mo-

tivation⁴⁸) compared with those with only a few years educational background, or others with professional skills that are much more difficult to work with in Sweden, such as skills related to being a media worker, a police officer (Nader), a lawyer (Wahid), or a teacher (Farida). For Naser, Reza, Nader, Farida, and Wahid, working in their earlier profession in Sweden is more difficult and, as they say, the uncertainty about how to become a professional in Sweden might create anxiety and negative expectations of the future and, thus, weaken the incentive for learning the new language.⁴⁹ I asked Hamid from Iraq what would help him to learn the language and get a job. He answered:

It is the problem; nothing is simple here in Sweden. It is difficult to learn the language, it is difficult to socialize with Swedes, and it is difficult to find a good job. You have to be away from home ten hours every day and leave your family. Compared with life in Iraq, everything here is harder to achieve. (Hamid, BAE)

Mozhgan: “What do you want to do then? How can you learn the language?”

This is what we hope that they will help us with. (Hamid, BAE)

Mozhgan: “Who?”

The authorities, the government, the system. (Hamid, BAE)

⁴⁸ Robert Gardner (1959) distinguishes between two different types of motivation: the integrative motivation, which according to him leads to better language achievements, and the instrumental motivation.

⁴⁹ Peter Jarvis conducted a research that involved more than two hundred adults. His research illustrates clearly how the social experiences impact adult motivation for learning a second language. The results of his study specifically emphasize that for an increased motivation learners need to be seen as persons and recognized as experts of their own learning situation. In such situations it is extremely important to understand the complexity of human processes and “the interaction between the person and the social world”. Furthermore, creating a situation where the learners can both experience and practice the language is most vital (Jarvis 2006, p. 11; see also Parker & Jarvis 2005).

Mozhgan: “What a about you? What role do you have in all this? What can help you to study more, to write more, to read more, to do your tasks at school with more engagement?”

At my age you want to learn a language fast and come out in the real world. I do what I can, but it is not enough when one is not allowed to combine the studies with a real life. We socialize with our own people and Swedes socialize with their own people. We speak Arabic all the time, so how can we learn Swedish? I forget what I read in classrooms. It is the relation to Swedes that you need and it is the use of the language that improves one’s language ability. Our children use the language properly; we just say bla bla bla like parrots. (Hamid, BAE)

The picture Hamid is presenting here is complex. What Hamid desires is a kind of authenticity that, due to the existing social structures, segregation, and the social and communicative gap between migrants and Swedes, is hard to get hold of. What motivates him is to be able to use the language in meaningful contexts and not only in classroom contexts, like a “parrot”. Furthermore, the expectation (the hope) that the “authorities, the government, the system” will ‘save’ Hamid creates a kind of passivity. Ali also confirms similar thoughts:

They know that I am educated. They send me to do internship in strange places. How interesting can it be for me, with my background, at the age of 33, to be sent to a restaurant? Something is wrong here. I am still waiting for someone to help me. (Ali, BAE)

The issue of the participants’ motivation as related to their social environment should not be simplified; this question deserves to be the subject for further investigations. However much the participants emphasize the relation to the majority and the interplay between their expectations of life and what the majority society offers, there are other significant sociocultural angles which need to be scrutinized. A more complex and comprehensive approach to

the question of motivation indicates that there are several crucial features that can also influence second language learners' motivation. These features, namely, learners' academic interests, their ambition to acquire a certain level of competence, their personal goals, earlier experiences of learning a language, and their feelings about the (in this case) Swedish-speaking people, have an impact on their motivation to learn a second language (Ushioda 2001, p. 102).

Investing in an Uncertain Future Does Not Motivate the Participants

Asra, 37, from Lebanon, and Salima, 32, from Syria, were two of the students at the BAE who usually complained about their bad Swedish. They were, however, very eager to speak Swedish to me. They usually blamed their 'bad' Swedish on the lack of contact with people who speak Swedish and their own lack of ability to learn the language. In this context, Asra says:

I am ashamed of how bad Swedish I speak. When I go to my children's school for development dialogues, I feel so bad. I don't believe that I will ever be able to speak Swedish well.
(Asra, BAE)

Salima says:

I have done all I can do, but there is no progress with regard to language ability. I cannot pass the tests properly either. I cannot learn to speak or pass the tests. (Salima, BAE)

Similar feelings are expressed by Ali, who says:

My days of pride are over and I will never be a respected professional here in Sweden. I must just forget about finding a good job again. (Ali, BAE)

Having language difficulties as adults in Sweden has a negative effect on Asra's, Salima's and Ali's self-confidence. The hopelessness

about learning the language and becoming a part of society, or handling daily conversations in a proper way, makes them pity themselves. This can be related to the concept of self-handicapping, which refers to “a strategy by which a student identifies a handicap real or imagined that can explain future poor performance” (Gardner 1983, p. 23). Ali, Asra, and Salima see themselves, more or less, as incompetent victims of a new language that cannot be learned and a society that cannot be entered (see a similar discussion in Lahdenperä 2000). These participants’ negative attitudes lead to self-deprivation and help them explain their bad language achievements. Another explanation of some of the participants’ perceptions of themselves as victims of migration with less motivation to learn the language, can be related to an imagined dark future and the idea that one can never come close to the host society or get a job, no matter what.

No matter how well we know the language, there is no future for us in Sweden. I have friends who can speak Swedish very well and have an education, but they are never called to one single interview because their name is Mohammad or Ahmed. Sometimes when I sit in the classroom I think it is better to go and work for other immigrants, for example, in a restaurant, instead of sitting here wasting my time. (Amir, BAE)

The same scepticism is expressed by Zeynab and Sahar, who are worried about not only their own future but also the future of their children.

How many women do you see in the job market with veils? It is impossible for us to get a decent job, even if we could speak the language. They won’t let us in, because they see us as strangers, fanatics. But I am not as worried about my own situation as I am for my children. What kind of future will they have in Sweden? Are they going to be seen as strangers and left outside society? (Zeynab, BAE)

It is the last semester I am studying the language. It is useless. I am going to work in my husband's shop. We have mainly Arabic customers and I do not need the Swedish language in the same way. Of course I wished to learn the language, because I have children here, but we spend so much time without results and no one will give us a proper job. Not even our children who know the language can get proper jobs. (Sahar, BAE)

The participants' motivation for learning the Swedish language is shadowed by a series of negative ideas that they experience as crucial. Language learning is not perceived as a good investment, though for some of the participants it is the closeness to society and getting a job which guarantees language ability, and not vice versa. Due to their self-experienced exclusion from the community and the lack of contact with the host society, the future does not appear as appealing and welcoming to some of the participants. The feeling of otherness is strengthened as a result of hearing anecdotes of discrimination and the hopelessness of the future; the participants cannot see the language as the pathway to a realized integration and self-realization, even if they believe that the language is the fundamental key. Accordingly, what encourages motivation is "a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community, emotional identification with another cultural group, a favorable attitude toward the language community, and openness to other groups (i.e; an absence of ethnocentrism)" (Gardner 2001, p. 12).⁵⁰

However, there is a weakness in the present discussion about motivation, since it focuses only on a language learners' approach, which means that it does not consider the role of the host society.

⁵⁰ Gardner refers to Whyte and Holmberg's (1956) four factors of influence on second language learning. It is contact with the community, experiencing and using the language in different ways, language ability (skills and talent), and psychological identification with the people of the target language. The outcome of their study indicates that if one learns the language with the purpose only to manage a job, then the motivation will be only to acquire a "job English" (a job language), while when people learning a second language aim to create "real bonds of communication to other people", they have the psychological ground to achieve language mastery. As mentioned earlier, the former kind of motivation refers to instrumental orientation, while the latter refers to integrative orientation (Gardner 2001, pp. 2-3). R. C. Gardner. *Integrative Motivation: Past, Present and Future*. Department of Psychology. University of Western Ontario.

Motivational factors cannot be studied in isolation from the rest of society, or outside the dynamic sociocultural context within which participants make meaning and construct their life-world. Therefore, “examining people’s goals may help us gain greater insights into different views of the means of achievement, the reasons for success or failure”(Elliott et al. 2005, p.19).

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss what influences the participants’ life-world in terms of their experiences of living in Sweden, and how their reflections upon these experiences might have an impact on their attitudes towards second language learning. These influences can be summarized in six parts:

Figure 2. Understanding adult migrants’ whole existence in the context of second language learning and use

The past and the habitus of the participants would be of little interest if it was not for their meaning in the participants’ lives after migration. More specifically, the participants’ lives after migrating to

Sweden include some major features of diaspora that, in combination with their habitus and life-world conditions, might play a crucial role with respect to how the participants approach the whole process of language learning. Since what the participants have in their repertoire, in terms of earlier experiences and an understanding of what can be counted as reality, is historically contingent (Luckmann 1970, p. 681), they need to rearrange and widen their understanding of different life-worlds, which leads to what Luckmann calls part-time membership in different life-worlds. The participants' past includes a system of dispositions, that is, a system of permanent and similar dispositions which integrate the earlier experiences of the individuals into their perception, acts, and decision-making (Bourdieu 1977, pp. 82-83) and which collide with new experiences in the migration society. This is not a bad thing, but it is challenging and requires active reflection about how to think and how to act, so that a meaningful life will be constructed.

With regard to some of their attitudes and opinions, the participants, perhaps unconsciously, refer to an earlier habitus, which seems to gain an important role now when the participants live in another country and experience a diasporic existence. Some of the features of a diaspora outlined by William Safran (1991, pp. 83-84) can help to understand the participants' feelings and thoughts and, consequently, its effects on attitudes towards language issues and motivation. These four features are: 1) the participants maintain the memory of the home country, 2) they have difficulties seeing a future in Sweden, 3) the home country is seen as a place to return to, and 4) they share a feeling of solidarity, and the need to connect to the home country, with other members of their group. The fact that the participants at the BAE can identify themselves with these features is a 'warning signal', from a second-language development perspective. The strong attachment to the past, to the home country, to norms valued in the society of origin, and to one's own group, distances the participants from Swedish society, and, thus, from the Swedish language.

By maintaining the idea that there is no place like home, language learners uphold a sentimental and 'practical' tie to their home country, which might end in a physical existence in one

country and a mental existence in another. Since the migration country eventually becomes a potential rival to the home country, the participants feel loyalty towards two countries and are torn between two distinct systems based on different values and worldviews. The participants see language ability as a key factor, seek harmony, and try to make sense of their everyday lives. However, the hope of returning, the strong bonds to relatives and home country, and feelings of in-betweenness, interfere with the participants' everyday life in Sweden. The participants must preserve the contact with the home country on many levels. The powerful desire to go back, and not being 'done' with the home country, influences the motivation to learn the language of the migration society. The dream of going back affects the participants' concentration on language learning; the energy which is required for learning a language as an adult is focused on longing to go back and comparing their life here with their life there. This dream can be destructive and remain as a hopeless attempt to reach something that has no real meaning in everyday life. As formulated by Anderson, the migrant's effort is directed to a place in which he/she "does not intend to live, where he pays no taxes, where he cannot be arrested, where he will not be brought before the courts, and where he does not vote: in effect, a politics without responsibility or accountability" (Anderson 1992, p. 11). One reason for the dream to go back and longing for something that has so little practical meaning in the everyday life in the migration society can be a longing for what is emotionally familiar, for what the participants have been socialized into.

The dual push of the earlier socialization and the new one is another hindrance that creates difficulties associated with language learning. The perception of family and duties is a strong factor. Most of the participants see the family as a key factor in organizing their life. The participants frequently say that they are worried about their children's or their husband's wellbeing. The energy required to learn the language can even be affected by feelings of loyalty towards the family. Another behavior which can be related to the participants' habitus is their perception of the link between age and study. Most of the participants see themselves as too old to

sit in a classroom and learn a language. They express a feeling of lost pride and confusion about what they do in a classroom. The old social dispositions and the past are kept alive in the diasporic existence and help to negotiate an identity which has become blurred and uncertain. Dealing with a life-world formed in the home country and with a life-world that is being formed in the migration society, functions both as a surviving and a blocking mechanism in handling the new life. The past and their earlier habitus, embedded in the life-world shaped in the home country, help the participants to survive, because the old dispositions and the past keep the unknown diasporic existence at a distance, and being reminded of what is familiar creates order and security. The past and the migrants' earlier habitus are, however, also hindering, because as long as the past is the most dominant guideline in dealing with life in Sweden, the participants at the BAE will continue to live in Sweden without being able to focus on language learning or becoming familiar with the social features of using the language. In other words, the participants' past and their earlier habitus construct the perfect milieu for "a present without one's own presence" and influence the attitude, concentration, and motivation needed to learn the Swedish language. Some of the participants do not see Swedish language ability as a key to social integration and employment. These attitudes are primarily created as a result of what other migrants, who have lived in Sweden for a longer time, say about the Swedish society. With this kind of attitude, sitting in a classroom can for some of the participants be perceived as wasting their time. In other words, the future becomes too uncertain and cannot guarantee that language ability leads to the desired life in the migration society.

The participants are aware of the importance of language ability, but they need a strong motivation to invest in the Swedish language. Since, according to what most of the participants say and the observed teaching contexts in classrooms at the BAE, there is no clear connection between the participants' social status, what interests them, and the value of investing in the Swedish language, many of the participants are not motivated enough to do their best in learning the language. The main conclusions of this chapter are:

- a) Most of the participants at the BAE, due to the fact that they must deal with different life-worlds (conflicting occurrences of everyday life), experience feelings of in-betweenness and displacement.
- b) Most of them long for the home country and the familiar.
- c) The past and the earlier habitus of the participants operate as a frame of reference and play a major role in dealing with life after migration.
- d) Most of the participants have to deal with conflicting kinds of habitus, namely, the habitus that is valued in the migration society and the habitus that the participants are familiar with. This coping, as much as it helps the migrants to adjust to their new life, also functions as a blocking mechanism for understanding the importance of the Swedish language and engaging with it.
- e) All the above-mentioned dimensions influence the expectations of the participants and their motivation to invest in the Swedish language.

6. SOCIOCULTURAL EXPERIENCES OF COMMUNICATIVE INTERACTION

Figure 1. Three major elements in the sociocultural understanding of the second language learning and use of adult migrants

Introduction

This chapter is about how the participants perceive their communicative interaction with people around them (people who do not speak their mother tongue), how their identity negotiation is formed during this process, and what strategies they use when interacting communicatively with other people in the migration society. Therefore, it becomes vital to see if there is any connection between the conditions within which a second language is used and identity formation and second language development.

Many researchers within the field of second language learning stress the significance of learning and using a language by interacting with native speakers. Through this kind of interaction, speakers receive inputs, negotiate meaning, and understand what is being communicated, that is, the pragmatic knowledge about the target language (see, for example, Kasper 1996; Ellis 1999). Ellis (1999, p. 1) defines interaction as “the social behavior that occurs when one person communicates with another”. While second language studies have been very successful in developing cognitive and linguistic aspects, they have failed to give an overview and analyze personality-related and social perspectives. “Factors such as motivation, beliefs, attitudes, anxiety, learning style, world knowledge, sex, and ethnicity have received lesser emphasis” (Cohen 1996, p. 11).

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the use of the second language in the migration society in different contexts and what influences the communicative interaction, and thereby the language development, of adult migrants. Currently, the question of how the social circumstances of interaction between migrants and people around them can affect migrants’ attitudes to and motivation for using the new language is absent from the sociocultural studies about adult migrants’ language development.. Therefore, I want to stress that the ideas expressed in this chapter constitute a deliberate move to illustrate that migrants’ sociocultural experiences while interacting with the migration society has a huge impact on their motivation to use the Swedish language and on their attitudes to it.

Perceived Alienation and the Search for the Familiar

The most successful way of learning a new language is to be deeply engaged with the milieu in which that particular language is used (Kemp 2003, p. 13). Learning the language of the migration society is a social process during which the migrant undergoes several social changes due to the migration.⁵¹ These changes put a significant question mark on the issue of adult migrants' identity negotiation when using the Swedish language. What meaning does the process of identity negotiation have when using the language of the migration society as an adult migrant?⁵² Such questions deal with aspects of belonging and identity formation and individuals' feelings when being placed in hybrid contexts of identities (see, for example, Rodriguez et al. 2010, p. 330).

It is important to understand that what affects participants' perception of self in a negative way can also affect the desire to learn the language and communicate in it. Some of the participants see their physical appearance as vital in their interaction with society. Some of the participants in this study wear a veil and usually talked about their negative experiences in relation to wearing a veil. Most of them experienced their wearing a veil as a contrast to what is appreciated in Swedish society. These experiences, and in

⁵¹ It is crucial to stress that it is not the second language learning in itself which is a complex process, but that second language learning in a migration context entails a series of certain difficulties. Dinesh Bhugra,

Professor of Mental Health and Cultural Diversity, defines migration in a way that makes the reader understand its effect on the migrants' whole life. Migration is defined by Bhugra as "a process of social change where an individual, alone or accompanied by others, because of one or more reasons of economic betterment, political upheaval, education or other purposes, leaves one geographical area for prolonged stay or permanent settlement in another geographical area. It must be emphasized that migration is not only a trans-national process but can also be rural-urban. Any such process involves not only leaving social networks behind (which may or may not be well established) but also includes experiencing at first a sense of loss, dislocation, alienation and isolation, which will lead to processes of acculturation. A series of factors in the environment combined with levels of stress, the ability to deal with stress, and the ability to root oneself according to one's personality traits, will produce either a sense of settling down or a sense of feeling isolated and alienated" (Bhugra 2004, p. 129).

⁵² We need more in-depth understanding of how migrants negotiate their identities and how their identities are affected by living in the migration country. Questions like the following can give a more transparent picture of the context within which migrants are motivated to learn a language:

1. When you think of the word *American*, what characteristics or traits do you think of?
2. In what ways do you consider yourself an American?
3. In what ways do you consider yourself something other than American?
4. How American do you feel? (Rodriguez et al. 2010, p. 330)

some cases things Swedes told them because of the veil, affected them greatly. Hana says:

I know that people do not like that I wear a veil. They sometimes tell me about that but not in a nice way. Once, a nurse told me that the veil was a problem and it would make her work much easier if I took it off. I really did not understand why and she did not explain why either. (Hana, BAE)

Mozhgan: “What did you say to her?”

Nothing. I didn’t know what to say. I just looked at her and she finished her job and looked very serious without saying anything or smiling. Now I go to a clinic with foreign doctors and nurses. They are nice and it feels very good. (Hana, BAE)

In the same context, Asra says:

I know that people look at me when I talk to them. They don’t like the veil. It is not only Swedes, even other immigrants don’t like the veil. I don’t know what they think, but I become so nervous and then I forget how to talk. (Asra, BAE)

Halima says:

Once a man shouted at me: “Go home and wear the veil there!”. I was cycling and I became so nervous that I did not know what to do. (Halima, BAE)

Maria from Afghanistan says:

I had a friend who considered wearing a veil, but she changed her mind. A veil is the hate object number one, especially if one cannot speak the language fluently. Swedes love designer clothes and see them as a sign of modernity. Casual clothes, especially those that can signify a kind of ethnicity, are synonymous with low status; you know what I mean... Swedes like

modern people with nice things that anybody can see. (Maria, MU)

In the same context, Shirin from Lebanon says:

I have, during the last years, sometimes worn a veil and sometimes not. I want to see people's reaction to it. (Shirin, MU)

Mozhgan: "What is it exactly that you are after? What reactions have you encountered?"

People treat me differently. With the veil they ignore me and without the veil I am treated more as a human. They talk to me without the veil, while when I am wearing the veil they hesitate and do not come close to me; they simply act and react differently. (Shirin, MU)

Mozhgan: "Why are you interested in seeing the reactions?"

I don't know. I suppose I am interested in seeing how people can change their attitudes when I wear a veil or when I do not. It is kind of funny and at the same time strange, because I am actually the same person, but I can communicate with them much easier without the veil. (Shirin, MU)

In a similar context, Minoo brings to the fore another aspect:

I never say to people that I am a Muslim. It seems that Swedes prefer to socialize with people who are not Muslims. One has to pretend that one has no religious beliefs or doesn't believe in God. (Minoo, MU)

Mozhgan: "Can you elaborate?"

I have noticed that when I give the impression that I believe in God or religion, Swedes perceive me as less interesting or less

intelligent. I believe that Swedes associate religious beliefs with being backwards. (Minoo, MU)

While it is paramount to treasure individualism in Sweden, there are at the same time the compelling effects of a consensus that encourages homogeneous behavior, and that is why what is perceived as Muslim symbols may sometimes hit a streak of islamophobia in Sweden (see also Ouis & Roald 2003; Bevelander & Otterbeck 2012). Homogenous behaviors can be seen by some migrants as a key to social acceptance, which means that migrants make a conscious decision to choose a behavior which can help them in meeting the demands of the Swedish society. So, in order not to be treated differently and like the backward other, some of the participants see a benefit in approaching what they interpret as the habitus appreciated in Swedish society, and they act according to a self-constructed interpretation of what is perceived as 'good' or 'respected' in Swedish society.

Due to an experienced otherness, some of the participants find more comfort and familiarity among their own cultural, ethnic, social, and national networks or forums, with a closer connection to their origins. This means that many of the participants dream of moving back to their home countries, because things are more familiar there. In Hana's case, finding a doctor with a similar ethnic background reduces the otherness, in the same way that other participants perceive a return to the home country as a solution to the experienced otherness in Sweden. Each time the participants choose to take a step away from Swedish society, they take a step away from the Swedish language and from acquiring knowledge about the host society. The feeling of belongingness and the feeling of comfort when one is acquainted with one's own ethnic group is constantly mentioned by the language learners at the BAE.

The question here is in what way the closeness to, and the fact of seeking contact with, one's own or other ethnic groups in order to facilitate everyday life, might affect the language ability of migrants. In their article "Enclaves, Language, and the Location Choice of Migrants", Bauer et al. discuss the correlation between migrants' educational achievements and their choice to live in cities

“with high concentration of ethnically similar immigrants”. The authors refer to other studies that have shown that ethnic neighbourhood, family networks, and language enclaves have a crucial impact on second language acquisition (Bauer et al. 2002, pp. 649, 650; see also Chiswick & Miller 1995). The authors come to the conclusion that in communities with smaller concentrations of their own ethnic groups, migrants become more fluent speakers of the second language (Bauer et al. 2002, p. 650). The authors relate this aspect to broader social and economic consequences and argue that:

If the size of the enclave is small, it enables immigrants to improve their English proficiency over time, which in turn affects their earnings and assimilation into the local population. On the other hand, immigrants with poor English proficiency will choose to migrate to locations with large networks of migrants of similar ethnicity and language. This in turn decreases their ability to increase their English proficiency, which negatively affects their earnings and assimilation into the local population. We may conclude that large enclaves are a potential source for a "language trap"; they attract poor proficiency English speakers and sustain their poor abilities. (Bauer et al. 2005, p. 660)

In another paper written by Cheswick and Miller, “Do Enclaves Matter in Immigrant Adjustment?” (2002), the authors see the migrants’ concentration in certain areas as hindering both their language development and their labour market earnings. Some Swedish researchers argue that ethnic concentration (segregation) can be due to socioeconomic and cultural facts. The researchers categorize these facts in three kinds: a) segregation as a result of migrants’ need to be near their own people, b) segregation due to the low level of income, and c) segregation because of cultural differences (Biterman et al. 2010, Andersson-Brolin, 1984; Bevelander, 1999).

I am aware that migrants’ concentration in certain areas and the fact that some of the participants of this study seek contact with, for example, doctors and other professionals from their own ethnic

group, in order to facilitate their everyday life, are perhaps two different things. However, here there is a similar mechanism, which is interesting, that is to say, migrants choose the migrant community above the community of the migration society. While researchers, such as Bauer, and Cheswick and Miller, try to emphasize the consequences of ethnic segregation for employment opportunities, I try to show the process where feelings of otherness lead to the participants seeking contact with migrant communities and thereby not developing their language as much as if they had to use and speak the Swedish language.

Even if this study does not attempt to enter the field of segregation and its consequences for the language development of migrants, it becomes inevitable to point out the significance and relevance of the relation between using a language and language proficiency.⁵³ However, neither Chiswick and Miller nor Bauer do a careful analysis of the reasons why migrants might insist on living in highly concentrated ethnic areas. By not taking into consideration why some migrants choose to live in highly concentrated ethnic areas or preserve contact with their own ethnic groups or other migrant communities, there is a risk that migrants will be pointed out as having themselves to blame. The general conclusion could be that if the migrants tried harder to leave the highly concentrated ethnic areas they would learn the language and integrate better. The structural issues of the migration society, such as discrimination, migrants' powerlessness in choosing their residential area, displacement, and otherness, which might lead to choosing to live in certain areas, are not problematized thoroughly. When the participants, as a result of alienation, seek affirmation in their own

⁵³ Cheswick and Miller develop their idea of the connection between using a second language and language proficiency and argue that: "Living and working within a linguistic concentration area has feedback effects on destination language proficiency. The greater the extent to which an individual can avoid communicating in the destination language, the slower is likely to be the rate of acquisition of dominant language skills. Consider two individuals: One lives in a large linguistic concentration area where one can work, consume, socialize and engage in other activities using the origin language. The other lives in a linguistically isolated area; communication can be done only in the dominant language. The latter may have a more difficult initial adjustment but has a stronger incentive to acquire destination language skills and has greater exposure that facilitates learning the destination language" (Cheswick & Miller 2002, p. 10).

ethnic groups and live among their own people, there is a risk that the desired language ability, due to a lack of practical exercise of the language, will not be achieved.

Moreover, there is an association between socioeconomic mobility, the assimilation process, and language achievement. There are several different reasons why migrants live isolated or segregated from the native majority. If the reason is low socioeconomic status (SES), it means that migrants with low levels of human capital become more dependent on their ethnic communities (Iceland & Nelson 2008, p. 742). Accordingly, there might be a correlation between language ability, assimilation, and socioeconomic status:

For example, high SES immigrants and their children, who are fluent in English, have a relatively high likelihood of assimilating with Anglos. Conversely, low SES immigrants with poor English language skills are less likely to assimilate with Anglos. Instead, they cultivate ties with their ethnic communities or assimilate downward with poorer African Americans. (ibid., p. 744)

Despite such a correlation, the notion *one way street* can also explain the language problems of migrants. This notion demonstrates assimilation policies which encourage migrants to become more like the native majority. A solution to this one-way-street thinking is that a plural society should instead offer a platform for “convergence of social, economic, cultural, and residential patterns” (Iceland & Nelson 2008, p. 743).

Feelings of Exclusion in Communicative Situations

Every time I am at the children’s school for different reasons it feels so strange. I cannot explain it, but I think they talk to me in a strange way; always trying to teach me something, and looking at me strangely. (Salima, BAE)

Mozhgan: “Do you usually talk to each other; I mean you and the staff?”

No, we don't. The problem is that I miss the casual talking. I have a friend who sends her daughter to a private (religious) school and our experiences from parents meetings with the teachers are not similar; they have nice discussions and really talk. (Salima, BAE)

In the above quotation Salima speaks of language and communication in terms of a tool for social interaction. This interaction usually rests upon a life-long learning of the silent social codes of a society used in communicative settings. One could speak of nonverbal culture, which "is highly situational and operates according to rules which are not in awareness, not learned in the usual sense but acquired in the process of growing up or simply being in different environments" (Hall, cited in Scollon & Scollon 1995, p. 54). This nonverbal angle of communication indicates how a language-based interaction on the part of the participants can stimulate thoughts of otherness, and consequently contribute to a lack of motivation for communicating in situations where one is not acquainted with the social norms embedded in communicating in a language. Most of the participants speak about and reflect upon the differences between their original home country and the migration country, especially with respect to sociocultural features. These features, in many cases, are comprehended as a barrier for communicative development. The participants' relationship to the Swedish language is often explained in the context of their feelings in different social settings. In the following quotation, Sara explains this complex relation between a spoken language that gains a certain quality and constructs a certain feeling in the speaker and the social context it is used in:

I felt awful for many years after I moved to Sweden. I hated everything and felt so powerless. Everything was different here. The only thing that saved me was my interest in the language. I knew that without the language I would be discriminated against the rest of my life. I understood after a few years that nobody could see the real me if I could not speak the language almost as the natives did. My goal was not only to learn the language at an aver-

age level but mastering the language and understanding its cultural codes. Compared with other Iranian friends who socialize mostly with Iranian people, I have lots of Swedish contacts. But there are moments when I feel like an outsider, for example, during midsummer and the like, when everything is about tradition and when people sing and dance. (Sara, MU)

Sara's story calls to mind Cohen's term *social strategies*, a term that includes "the actions which learners choose to take in order to interact with other learners and with native speakers (e.g., asking questions for clarification and cooperating with others)" (Cohen 1996, pp. 4, 5). Due to a certain ambiguity, Sara chose to consider a new social strategy in order to succeed with her new life after migration. Socializing with Swedes and mastering the language became Sara's most vital instruments for entering the Swedish society. However, according to Denise from Scotland, this type of 'struggle' to enter society can exist even if one is from another European country.

People think that European cultures are like each other. But they are not. Sometimes when I talk to Swedes I do not understand what they mean or what is funny when they laugh. When I ask them about it, they really cannot explain. In Britain people are usually willing to share and explain, but not here. I notice that here, for example, Swedish students socialize with other Swedish students and students with a foreign background with other students with foreign backgrounds. It seems as if there is a wall between us. (Denise, MU)

Denise uses the metaphor of a wall to explain the distance between natives and migrants, while Sahar at the BAE refers to a mutual strangeness.

People often say that if you want to speak the language properly you must socialize with Swedes. I think that Swedes see us as strange people in the same way that we see them as strange people. (Sahar, BAE)

Mozhgan: “Why do you believe that they see you as strange and why do you experience them as strange?”

They live in another way, they raise their children differently, and they are reserved and quiet. And they believe that we do not have cars or fine houses in our home countries and that we are religious and uncivilized people. One of my daughters is studying in England and the other one at Lund University, so we try to show that we are civilized. We really want to socialize with Swedes, but it is not easy. (Sahar, BAE)

The construction of ‘we’ and ‘them’ here is evident. The word ‘people’ here seems to refer to those with other perceptions; those whose way of thinking, whose way of doing things we cannot understand. Here there is a revised scenario. While in chapter four I discussed how the learners were seen as the deviant by the teachers, because of, for example, not having calendars, and so forth, here it is the ‘Swedes’ who are seen as deviant by the participants, as those who create the *wall* in communicative situations. In order to understand what is unfamiliar, the participants need to construct meaning. Sara wants to understand the new cultural and social language used in Sweden and so does Denise. Denise’s, Sahar’s and Sara’s efforts to understand the ‘*new*’ can be understood in terms of self-organization, which operates as “the emergence of order out of chaos” (Fuchs 2003, p. 388). Denise, Sahar and Sara are experiencing a kind of self-organization, which means that they use their old habitus in contrast to the majority’s habitus in order to create order and to understand their existence in relation to the host society, that is, in order to understand what is new. But this is not simple, because in doing so the participants’ thinking is affected by their own habitus, which is prepared by their own conditions of existence (ibid., p. 391). So, in understanding and evaluating the way ‘Swedes’ are, the participants use their own conditions of existence and refer to their own social dispositions, that is, the dispositions they are familiar with. Consequently, without planning it, the way most of the participants try to create order and understand themselves in communicative situations become a social struggle

conditioned by components surrounding them in their own life-world.

Here, I attempt to use Bourdieu's idea about social dispositions in order to analyze the participants' feelings and thoughts about being excluded in communicative situations. Bourdieu asserts that individuals and groups have a system of dispositions that provide them with a few restricted principles that construct the way they act, think, understand, and value things in different social contexts. The actions of individuals and of groups, and their understandings and values, are not a direct effect of outer relations; it is the result of the encounter between people's habitus and the social context within which they occur. This encounter is central in Bourdieu's conception. It means that the social world can be approached from two perspectives: the system of dispositions of the individuals and the groups they belong to, and other people's and groups' social dispositions (Broadly 1991, p. 163). This idea indicates that the classroom and the migration society can be arenas where the habitus of people and groups constantly might confront each other and construct a dynamic field. According to the participants' narratives, it is the lack of a relation between these two habitus (simply expressed, the habitus of the participants and the habitus of the people they meet in school and in society) which contributes to the construction of 'we' and 'they'. Consequently, it is not only the lack of a language which makes the communicative situation between the majority and some of the migrants difficult, but also the lack of understanding of and respect for the content of each other's habitus. It is, then, worth thinking about what role the habitus of school and migrants play as well as about the fact that there can be a risk that different generations of migrants might suffer from the same problems with regard to becoming a communicative part of the Swedish society.

The impact of different social and communicative dispositions can be illustrated differently in different contexts. Hamid from Iraq is 33 years old. He told me that, during a short period of time, he was involved in a project initiated by the Swedish public employment office (*Arbetsförmedlingen*). According to him, working with the project as a carpenter was OK, but when he was sent to a Swedish group it felt awkward.

We didn't understand each other, we were like strangers. We struggled so much, but it did not work. At the end I was alone and had nobody to talk with. It felt as if they ignored me and my hope that now I could learn Swedish when I worked with Swedes resulted in nothing. (Hamid, BAE)

Many of the participants use the term "strange" in order to explain their experiences in communicating with, as they say, "Swedes". They perceive the situation as strange; they experience themselves as strange in the eyes of the majority (Swedes) and they experience the majority as strange. According to some of the participants, the reason that they cannot come into contact with the majority and develop their language is that they feel like outsiders. Here, *habitus*, in the sense of shared social dispositions among groups of people, even if temporary, constructs affiliations. Ingela from Germany reflects upon similar feelings and refers to a period when she worked with Swedes.

I worked during a short period before studying here. It was torture. During lunchtimes, breaks and the like I was invisible. Nobody was interested in me or asked anything. A friend said that Swedes don't want to bother you and that it was me who should talk to them. I listened to my friend and talked to Swedes at my work, but it didn't work. It seemed as if we understood the words but there was no emotional attachment to what we said to each other. (Ingela, MU)

According to Ingela, it was the absence of an "emotional attachment" in the communication that was the barrier. Ingela, like some of other participants, refers to what she has heard from her friend. Here, Ingela's action, like those of many other of the participants, is "shaped, redirected, and constrained by the social context; norms, interpersonal trust, social networks, and social organization" (Coleman 1988, p. 96). Such interpersonal trust constructs a series of expectations with respect to what functions and what does not function in the migration society. To build relations with other significant persons can both provide useful everyday information

that can help people in acting in different social contexts and be a source of uncertainty (Coleman 1988, pp.104–105). With respect to the participants of this study, relying on what other migrants with similar experiences share with them restricts the participants' own understanding of the situation; although they construct a feeling of belongingness, these kinds of relation to other migrants also construct a premade assumption of 'we' and 'they' and strengthen the feelings of otherness in communicative situations. Mira, another student at Malmö University, reflects upon similar feelings of otherness when she remembers her school time. She says:

I remember that me and my friends with a foreign background, we felt sometimes like outsiders. We blamed the teachers for the tiniest problem; we believed that they did not like us because of our origins. It felt like that. (Mira, MU)

Mozhgan: "Did you speak with the teacher about that?"

No, of course we did not. But we spent much time with other students with a foreign background who understood us. In the classroom we spoke Swedish all the time and did everything like the other students, but it seemed as if there was a distance between us and the Swedes. (Mira, MU)

Hamid, Mira, and Ingela do not actually comment on why they experienced this otherness or what factors might be important with regard to the construction of the otherness. Safa, as one of few participants, points out a possible reason.

Once I worked in a project and I had lunch together with other Swedes working with the same project. During the lunch I felt so bad because no one talked to me. It seemed as if they already knew each other and talked about things that I had no idea about. They talked about parties they had or other activities they had done, and what was I supposed to say? It was awful; nobody noticed that I was sitting there silent. (Safa, MU)

Mozhgan: “Did you try to communicate, to say or ask them something?”

I don’t know if you understand, but the situation was strange. I felt really outside, I needed help to join the discussion. It was useless to ask, it would have been embarrassing. (Safa, MU)

There is an increasing awareness that language use is a medium of self-representation (Miller 2004, p. 291). This indicates the significant link between the importance of student-confidence and positive identity formation.⁵⁴ So, if language development rests upon practice and practice rests upon the possibility to ‘present’ oneself and become someone in communicative situations, the critical issue should be how to become an equal part in communicative situations. Safa argues that the earlier familiarity among her workmates made them into a group of people with common interests; they had a kind of ‘history’. The already familiar involvements among Safa’s workmates made them stronger as a group and made them less interested in Safa. The lack of a common frame of reference became an obstacle in the interaction between Safa and the group. Safa could not change the game, or learn to participate in the game, because she lacked not only language proficiency but also a ‘shared group matrix’ and a common frame of reference. A similar experience is expressed by Linda from Luxemburg. She says that nobody is interested in her, and due to the lack of genuine interest on the part of the Swedes her communication with Swedes becomes tedious. Linda also has similar thoughts as Safa, thoughts that indicate the importance of the link between communication, identity, and recognition:

⁵⁴ Miller elaborates this idea and asserts that: “Students from subordinated groups are silenced because they are unable to represent themselves or to negotiate their identities through their first language at school. Some are both seen and heard as different. Speaking itself is a critical tool of representation, a way of representing the self and others. It is the means through which identity is constituted, and agency or self-advocacy is made manifest”. (Miller 2004, p. 293)

I have lived in Sweden for six years and I have a Swedish boyfriend. I still feel that I do not really belong here. When we are with Swedish friends nobody is interested in who I was before moving to Sweden. I honestly do not know how to communicate with them. I believe that I have tried many times, but it always results in cold and boring communication. (Linda, MU)

Denise is from Scotland. When she first came to me after reading my ad about seeking students of Middle Eastern background for interviews, she told me that “I know that I am not from the Middle East but I really want to participate in your study. I constantly reflect on my decision to move to Sweden and issues relating to language and communication. I have many friends from the Middle East and Africa and we understand each other very well, but it is different with Swedes”. I asked her how she experienced using the Swedish language in different contexts. She said:

I have been married to a Swede for seven years and we have two children. But I am so lonely that I believe it is not human. I’ve never learned how to find a way into Swedish hearts. Somehow I manage to be the other all the time. I remember once when I studied and we had to work in a group; I was always standing there alone waiting for someone to pick me and no one did. It was always me and the other foreign girl who ended up in the same group. It is the same thing now that I study Communicative Swedish, I mean Swedes socialize with Swedes and immigrants with immigrants. What does it tell you? (Denise, MU)

Mozhgan: “What do you think about this? What is the reason?”

Immigrants prefer to socialize with immigrants because you have to be a *blatte* (the slang for foreigner) to understand what it feels to be a *blatte*. (Denise, MU)

Denise sees being a migrant as a common social background that makes communication easier between migrants. Due to the difficulties in communicating with Swedes, Denise, despite coming from Scotland, sees herself as a '*blatte*'. It is striking that Denise and Linda share the same discomfort with regard to socializing with Swedes and do not really understand what is expected from them in communicative situations. Sara moved to Sweden as a teenager but still feels 'excluded' in particular situations. She refers to midsummer as a situation where Swedish traditions can evoke feelings of otherness. She says:

Once I was at a midsummer party with my Swedish boyfriend. I felt that my imitation of the frog dance was embarrassing. I felt that it was not my dance; it was a Swedish dance for Swedes who have grown up with that and done it their whole life.
(Sara, MU)

Even if the participants from Malmö University have language competency, they must deal with the 'blending-in' processes. The 'perfect' interaction seems to be a complex matter which requires not only language ability, but also knowledge about and understanding of the existing social and cultural codes. Many of the participants experience their feelings of alienation as a barrier in their communicative interaction with Swedes. The participants' lack of knowledge and feel for the Swedish traditions becomes another obstacle with regard to being included. It is no longer language and communicative codes they lack; rather, they lack the joy of sharing traditions as a means for communicative interaction. The Swedish traditions, as explained by some of the participants, become one of the features in the construction of '*we*' and '*they*'; this contrasts with the diversity that the participants are a part of. Gibson and Carrasco use the term 'non belonging', which explains elegantly migrants' feeling that despite all the policy considering the importance of equality in multicultural societies (in their case Canada) migrants can feel alienated and lack the sense of belonging (2009, pp. 254, 255). Linda from Luxemburg also refers to tradi-

tions as signifiers of otherness, when differences become visible and create a special kind of alienation:

We do not celebrate Christmas as people do in Sweden. When I want to do it in my way then nobody is happy, neither my Swedish boyfriend nor his family. I give up in the end and let them to do as they've always done. It feels as if they win and tell me silently that in Sweden we must do like this. Such events have made me distance myself from them, not seeing them as friends and not willing to socialize with them as often. I simply feel inferior and avoid my boyfriend's family as much as possible. (Linda, MU)

Linda comprehends her own position as an inferior one in communicative situations and therefore shares the feeling of otherness that is common among most of the participants, including the participants at the BAE. Here the feelings of belongingness are crucial in choosing to socialize; the common background matters. Titu comes from Zimbabwe. He is involved with some national and international organizations and sometimes lectures about racism and related topics. He says:

Despite the fact that I am very internationally involved and travel and meet lots of Swedes, I can never feel like an equal in the Swedish groups. Jesus, all the verses and songs that they sing on all the traditional occasions. It is so Swedish. Swedish culture leaves hardly any place for other cultures. (Titu, MU)

For many of the participants, being a member of Swedish society is not the same as being a member of a Swedish community. A Swedish community, as it is understood by many of the participants, consists of cultural, normative, and traditional nonverbal codes which they perceive as excluding mechanisms and which draw a line between the foreign participants and the Swedes. The excluding mechanisms, perhaps unintentionally, mark the borderline between 'us' and 'them'. In such contexts, the unwritten norms, the sense of peoplehood, the history, and the traditions become essen-

tial for inclusion. According to the participants' experiences, in many of the communicative situations the majority show no interest in the participants as individuals, nor do they explain what is going on in order to make it easier for the participants to be a part of the communicative interaction. Integrating with the 'community' goes through social jargons and cultural practices that are common in Sweden and that, in the eyes of the participants, lead to constantly distinguishing the Swedish way as the accepted way, the way which provides confidence in contrast to the strange way that stands for alienation and abnormality. Accordingly, Swedishness can become the strongest component of communication. Here language and culture are strongly allied and both deeply associated with habitus and the feel for the game. Language, songs, traditions, and culture become indicators of membership and passwords to enter the game and play it correctly.

Language Ability Versus Ethnic Identity: Choosing Between Being a Traitor or a Hypocrite

"Identity is constantly interactively constructed on a microlevel, where an individual's identity is claimed, contested and re-constructed in interaction and in relation to the other participants" (Norris 2007, p. 657). In learning and using a second language, the identity issue becomes vital, because language becomes an indicator of being the other, the migrant. Arguably, in the shadow of globalization and westernization migrants are becoming more and more different, compared with natives, in terms of appearance, religion, customs, belief-systems, language, and other characteristics associated with ethnicity (Chiswick & Miller 2002, p. 2).

Despite Bourdieu's resistance against the term *role*, based on the idea that the term refers to a theatrical world where people play roles rather than being seen as the results of their actions (Brady 1995, p. 187), for the participants playing a role has become a crucial strategic approach to integration and recognition. In this context, however, some of the participants perceive speaking good Swedish as role playing that confronts their identity and their sense of loyalty:

I still have difficulties using ‘real’ Swedish phrases.⁵⁵ On the one hand, when I use such phrases, I feel that the Swedes would think “why is she imitating us”? And on the other hand migrants would say “why is she losing herself and her identity”? It is like choosing between being a traitor or a hypocrite. (Sara, MU)

Sara’s statement indicates the link between second language ability/use and identity. A true migrant who is loyal to his/her group speaks so that other members in the group can still define him/her as belonging to the group. How the people within one’s own ethnic groups perceive each other, and the relation and closeness to one’s own group, play a crucial role with regard to attitudes towards communicating and the use of the Swedish language. Shirin goes a step further and says:

All the migrants that I know who speak Swedish fluently have no close relation to their ethnic groups. Those who talk Swedish less perfectly spend their time almost exclusively with people from their home country. (Shirin, MU)

But not all of the participants struggle with strategies to find ways into the Swedish society. Some of the participants refuse to be a new type of person who strives to create shared characteristics with Swedes. Naser says:

I don’t need to be like Swedes in order to learn the language or to get a job. I have my identity, my expertise and education. If they don’t recognize that, it is their problem. I can go back to Lebanon and live my life without putting so much effort into figuring out what they want me to do or to be. (Naser, MU)

While Naser is confident that he will manage without changing his ‘strategy’, Hamid from Iraq is not sure that he can get a better life

⁵⁵ Sara refers to some idiomatic Swedish expressions that are hard to formulate.

if he totally ignores the new social circumstances in Swedish society. He says:

In the beginning I was so stubborn. I laughed at everyone who we thought had become Swedes. You know people who did Swedish things and talked like Swedes and lived like Swedes. But eventually I noticed that they talked better Swedish, got better jobs and somehow they managed to leave the in-betweenness⁵⁶ behind. So I decided to try more to be attentive to how Swedes behaved and did things. (Hamid, BAE)

Mozhgan: “What do you mean? Can you give any examples?”

For example, instead of hanging around, I see that I can partake in some voluntary projects with Swedes and then become one in the group and join them for after work drinks and talk about things [he laughs]. I have even become more aware about what I wear, home decoration...you know such things that people see and judge you on. But inside [he points at his heart] I am one hundred percent Iraqi. (Hamid, BAE)

Hamid sees a link between getting close to the majority and certain benefits which will hopefully lead to recognition and respect. The participants' narratives portray them as the “foreigner within”, the foreigner within contexts of unwritten norms which, over time, must be coded and decoded. This process of selecting strategies to get closer to the majority in order to learn the language and receive recognition, involves role-playing as an act which is conducted based on arbitrary interpretations of Swedish society.

The participants generally believe that more contact with Swedes lead to better language proficiency. At the same time, establishing contact with Swedes or ‘learning’ to be one in a communicative situation (knowing how to play the game) entails other complexities. In this context, for some of the participants, perpetuating eth-

⁵⁶ In-betweenness is my choice of phrase based on what Hamid told me.

nic identity becomes a dilemma, a serious issue that complicates the already complicated post-migration condition. Here language learning and ‘speaking like the host society’ can be understood and discussed in terms of changed loyalty to one’s group. Nor, at Malmö University, elaborates on this issue as follows:

When I first moved to Sweden I wanted to experiment. Swedish society was so exciting and exotic. I ate ham and meatball sandwiches and watched Swedish TV and listened to Swedish music all the time. After a while I began to feel lonely and homesick. I became confused and did not know what to do. Something was missing. After a few years, I knew that I did not want to live in my home country and then I broke all my contacts with my own culture and people from my home country. I even had less contact with my family during that period. I studied and studied. I realized that my language ability was improving incredibly. After a couple of years, when I spoke Swedish fluently and had lots of Swedish friends, I felt I was longing for home again. I began to listen to music from my home country and felt a stronger feeling for my home country. (Nor, MU)

Nicola Ingram, as we saw, uses the term *the habitus tug*, which explains how an individual can be “pulled in different directions” when the individual faces difficulties in belonging totally to one field only. What is significant is that “in some cases the conflicted habitus causes division, leaving an individual alienated from the practices within a field” (Ingram 2011, p. 290). Michel Bruneau argues that we are facing “new cosmopolitanisms” based on “mixity” and mobility that lead to multiple belongings and new forms of identities (Bruneau 2010, pp. 45, 46). These confronting fields, where Nor, for example, must take an action which confronts the basic premises of an earlier habitus, locate the participants in a mental field characterized by duality and contrasts. Even if it is unconscious, the participants need to make a decision in dealing with the old habitus and about whether to let the new habitus enter their life or not.

I interviewed Ellen, a teacher at Malmö University, who was involved in the introductory course for migrants who attempted higher education. She said:

A student from Russia at the introductory course at Malmö University had huge pronunciation problems. She was willing to improve herself and I decided to help her with her pronunciation. At the end of the semester the student was speaking Swedish with remarkably better pronunciation. But suddenly during her last meeting, when I and some other teachers admired her language improvement, she said “Where is Russia now?” and began to cry. (Ellen, teacher MU)

For the Russian student speaking Swedish with an accent was a part of her identity as a person who belonged to a certain nation. One can say that Swedish spoken with an accent can have a function in the sense that it indicates a certain affiliation. But it can also function as a control system for perpetuating ethnic identity. Zeynab says:

Once when I spoke to my children in Swedish in order to exercise my language, my relatives made fun of me. They joked, saying that I was becoming a Swede just because I spoke Swedish to my children. (Zeynab, BAE)

In Zeynab’s case, language is perceived as the marker of the real identity. A certain accent and not speaking Swedish fluently are the signifiers of ‘we’. What becomes of a migrant if she/he stops being *like* a migrant, not speaking Swedish with an accent and behaving exactly like the Swedes? To whom and to what does she/he then belong? It seems that for some of the participants, watching, for example, parabola TV, or reading newspapers from the home country, is a struggle to keep alive an identity that is necessary and to preserve a link to the home country (see Adamson & Demetriou 2007, p. 511). Nor, in the quotation above, also relates her language identity and her language development to strategic thinking; she critically examined the closeness to her original cul-

ture and roots, and her chances of developing the language of the migration society. According to Nor, her origins could interfere with her language development, which was why she decided to 'cut off' the relations to her ethnic background. Later, when she achieved her desired language ability, she began to appreciate her origins again. The confrontation between two social fields might become an enemy to language development. Here, the attachment to an earlier habitus as a familiar way to deal with and know about the life and the society one lives in reveals "the complex and nuanced expressions of identity among the participants and where they view their place in their social world". In such situations people must deal with ambivalence, internal conflicts, and "the tug between two social fields" (Ingram 2011, p. 292).

Knowledge about how communication is carried out in different contexts in a specific society 'requires' entry into another culture, and education functions as "an agent of enculturation through which learners are imparted not only with knowledge but also with beliefs, know-how, and values" (Rubinfeld et al. 2007, pp. 184, 185). That is why the contact with the host community provides more confidence in speaking the second language (ibid.). The participants are aware that learning and using the Swedish language satisfactorily is hard work; it not only involves technical mastery, but can also entail a social struggle. This is a struggle because the original bonds are needed as much as the contact with the majority, and awareness about social norms and values is necessary in acquiring the language of the migration society. The question, however, is how to create a balance between different principles, worldviews, and social realities. Social and psychological factors are crucial components in second language learning in ethnicity-related contexts (Taylor et al. 1997, p. 102). Learning and using a second language has complex consequences for migrants, since it can interfere with their needs for a firm identity and recognition. Taylor et al. argue that:

/.../ it is obvious that minority groups are involved in a struggle for cultural and linguistic survival in the face of threatened assimilation by more dominant groups. In such situations it is

quite conceivable that, for some individuals, anticipated rewards of learning a second language do not balance out the perceived costs in terms of loss to ethnic or cultural identity. (Taylor et al. 1977, p. 103)

Taylor et al.'s study indicates that the extent of personal contact with the majority, and the threat to one's identity caused by learning a second language, are two significant variables in second language development. Those who do not perceive second language ability as a threat to their cultural identity become more competent speakers of the second language (ibid., p.113). So, the sociocultural determinants become vital, as they affect the attitudes to and the motivation for learning the language of the migration society. In other words, it is not only learner characteristics that are the key factors of second language learning, but the analysis of sociocultural influences can also play a crucial role in the field of second language development (Taylor et al. 1977, p. 113). What happens in the participants' case when they are placed within a field of confronting realities is what is explained by Bourdieu as a two-alternative situation. In situations when people can practice their habitus they feel at home. In other situations it is different. When the habitus is strong people can convert the social stipulations. On the other hand, when the social stipulations are stronger, people can either leave the field or use their habitus, which means that it will eventually be modified (Brady 1995, p. 187). The participants' narratives in this chapter confirm the huge complexity that informs the necessity for the participants to choose different strategies and try new social dispositions and ideas in order to feel included. Their own need and the need of the family, after all, become strong stimuli in determining to what degree to modify or split the old habitus and make efforts in learning the language and integrating with the Swedish society.

Being Perceived as the 'Cultural Other' in Communicative Situations

In the following section I aim to portray the participants' interpretation of Swedish society and Swedishness. This aspect is signifi-

cant, because it directly influences their own self-positioning, as well as their attitude to the Swedish language and their efforts to develop and communicate in it.⁵⁷ In explaining how they understand their interaction with the majority, some of the participants illustrate a negative picture of the role of culture as a frame of reference for understanding migrants in communicative situations. Nila, a student at Malmö University, says:⁵⁸

I never understand when Swedes talk to me and use the word culture. I mean I don't understand what they mean and what they try to say. I don't believe that they themselves know what they mean by the word culture. For example, they ask me: do you do like this in your culture? And then I wonder what they mean by *your culture*? Do I have a special culture or do they refer to a culture that all Iranians behave according to? (Nila, MU)

Mozhgan: "How do you feel in such situations?"

I feel so marginalized. I just wonder what happens to the person in me. I mean the person in me who is not like anyone else in the whole world regardless of culture, immigration, and other things. (Nila, MU)

Charles Taylor considers identity formation partly as a result of recognition or its absence. He emphasizes that misrecognition and reflecting upon other people in terms of humiliation and disgrace is damaging and makes people suffer (Taylor 1992, pp. 25–26). But above all, it is the internalization of that given identity which can harm migrants' continued negotiation of their identity and which

⁵⁷ With regard to the role of attitude in second language learning, the interested reader should consult, for example, Krashen, S. (1980a) 'Attitude and aptitude in relation to second language acquisition and learning', in: Diller, K. (ed.) *Individual Differences and Universals in Language*.

⁵⁸ Eriksen (1999) argues that several migrants are victims of a kind of 'cultural terrorism'. This means that society requires cultural representation and migrants have to manifest a cultural identity; no one can deny their cultural identity. "You cannot impose identities on people...the people will just resist them. It would be really a dangerous thing if one were not to accept the existence of communities". <http://www.sv.uio.no/sai/om/aktuelt/i-media/2011/mauritius-times-1-2.pdf>

might influence the motivation for learning a second language and communicating in it. As will be discussed later in this chapter, it is significant to stress that “the projection of an inferior or demeaning image on another can actually distort and oppress, to the extent that the image is internalized (Taylor 1992, p. 36). What I am trying to underline here is that, in reacting to the majority’s expectations, some of the participants implant the majority’s beliefs, attitudes, and values into their lives to such a degree that it becomes an artificial act and an obstacle to developing a positive and confident identity.

Nila sees the majority’s use of the concept of culture as an explanatory tool in order to simplify the understanding of the other, and thus the use of the concept of culture in such a context proposes otherness; it becomes another criterion of otherness. By using the word culture as an umbrella concept that includes what the participants do or say, the majority construct an imagined understanding of another person, a different person. On the other hand, Nila is aware of how she is exposed by culturalization; she becomes vulnerable. In the same context, Maria, another university student born in Afghanistan, says:

For me the word culture is the beginning of exclusion. The minute I hear someone, especially from the majority, use the word culture, something echoes in my mind: “they are excluding you...they are excluding you. They are constructing borders between you and them”. You know what I mean? For example, when they try to relate the fact that I do not like wine to my culture. They usually ask: do people drink in your country? And I say, irritated: my mother does. (Maria, MU)

Mozhgan: “Do such remarks affect your communication with Swedes?”

Yes, many times. Because I begin to think that despite my initial feeling that I have lived in this country for many years and I know its people and its norms, I might be perceived as different anyway. I feel that I have to defend a whole nation by my own.

I sometimes get aggressive and then the communication becomes terrible. (Maria, MU)

Both Maria and Nila are disappointed, because they believe that some of the people that they have contact with try to understand them by referring to an imagined cultural frame of reference; Nila and Maria experience that they are seen as outsiders, while they do not in fact feel like outsiders. Maria believes that she is familiar with the people and the norms in the migration society and it bothers her that some people treat her as someone different. The idea of imaginary cultural markers and the construction of 'we' and 'they' are perhaps more visible to Maria and Nila than they are to the majority. Sensing affiliation through communication, or experiencing otherness through communication, are two important key elements for communicative interaction and, thereby, language ability. The internalization of these key elements is evident in what Asra says when she reflects on how she experiences the communication with the teachers at her son's school:

I feel...you know...I see that they treat me differently compared with Swedish parents. Once, they talked to me about a rain suit and the teacher told me, while other parents were looking at us, that "in Sweden we use rain suits when the autumn comes" and she looked at me without smiling. They always talk like that...it is hard to explain....one can see that the teachers think they are better than us, know much better and do things more correctly. (Asra, BAE)

Nila's, Maria's, and Asra's way of being and doing things is interpreted in terms of what is supposed to be common in Sweden. It means that a 'non-standard' behavior can be interpreted by the majority as related to the participants' origins (which is why the teachers remark that in Sweden people do things in a certain way, which should be seen as the right way). At the same time, the participants believe that how they are perceived is perhaps not only based on cultural interpretations, but also on an imagined and constructed ethnic affiliation that is taken for granted. The partici-

pants generally agreed that what they do and how they do things can often be related to their ethnic background, which from the majority's point of view says something about their culture. The complexity behind how people (both migrants and the majority) can be associated with a culture, or with ethnic characteristics, is difficult to grasp, since sometimes the communicative situations become complicated because the participants do not have the right feel. Ingela's narrative here shows how frustrating communicative interaction might be, without Ingela being able to point out the problem:

I always feel like an outsider. I have to be attentive to all the details, because if I miss something nobody is capable of explaining it to me, especially in a language that I comprehend. I always have a feeling that Swedes have a kind of leading edge in communicating and socializing through communication. (Ingela, MU)

Mozhgan: "What do you mean by saying that they have a leading edge and in what way do you feel like an outsider? Can you give an example?"

It is how they act that makes me an outsider. It is hard to explain. It is difficult to know when to join the discussion. Some people can interrupt while some don't. It feels as if they know how to communicate without actually saying anything or considering the conversation rules that they themselves have set up. It is not like nobody interrupts during the discussions in Sweden, but the Swedes know how to interrupt, and I don't, not in Sweden. By leading edge I mean that the communication between them goes so smoothly, while I feel great pressure to make it right; they know about all the unwritten rules. One becomes more silent in such situations, compared with when I am together with other migrants or people from my own country, when I feel equal. (Ingela, MU)

Ingela refers mostly to a social and technical ability that provides the majority with the leading edge in communication situations and makes her inferior in such situations. Sahar, on the other hand, sees the lack of understanding for her culture as an obstacle in communicative situations:

Swedes totally ignore how we do things and how our culture functions. When they do not show understanding for how our culture works, then it is not easy to communicate. (Sahar, BAE)

Mozhgan: “Can you give an example?”

For example, when I say that my child is sick and I have to stay and take care of him and cannot attend the course, the teachers almost get angry. They always ask why my husband cannot take care of our child so that I can attend the course. The teacher does not understand that he must work and, besides, I like taking care of my child. (Sahar, BAE)

Mozhgan: “Have you explained this to your teacher?”

No, I haven’t. It is no use. She will not change her attitude, I know that. No matter what I say, she believes in her own culture and how Swedes do things. (Sahar, BAE)

In the same context, Zeynab says:

I understand that they want to see us as free women who study and develop. But it is so strange that they do not want to understand that for us family is very important, more important than realizing ourselves. (Zeynab, BAE)

Mozhgan: “Does this attitude affect your communication with Swedes or your language studies?”

I don’t know. But I know that I would be happier and feel more welcome if they didn’t see us as a strange oppressed group. It

would be easier then to have self-confidence, seek contact and speak more Swedish, because then one knows that they do like me. It is not easy to speak with people who you believe don't approve of you. (Zeynab, BAE)

According to these narratives, the majority promote the Swedish culture as the norm, at the same time as they explain the participants' behavior by referring to their culture. While Nila and Maria at Malmö University oppose the use of the concept of culture, Sahar and Zeynab encourage it, with regard to their culture. These contradicting desires point to the complexity of how different the participants are. While some of the participants wish to be understood in terms of cultural affiliation, other participants firmly state that they do not wish to be understood as individuals with a certain cultural affiliation. Recognizing these different needs in the context of second language teaching is vital.⁵⁹

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss how the social room within which the participants exist, and the participants' interpretation of their interaction with people in Swedish society, might have impacts on their language and communicative development. Here it is the interaction with society which is interesting for language development.

Most of the participants feel that they cannot really belong to the social and communicative context when being together with Swedes. They assert that there are unwritten norms and a rather strong group affiliation among Swedes, which makes it difficult for the participants to join the Swedish group and communicate on equal terms. The narratives of the participants indicate that they

⁵⁹ A study conducted by Patricia Duff, Professor of Chinese Language & Literacy Education Research (2002), in western Canada, brings to the fore the same aspect of sociocultural interference in second language acquisition. Duff shows how a group of Chinese migrants were not happy when their teacher referred to their cultural background in the classroom. Duff argues that these students did not want to be identified with the traditional Chinese values and thereby be perceived as the other. This indicates that some researchers' approach³⁹ in advocating multicultural education, which is based on cultural sensitivity, teachers' respect for cultural identity and differences might actually be perceived as negative by some students, who see an emphasis on culture as something that makes them into the other.

see a clear link between understanding a society and communicating acceptably in its language. However, in getting close to the Swedish society and communicating in its language, the participants face another serious problem. Too much interest in the Swedish society and fluent Swedish might be perceived by one's own ethnic group as disloyalty. When the participants are perceived as becoming Swedes they cannot be seen as 'pure' members of their ethnic group. The disconnectedness from one's own group has both practical and mental consequences for the participants; it becomes a question of identity, a question of who the participants are and to whom they belong. Therefore, many of the participants have to consider their closeness to the Swedish society as an issue with serious consequences for their identity negotiation, group belongingness, and access to a social network.

One could say that the participants constantly need to examine new and contradictory things and make new decisions. Even if, for many of the participants, their existence in Sweden has become safer, seen from a political point of view, it does not mean that their social existence has become more comfortable. They are required to develop an identity in the public and school sphere which might contradict their identity outside the classrooms and in their homes. The hybrid identity construction, and hovering between what Swedish society advocates and what the old habitus and their own group encourage, leads to some of the participants constantly pondering what is right and wrong in approaching Swedish society. As a result, the participants begin to interpret the Swedish society. Their interpretations can, however, be subjective and function as 'an imaginary guideline' to how to achieve a better life and inclusion into Swedish society. The perception of an imagined Swedishness results in strategies for understanding the Swedish society, and for being a part of it and stop being the other.⁶⁰ The imagined Swedishness constructs order and, in the eyes of the participants, can help them to blend in, succeed, or learn to communicate in the language. But not all of the participants want to 'learn' about the Swedish way. Some of them resist what they believe to be strategies to become like 'them'. They

⁶⁰ The interested reader can read Lena Sawyer's book (2000, pp.153-156), where she discusses how national cohesiveness among citizens is fostered and how this affects the notion of diversity.

want to preserve their life and their identity as they once were in the home country. In other words, these participants choose the social membership in their own ethnic network as a strategy to deal with a complex life after migration, with or without the Swedish language.

While some of the participants see the copying of what they believe to be the 'Swedish way' as the key to inclusion and language development, other participants feel safer in distancing themselves. The reason for this isolation from the Swedish society can partly be a result of seeing yourself as different or believing that the majority see you as different. Some of the participants experience that they are treated differently because of wearing a veil or doing things differently than Swedes. In such situations, to communicate with Swedes, for example, in the day care center or the children's school, does not feel pleasant; it can become something that the participants would rather avoid.

However, both groups of participants, that is to say, those who do their best to get close to the Swedish society and those who feel safer not copying the Swedish way, have to cope with an existence characterized by dualities. The old habitus, different life-worlds, language barriers, and different communicative norms are some of the examples that indicate the complex social situation that the participants have to deal with. Therefore, the role of teachers in understanding diverse classrooms becomes the most significant point of departure for creating a good teaching and learning environment for second language acquisition in a migration context. Complex situations need complex approaches and language learners must be seen in their total social environment. Consequently, the issue of second language teaching and learning becomes an issue deeply rooted in questions such as: What are the dreams of the adult language learners? What are they afraid of? How do they perceive their future in Sweden and why? What are their goals for the future? Why do they perceive the Swedish society and communicating with the majority in a certain way, and so forth? In other words, the life-world/s of the participants should be seen as the social background to their communicative action (Baxter 1987, p. 39).

7. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research set out to understand how the interplay between a) the participants of this study as language learners and language users in Swedish society, b) school as a social institution, and c) the communicative interaction with the majority as the participants perceive it (and which might affect the course and the outcome of teaching, learning, and communicating in the Swedish language). This chapter discusses the results of the study as they relate to the research questions. The structure of the discussion is based on the idea of the problem of the study being seen as a triangle. This means that this chapter comprises three big sections:

- the institutional influences,
- the influence of the participants' life situation/life-world, and
- the participants' experiences of communicating in the Swedish language.

Under each heading the most vital assumptions drawn from the empirical material will be discussed within the theoretical frame of the study. The theoretical framework here helps to interpret the findings. A brief summary will outline the most significant conclusions of each section.

The Institutional Influences

In what ways do the sociocultural influences shape the content of the teaching of the Swedish language and teachers' perceptions of the learners (in this study in the context of the BAE)?

Speaking Good Swedish or Thinking Like Good Swedes?

According to what the participants have expressed in this study, they need to learn the Swedish language and to acquire basic language skills in order to cope with practical issues, and especially in order to find a job. The participants need the Swedish language in order to be able to communicate their thoughts in various situations, for example, in order to be able to express their opinions when they meet the school staff in their children's school or when they have to seek medical care. They need the Swedish language to carry out important conversations in their everyday life, when they have to argue, explain, and convince in different social contexts. This means that the participants need what Hymes (1967) has called *communicative competence*, which is the ability to use language in different social settings. The empirical material of this study indicates that providing the participants with communicative competence has a minor importance in teaching contexts. The main focus is put on learning the language by using Swedish social dispositions, in terms of illustrating some valued ways of living and doing things in Swedish society. Teaching norms, rather than focusing on communicative competence, functions as a bridge to how to think like Swedes, instead of opening for how to communicate in different societal contexts. Studies show that in first language acquisition this kind of approach is normal (as it is a natural part of the socialization process of a child), but the difference here is that the participants are adults and already have a language and a past of their own, a fact that must play a more crucial role than it does now (see, for example, Cook et al. 1979).

In the present situation at the BAE, the school acquires the role of an authority which sets out not only to represent the Swedish culture but to teach it as well. Thus, teaching culture becomes more important than teaching language and communicative competence. In teaching norms and culture, the idea of what counts as good Swedish becomes alive too. One might wonder what is problematic about this approach, which aims for migrants to acquire knowledge about the norms and culture of the migration society in order to be better integrated. The problem is that this approach misrecognizes migrants' life-world and what they see as their social

reality, especially during the first years after migration. Vygotsky stressed “the dominant role of social experience in human development” (Vygotsky 1978, p. 22). In a learning context, Vygotsky saw the social relations around the learners as the most important aspect. He argued that people’s thinking is mainly developed as a result of the influences of the social spheres, rather than the other way round (Vygotsky 1986, p. 36). Therefore, even in understanding what is really meant by language ability we need to put the conception within a social context and find out how it is perceived in society, that is to say, relate it to the life-worlds of people where they aim to realize themselves (see Baxter 1987, pp. 45-46). In other words, it should perhaps be a part of the curriculum to map out the language of self-realization for migrants as migrants themselves perceive the concept of self-realization.

Incorporating teaching material based on how life is lived in Sweden, at the BAE, instead of focusing on learners’ social experiences, indicates that the language learners are indoctrinated into an understanding which promotes telling and understanding the story about the ‘Swedish way’. This can also be seen as ‘programming’ the students, when knowledge construction and language skills are “more consistent with indoctrination than education” (Sears & Hughes 2006, p. 15).

The appreciated values of the Swedish society and Swedish traditions (such as the importance of women’s self-realization, how typical Swedes live or celebrate Easter, etc.) are vital parts of the education. Here, as discussed by Broady, the educational system distributes cultural capital, and at the same time it is responsible for the existence of that capital. Schools are social systems that construct recognition and perpetuate a symbolic order which classifies people and mediates an image of what the world is like. The educational system illustrates in what way power relations, in terms of pedagogical actions, exclude people with deviant opinions compared to those accepted by the schools. The BAE seems to have the power to divide the social world and determine its legitimacy without having knowledge of the participants’ life-world.

Seeing things from the BAE’s point of view, the idea of what good Swedish means, and how it is taught in linguistic terms, re-

mains somewhat ambiguous. There is a contradiction between the purpose of language education and the school's practice of language teaching, which means that the school's most significant purpose, namely, to provide language ability, is inferior to a hidden agenda of changing the language learners' sociocultural understanding of the world. The goal of Swedish for migrants is formulated as follows by the Swedish National Agency for Education⁶¹:

Education in Swedish for migrants is a qualified language training that aims to provide adults with another mother tongue with basic skills in the Swedish language. In the education, students should learn and develop a functional second language. Students should get the linguistic tool for communication and active participation in everyday, social and working life. The education is characterized by students developing a communicative language ability to communicate both orally and in writing in Swedish based on their own needs. In addition, the training provides adult migrants who lack basic reading and writing skills with the possibility to acquire such skills. (Swedish National Agency for Education 2013, p. 6) (My own translation)

It is interesting that learners' communicative ability "based on their own needs" is emphasized above. However, in the context of this study, it seems that the actual needs of migrants, which are somewhat invisible, become subordinated to a majority consensus about what the learners need, and consequently should know, during and after language education. Thus, as argued by Sjögren, how migrants think and how their thinking is influenced by and influences the Swedish system becomes irrelevant. Migrants, who are usually in subordinate positions, confront a strongly organized institutional world that presents right and wrong to them (Sjögren 1996, p. 31 ff). The question of what is good language ability, and how it can be achieved, is significant and should be examined within the

⁶¹ The education termed Basic Adult Education, which was examined in this study (as explained in the method part), was not just about learning the Swedish language, but also English, civics, mathematics, home economics and consumer knowledge, and computer skills. But I have had no interest in teaching structures and learning accomplishments in other subjects than Swedish.

context of the life-worlds of migrants, in terms of learners' "province of reality" in which they continuously participate (Schutz & Luckmann 1973, p. 3). According to Schutz and Luckmann, "we designate everything which we experience as unquestionable" (ibid., p. 4) and I relate this statement to a reverse setting where the life-world of the educational authorities becomes utterly significant, with regard to how they see the design and philosophy behind second language learning for adult migrants, namely, it would seem, as unquestionable

The Invisible Learner

The participants assume that they are in school in order to learn a language by sitting in the classroom, reading and writing. It is the grammar, the tests, and the written papers that have a high priority, not only to the students but also to the teachers at the BAE. The textbooks used at the BAE are very significant, and the most important task of the teachers seems to be to convince the learners of what is written in the textbooks and of what they believe to be common values and knowledge in Swedish society. Methods for developing students' self-understanding, critical thinking, and engagement have a marginal role, if any at all. According to my classroom observations, methods such as group work, group discussions, and a free choice of topics to discuss and write about were not used at the BAE either. Furthermore, the teaching practice at the BAE is isolated from the social realities of the language learners' life-worlds. The participants try to interpret their surroundings based on the historically structured background knowledge (stock of knowledge) that they possess (Baxter 1987, p. 46). The relevance of a given knowledge and the reception of that specific knowledge are related to the receiver's cultural standards of interpretation, value, and expression. In other words, what the participants are exposed to is part of the world that, at a given time, is relevant to their goals and interests. Here the "stock of knowledge" serves as a resource for participants (Habermas, cited in Baxter 1987, p. 46).

Given this context, by using, for example, the novel *The Guy in the Grave Next Door* as teaching material, the school refers to a

“stock of knowledge” about an unfamiliar sociocultural context (belonging and created in another life-world) which is not useful for most of the participants, while, at the same time, the institution signals the importance of learning about significant sociocultural aspects and how the values and societal components of the Swedish society play a vital role for a migrant. In this case it is the author of the novel that mediates a part of what is significant and valued in Swedish society. Writing an essay about Easter without ever having celebrated Easter and not knowing where to find information about it, is, besides being time-consuming, an impediment to the learners’ chances to critically write about an issue which corresponds to their everyday life. Furthermore, the participants become less motivated to take active part in a subject when they cannot use it in practical situations or relate it to their own social reality. Language learning has sociocultural dimensions, as it is a process that involves social negotiation in the sense that it includes “meaning-making in collaborative activity with other members of a given culture” (Mitchell & Myles 2004, p. 200), which makes the process of language learning successful. The idea of individual learning as a part of and dependent on social interaction (Lantolf & Thorne 2007, p. 218) loses its meaning when the participants at the BAE are served with issues they are expected to consider as important to learn. These issues could, instead, be harmonized by collaboration between adult language learners and school.

Here, Vygotsky’s idea of socially and culturally situated learning touches upon a number of important questions. As he points out, there is an interdependence between human development and social influences. This signifies human strategic interaction with your environment, whereby the cultural system provides you with the tool needed for development. Note that here we have to recognize the environment and the cultural system within which the participants exist. Since “the mechanism of individual developmental change is rooted in society and culture” (Vygotsky 1978, p. 7), the starting point should be in what way schools’ and learners’ perception of society and culture influences teaching and the learning context. Since most of the participants at the BAE have individual-based relations to different kinds of social experiences anchored in

their life-world, the concepts of society and culture become different things for the participants than for school and the teachers. Therefore, as emphasized by Vygotsky, students' personal experiences and personal activity (which is determined by the social environment) should be a crucial foundation for the pedagogical work (Vygotsky 1997, pp. 49, 45).

The teachers at the BAE explain the failure of the language learners by referring to their homesickness, to their attachments to their families, to their lack of motivation, to their absence in the classrooms, to their lack of a sense of order, etc. Furthermore, teachers mention the participants' lack of organization and their inability to be on time and use the same organizational methods as Swedes, such as using calendars or having their papers in order. Here, the motivational factor should be seen as more crucial. Instead of focusing on students' interests, in Bourdieu's term, the teachers point out symbolic assets embedded in the cultural capital; they advocate the 'qualities' that school cherishes, the same symbolic assets that the teachers themselves have been socialized into and value highly (see Bourdieu 1977a, p. 494, Broady 1991, p. 124). At the same time, it cannot be denied that the above-mentioned aspects discussed by the teachers in this study have an impact on learners' language development, but my point is that the teachers need to acknowledge the pedagogical shortcomings as well.

What teachers do at the BAE is to reproduce and transform the accepted habitus (a set of valued social dispositions): responsible students have very little absence, have their papers in order, treasure personal goals, require that their husbands take care of their sick children (in the case of female participants) and think about their rights as women, go to their internships even if the distance between the home and the location of the internship is long, use a calendar, read Swedish newspapers, acquire knowledge about Swedish literature and Swedish culture, learn about social jargons and how practical things are conducted in Swedish society, etc. The school teaches the habitus of the migration society and has no interest in seeing the adult language learner as an individual with specific dispositions rooted in other social and cultural affiliations.

In this way, the otherness of the participants is constructed and the existence of 'the society within the society' reinforced. By 'society within the society' I mean that the participants find comfort in the familiar world that does not see them as outsiders; a world that respects them and permits them to be the way they wish to be. The otherization done by school, quite as much as the participants' longing for home and attachment to the past, is the mechanism behind the construction and maintenance of a society within the society, which in itself, by confusing the migrants, contributes to a reduced motivation to learn the Sweden language. Most of the participants experience a feeling of otherness and this influences their attitudes towards the Swedish society and the Swedish language (see also Ekblad et al. 1999).⁶²

In a similar context, Cummins refers to Canadian experiences and argues that if students are not affirmed in the classrooms, if their experiences are not part of the curriculum, and if all actors in the learning process are not allowed to contribute to the process, then the students "will seek affirmation on the street" (Cummins 1997, p. 89). In the case of adult language learners at the BAE, they seek affirmation through meeting their countrymen, watching parabola TV, reading the newspapers of the home country, participating in activities arranged by their ethnic groups, buying their tickets and groceries in the ethnic shops, etc. Not being affirmed and not being able to develop the Swedish language the way they wish, the participants at the BAE (even some participants at MU) seek meaningfulness and recognition in a society within the Swedish society and in a sociocultural sphere that strives to survive alongside the Swedish society. The growth of the society within the society, and the culture within the culture, isolates the participants at the BAE not only from the language but also from social participation in the migration society. Benita Luckmann refers to a mod-

⁶² Ekblad et al. use the notion "parallel lives" and based on their empirical material they bring to the fore the same idea that I try to argue for by using the term 'society within the society'. The authors refer to the participants of their study and write that "the Iranians mentioned the need for empowering people, especially immigrants, in order for them to be better respected by the Swedish public and authorities. They proposed an integration programme, which might reduce the need among newcomers to Swedish society to live parallel lives. Such a programme might also help them develop a sense of coherence in the new context" (Ekblad et al. 1999, p.337).

ern man who “instead of being a full-time member of one ‘total and whole’ society” is “a part-time citizen in a variety of part-time societies”, and migrants’ positioning after migration can be compared to that of Luckmann’s modern man. In a similar way, “instead of living within one meaningful world system” with complete loyalty, the participants now, after migration, live in many differently structured worlds with limited commitment (Luckmann 1970, pp. 587, 588). The difference, however, is that Luckmann’s modern man, as I see it, probably was seen as belonging to the majority, whereas the participants of this study are not. This means that since the issue of the participants’ main membership is elusive, the constructions of other life-worlds result in the construction of a subordinated society (“ethnic society”) within a superior society (“Swedish society”). With this I mean that the modern man had a definite position in his society and that his life-worlds were more like sub-areas of his existence, as a result of the emergence of modern society, while the participants’ life-worlds are a result of a migration that in many cases was not actually voluntary and entailed a loss of sense of identity.

In analyzing how teachers at the BAE reflect upon teaching and the methods used in classrooms, it becomes evident that there is a lack of understanding of the fact that language learners’ life-world/s must be considered seriously in order to achieve better learning outcomes. Teachers need to critically reflect upon the curriculum in relation to what the challenges are and what kind of resources and life situation each of the students possesses. Teachers should be given the possibility to participate in the improvement of second language teaching in a migration context. It is important to realize that the issue of teachers’ professional identity and competence should be more critically discussed. This aspect is fundamental, because the curriculum cannot be developed without teacher development (see Stenhouse, 1975; Elliott 1994).

Culture in the Classroom

Seeing the students’ culture as an obstacle for educational achievements is not a new idea. Rather, the idea that the problem of minority students’ academic underachievement is related to their cul-

ture, and cannot be solved by changing the practice and approach of the school, has been discussed by the help of the theory called *the cultural deprivation paradigm* (see Hall & Gieben 1992, p. 51 ff.; Goodwin, Cheruvu & Genishi 2008). The teachers at the BAE emphasize, in different contexts, that the participants' way of behaving and performing their studies is a barrier for their language development and their integration into society. By seeing the language learners as attached to a certain cultural frame of reference that explains their behavior, the influence of other social factors is not taken into consideration, as also pointed out by Aleksandra Ålund (2002, p. 45).

The participants are seen as victims of their social and cultural background. Given this context, the teachers at the BAE do not realize that there is another side to the coin, which illustrates the failure of the students as related to the fact that it is the primary position of mainstream culture that might be the reason for some of the participants' underachievement. While the school sees the copying of Swedish norms as the door to language ability and integration, the participants feel subordinated and deprived of their personal autonomy. Here it is significant to stress the correlation that Bourdieu made between inequality in the context of school and inequality within the context of different cultures. He argues that schools are excluding categorization apparatuses, which function as a filter. Educational systems operate as institutions that mediate and control the legitimization of culture and provide different ways of accessing culture. Therefore, schools have the power and the opportunity to create equality or vice versa (Broady 1991, pp. 140, 152).

The meaning of culture in the classroom, or the students' perception of the cultural aspects in a systematic way, is not critically reviewed at the BAE. The general perception is that the students' underachievement is a result of bad study technique, their 'life style', and what they prioritize in their life. The discussion with the teachers illustrates that they do not problematize the achievements of the language learners in a critical way based on specific pedagogical approaches, such as intercultural pedagogy or multicultural education. Within the classroom practices, the perception of what

causes what is mostly unclear, and sometimes rather arbitrary and based on personal teaching experiences. The teachers seem to draw conclusions about the participants' behavior on an uncomplicated basis, which does not involve the opinions and emotions of the language learners at all (for example, why some of the language learners do not have calendars, come late, and have no order among their things). Some examples from the teaching context at the BAE, such as reading the novel *The Guy in the Grave Next Door*, discussing Swedish norms like the right to live together without being married and the right of women to choose self-realization before the family, writing about Easter and other Swedish traditions, and similar teaching contents, indicate that what is seen as important knowledge is not related to the need to master different communication situations but to *what is the valued way of thinking and acting in Sweden*.

Jason Irizarry (2009) argues that we need to know how what is taught in classrooms is affected by culture and in what way what is taught can be connected to the students' culture. As I see it, these kinds of investigations are necessary, in order to problematize what kind of status is given to the culture which is mirrored in the teaching context and to the sociocultural background of the students at that particular period of their life. I deliberately emphasize the phrase "at that particular period of their life" because people's dispositions change over time. This can be understood by referring to Bourdieu, who argues that there are as many habitus as there are people. This means that habitus, on the one hand, is collectively produced and, on the other hand, can be individually based. Bourdieu, in other words, made it clear that habitus is acquired and refers to "a genetic mode of thought, as opposed to essentialist modes" (Bourdieu 1993b, p. 86). Thereby, the participants' affiliation at a specific period of their life, when they live under certain circumstances, should be seen as significant in teaching and learning Swedish as a second language, without considering that affiliation as static.

Borrowing Grenfell's words, the educational system does not encourage the students to form a "relationship with education that suits them. They do not connect to what education offers them be-

cause the way thinking is represented in its system is simply alien” to learners’ cognitive habitus (Grenfell 2004, p.81)

Concluding Remarks

In designing curricula, as well as teaching methods and practices, the following should be taken into consideration:

- Adult migrants, in general, are not young students who move to another country to learn a second language with the purpose of engaging in higher studies. They need the language for social participation, and they also need it in order to handle practical everyday situations.
- Improving teacher competency requires systematic work, based on changes in the surrounding world and on the language learners’ backgrounds, needs, and individual circumstances (structured educational contexts).
- The reality presented in classroom teaching should correspond to language learners’ needs and interests.
- The teaching of Swedish culture should have a minor role (or be separated from language teaching courses) in order to leave space for the use of methods that provide language and communicative competency.
- New pedagogical methods and approaches should be considered, problematized, used, and evaluated critically and continuously.
- Language learners must have the opportunity to influence the teaching context and student evaluations should be implemented continuously.
- The teaching context must connect to the participants’ sociocultural background and earlier experiences.
- Language learners would feel more included if the classroom teaching was partly based on their earlier knowledge, instead of representing ideas of assimilation and the Swedish way of doing things.

The Influence of the Participants’ Life Situation

In what ways do the language learners’ life situations influence

the course of their language development?

There are several factors that influence the acquisition of a second language. Some of the most important features have been outlined as motivation (see, for example, Gardner 1985; Norton 1995, 2000, 2004), the sociocultural environment in which an individual is situated (see, for example, Lantolf & Thorne 2007), and attitudes towards the second language (see, for example, Benson 1991; Ellis 1997). Dixon et al. mention home literacy practices, opportunities to use the second language informally, “well-implemented” and “specially-designed” second language educational programs, the time that language learners devote to the instructions, the issue of personal talent, motivation, and the first language of the language learners as some of the most vital issues that need to be examined (Dixon et al. 2012, p. 5). However, there has been too little research conducted within the field of adult migrants’ second language development. As repeatedly emphasized in this study, there is a need to look at the second language development of migrants within a migrant perspective, which means an understanding of what is going on in the mind of migrants and an understanding of their social surroundings while they try to learn a second language after migrating to another country. In choosing an approach with attention to migrants’ life-worlds, understanding diaspora also becomes a crucial entry into some important questions. Diaspora shows the multi-situated migrant, who cannot totally free him/herself from her/his past and needs to find channels not only into a precious past, but also, and perhaps more importantly, into a meaningful present and a promising future in the migration society.

Living with the Past

Most of the language learners at the BAE study the Swedish language while they have to deal with a diasporic condition, within which they are positioned particularly during their first years after migration. This diasporic condition, in terms of disconnection from the home country and the familiar life-world, leads to a romanticization of the home country. Despite the fact that most of the participants have made a conscious decision to leave their

home countries with the purpose of finding a better life in Sweden, they have a romantic picture of the home country and constantly dream of going back. The strong feelings for the home country place the participants between 'two worlds': the world of the home country and the world of the migration country. Constant feelings of ambivalence and ambiguity dominate most of the participants' everyday life. This kind of ambiguity interferes with the ability to concentrate on learning the language of the migration society.

Due to the fact that the language learners must build a new social existence, along with the fact that most of the knowledge that they possessed before migration is no longer of any use in Sweden, they feel displaced. The language learners' longing for the home country is partly related to their perception that they were more competent persons in their home countries. Here habitus and symbolic capital play a crucial role in understanding the experiences of the participants. Based on the narrative of most of the participants and the belief that habitus is a system of dispositions that allow people to act, think, and orient themselves in the social world (Broady 1998, p. 2), one realizes that the position of the language learners at the BAE and their approach to the issue of language ability are probably built upon their earlier habitus. This habitus, consisting of habits which language learners incorporate into the family and school practices, is the source of their unconscious pattern of behavior. The very idea that language learners at the BAE see their own age, the age of their children, and the situation of their families as hindering features for their personal development, as well as for their language development, indicates the existence of earlier dispositions and values that need to be considered in the context of language development in the migration society.

But the earlier habitus and the dream of going back to the home country are not the only features that influence the participants' engagement in and attitudes towards learning the Swedish language. The participants create and uphold transnational relations and processes which lead to a specific existence, in this study referred to as a diasporic existence. What I have tried to illustrate, using the concept of diasporic existence, is the condition which locates some of the participants physically in the migration country

while they are mentally involved in a series of conducts and feelings anchored in the home country. The earlier ways of living, memories from the past, the need to be constantly updated about events in the home country, and the relations to their countrymen in the migration society, are everyday concerns for most of the participants. These kinds of concerns require a constant closeness to the life before migration, using the mother tongue, and perpetuating ethnic relations. The fundamental aspect here is that these attachments disconnect the participants from the Swedish language. I argue that the recognition of this attachment, as explained by Nina Glick Schiller in the following quotation, is utterly significant in the language learning context:

Even though migrants invest socially, economically, and politically in their new society, they may continue to participate in the daily life of the society from which they emigrated but which they did not abandon. (Glick Schiller 1999, p. 94)

The participants maintain their relation to the home country via contacts with countrymen, watching parabola TV, reading newspapers written in their native language, etc. In other words, the maintenance of transnational relations is realized by constructing a field of social capital, which helps the participants to create meaning. Upholding relations to two worlds reinforces, in Ingram's words, the *habitus* tug, which "implies a plurality of dispositions" (Ingram 2011, p. 293), that is to say, the social dispositions existing in the migration society and the social dispositions existing in the society of origin. The plurality of dispositions locates the participants within the field of constant ambivalence and ambiguity with regard to their mental state and decision-making in the new society, such as considering the worth of language proficiency and investing in it. The confrontation between the participants' earlier *habitus* and the *habitus* of the migration society, accentuates, above all, the effects of transnational processes on language development (see also Szanton et al. 1995, p. 684).

The Loss of Symbolic Honor

Some of the participants at the BAE witness a loss of personal identity, in the sense that they refer to the person they were before migrating to Sweden and to the emergence of feelings that they cannot be the same person any longer. Suddenly, they find themselves in a society where their knowledge becomes useless and where they, as adults, have to sit at a desk and learn a new language, while they, in their own opinion, should be doing more purposeful things and live a life based on their already acquired capabilities; they do, in fact, long for the kind of life they had in their past. I argue that in understanding what the participants try to mediate we are helped by looking at Bourdieu's concept of symbolic capital. I choose to give the concept a significant status, because it encompasses everything that is recognized by a social group, for example, status, prestige, the right sense of self in a collective context, power, economic welfare and how this welfare can be used in different social contexts (Bourdieu 1990, pp. 112-19). This aspect seems to be vital for most of the participants, since they convey the attitude that they should be able to live a life worthy of them and to be recognized for what they are. As an adult, it is a burden not to be able to use the language of the migration society and to sit in a classroom and struggle to learn the new language, and about the new society, with little success. In his study *The Sentiment of Honour in Kabyle Society* (1965) Bourdieu problematized the complicated system of the sense of honor which invisibly organizes the life of the farmers in Kabyle society. Most of the social conduct in Kabyle society (besides having an economic purpose) had to do with the sense of honor. Here I am not at all trying to compare Kabyle people with the participants in my study, but rather to illustrate that the sense of honor and symbolic power portrayed in Bourdieu's study can explain the narratives of the participants in certain situations. As elaborated by Broady, based on Bourdieu's work, just as it was important for the Kabyle people to prove their possession of symbolic capital, it is also vital for the participants to be recognized as proud adult migrants with a life history worth being recognized.

While all of the participants come from societies that cannot be compared with the society of the Kabyle people in terms of modernity, the participants' efforts in perpetuating their honor and dignity is reminiscent of a struggle for recognition. It seems that this struggle for recognition of one's symbolic capital encourages some of the participants to get close to groups of countrymen who construct communities of belonging that can set norms, build opinions, or perpetuate and reinforce the old norms of the society of origin. More specifically, at the same time as the ethnic group receives the 'authority' to construct belongingness, it also develops the power to include and exclude by recognition and misrecognition. Here the influence of the ethnic group relations can, over time, obtain the same status as that represented by the Kabyle clan:

In groups whose members are well-known to each other, such as the Kabyle clan or village, the control of public opinion is exercised at every moment, and community feeling is experienced with the highest possible intensity . . . everybody knows everybody, condemned without the possibility of escape or relief to live with others, beneath the gaze of others . . . thus the fascinated attention paid to the conduct of others, coupled with the almost haunting preoccupation with their judgment, render unthinkable or despicable any attempt to free oneself from the dictates of honour. (Bourdieu 1974, p. 212)

For most of the participants, it is the striving for a sense of honor, and the question of whether they are able to preserve or be equal to the familiar sense of honor, which determine the quality of their attitudes and efforts in learning the language. Sitting in a classroom as adults and struggling to learn a totally strange language, surrounded by more or less unknown norms for achieving success, the participants are reminded that the capital they possess no longer helps them to preserve or achieve a satisfying sense of self. What second language teaching offers does not correspond to what is perceived by some of the participants as honorable and motivating. School, classrooms, and teaching contexts do not confirm what, in the eyes of the participants (or the ethnic group), counts as self-

accomplishment with dignity and honor. This can, partly, explain why some of the participants want or choose to ‘work on their own’ without possessing sufficient second language ability; working provides more pride, recognition, and symbolic honor than sitting in a classroom. Consequently, one of the major shortcomings with regard to the attitude to second language underachievement is the lack of understanding of the role of the language learners’ symbolic capital within the context of language learning and how it can be compensated for pedagogically.

It is important to emphasize that when habitus, in terms of people’s systems of dispositions which help them to think, act, and orient themselves, is internalized, it becomes symbolic capital (Broady 1991, intro). Building upon this definition of symbolic capital, what happens in learning and communication situations is that the participants’ knowledge, in terms of how to think, perceive and do things, suddenly no longer counts as recognized capital. The ability to make ‘perfect’ conversation, to read a newspaper in the mother tongue, to take care of a family, to negotiate social rules, etc., does not provide social recognition in the Swedish society.

Symbolic capital was used by Bourdieu to capture the relationship between institutions and people and to:

/.../explain the ways in which capitals are perceived in the social structure e.g. the status value attached to certain books, values, and/or places of learning. In relation to capitals, it should be noted that all forms (*economic, social, cultural, and symbolic* categories) are the key factors that define positions and possibilities for individuals engaged in any field (in our case, education). (O’Brien & Ó Fathaigh 2004, p. 9)

It is the nature of symbolic capital to be able to define positions and opportunities, which is crucial in the case of the participants of this study. To understand why people want to perpetuate the value of their earlier acquired knowledge and the value of their earlier investments (Broady 1991, p.7) helps to understand their sense of motivation. The participants argue with themselves about whether

sitting in a classroom and learning the Swedish language can provide valuable positions and opportunities, or whether they should be loyal to what they possess in terms of recognized symbolic capital and depend on that. The result of this study indicates that the participants believe that the Swedish language competency can provide some of the symbolic capital's main components, such as prestige, authority, knowledge, reputation, etc., but nevertheless learning and communicating well in the language in different contexts can be a difficult social conduct inside and outside the classroom. The issue of making the Swedish language worth fighting for and investing in for the individual migrant deserves more attention. I will come back to this issue later.

The Meaning of the Everyday Life-World Context

At a first glance it might appear as if it is the home countries' constant existence in the daily lives of the participants that is the cause of their language underachievement and communicative difficulties, but the real problem actually involves what kind of social reality the participants' past mediates, compared with the social reality that the host society/school offers. Part of the ambiguity that characterizes the participants' life decisions after migration, and how they experience their social environment, is shaped by an 'unconscious competition' between host and home country; between the participants' present life and earlier life, between the society of origin and the migration society, and between the habitus appreciated in the home country and those appreciated in the migration society in general. As an example, the distribution of information should be mentioned. Most of the participants watch cable TV with programs from their home countries. As a result, information given by Swedish television has an inferior status, since the participants choose to be informed not only about news but also about other aspects of social life through cable TV. It means that the social information, norms, and values of the home country continue to compete with those of the migration society.

Despite the fact that they have chosen to migrate to another country, some of the participants preserve an attachment to their past and their home countries, because they represent a more rec-

ognizable content. Consequently, the participants at the BAE exist and operate in a social room where, generally speaking, how they perceive an 'ideal life' confronts how an ideal life is perceived by the majority and by school in the migration society. As acquiring language ability, and finding a meaningful life in Sweden through the Swedish language and social interaction, becomes a challenge, the participants seek to find meaningfulness by using other channels than those recognized by the migration society.

What the participants seek, in the first place, is a habitual familiarity embedded in their past. Reaching this familiarity is difficult, because of, among other things, the lack of language ability and different perceptions of a series of social and cultural dispositions during the first period after migration. Most of the participants miss the sense of having control over their situation, both in terms of how to interpret a new society based on earlier knowledge and in terms of using strategies that can lead them to a meaningful existence. Bourdieu's explanation of symbolic assets, such as memories of the past that are stored in people's bodies, is reflected by how many of the participants see their past as a former security map which no longer can show the road to mental and social stability. The symbolic capital, in the form of habitus, knowledge and the social arrangements that the participants were so familiar with, is no longer useful; they can feel alienated in and outside the classroom. Here one can speak of loss of a familiar life-world. This loss makes it harder for the participants to "under experiential conditions navigate and position themselves in time and space" (Costello 249). This loss of life-world erases the participants' uniqueness, and it questions their "private enterprise", feelings, and instincts (see Ashmore 1969, p. 56).

Another problem is that, even if some of the participants believe that learning about the Swedish cultural and social dispositions could help them, achieving this purpose feels like an abstract conduct outside the participants' current social reality. Secondly, according to some of the participants, it is not worthwhile learning the language and the social norms of the migration society because it will not change anything. Investing in the Swedish language consequently becomes an investment that might not result in any bene-

fits or recognition. Furthermore, the issue of how their countrymen might transfer their own negative thoughts about the uselessness of Swedish language ability in finding a good job and a better life, and the consequences of such behavior, should be investigated further.

Many of the participants express a loss of pride and the feeling that at their age they should have a proper life and not sit in a classroom. In particular, the male participants suffer from the loss of professional identity; their eagerness to be a productive part of society makes it difficult for them to realize the importance of language ability if they are to enter their desired life. They become impatient, and the dream of going back becomes a substitute for what is missing in their life in the migration society.

Can the Life-World Have a Meaning for Language Learning and Language Use?

One aspect of the life-world is that people need to “put things in order”, because otherwise the taken-for-grantedness of life will be contested. This means that the life-world encompasses the idea of continuity and that “a shift of structure in the consciousness” can lead to a situation where “the individual becomes involved in a struggle to explicate the experience, to typify” (Meisenhelder 1979, p. 24). For most of the participants, the scenery of life in the migration society is not the same as before migration. Putting things in order and understanding new experiences in the migration society requires multiple actions, in terms of learning a second language, speaking the language, meeting and understanding significant people surrounding them, upholding relations to the home country, etc. The structure of life is usually taken as constant, and, when they are valid, previous experiences can be a ground for actions, and the individual can say “I can always do it again” (Schutz & Luckmann 1973, p. 7). In line with this perception, I argue that the participants in many cases must face different structures of life and reality and cannot say “I can always do it again”. This means that, as is evident in the empirical material, different strategies must be considered in a new manner when dealing with everyday life issues. These strategies are not only considered in relation to the majority,

but also in relation to the migrant's own ethnic group. For the participants it means a constant hovering between different spheres, each of which requires its own rules for playing the game. It is here that the concept of part-time members of small life-worlds becomes interesting. What is new in this understanding is that these small worlds, and people's participation in them, are restricted, which leads to the idea that the participants are part-time members of small life-worlds and that, consequently, their complete membership becomes a blurred subject. "The multi-world existence of modern man" (in this context the migrants/the participants) needs constant changing. The illustration of the modern man as constantly moving from one world to another, as I see it, also explains migrants' move between worlds and how they are met by different expectations, as they must play different roles. They are subject to different influences and belong to "different realms of meaning". The participants must pursue different goals and target different "good" accomplishments. Depending on which different social groupings they associate with, their efforts require different ways of organizing and doing things. But most importantly, they must, in the same way as the modern man in the context of small life-worlds, satisfy different needs (Luckmann 1970, p. 590). All these dimensions, as I see it, connect to the issue of identity formation after migration and its consequences for language development and communicative interaction/competence. In this context, the researcher Helma Lutz refers to the influential book by the journalist Eva Hoffman, *Lost in Translation*, published in 1989, and presents some fundamental ideas about language development in migration societies. She uses the concept of linguistic identity and, referring to Hoffman's subtitle (*A Life in a New Language*), argues that learning a new language in the migration society is associated with a "life' in a new language". One of the aspects of dealing with a new life (seen from the participants' perspective, too) is that "living in a new language is a precarious process in which a migrant is not only forced into language learning but also has to subordinate himself or herself to things that are alien and alienating. He or she is forced to get rid of an old identity and acquire a new one" (Lutz

2011, p. 348). Lutz highlights what can be called an intellectualization of second language learning:

Hoffman's reaction led me, as a sociologist, critically to examine whether language acquisition is just an instrumental process in which one learns to function in a new country or actually results in a deformation of the self. Does the acquisition of different cultural codes necessarily entail subjugation, or can it also be experienced as a creative space in the process of identity reconstruction? (Lutz 2011, pp. 348, 349)

Language learning, and using a language, is much more than knowing and using words, phrases, and grammar. The participants of this study undergo a process of psychological adaptation (see also Isurin 2011, p. 204). Language, being an apparatus that holds individuals together in a society, as well as being the strongest unit in our identity, plays a crucial role in our lives. Through what we say, we emerge in a sphere where we, like actors, play culturally defined roles. "The apparent connection between changing languages and changing identities helps to illuminate the individual and social factors that make up one's sense of self" (Johnston 1999, pp. 7, 8). Given this context, the understanding of migrants' life-worlds is vital in understanding the process of second language learning after migration. Life-worlds provide people with psychological significances in terms of forming platforms where identities are "constructed by situated actions" (Eberle 2012, p. 290). The more these situated actions feel comfortable and including, the more fruitful communicative and learning environments become. The more the participants can understand the changes in their life and make sense of their existence in the migration society, the more they become motivated to be a part of society and learn its language. Ambiguities and in-betweenness regarding the part-time memberships lead to an unrewarding position, which makes the participants keep dreaming about a simpler life in, and a return to, the home country. The dream of returning is a substitute for a fragmented social existence and gives hopes of an everyday life-world with less challenging adjustments.

Motivation as Related to the Learners' Life-World⁶³

In previous sections, I have been trying to illustrate in what way the concepts of life-worlds and habitus can help in understanding the psychological and sociocultural platform within which Swedish is taught, learned and used as a second language.

The findings of this study indicate that the effects of social, cultural, and historical facts should not be exaggerated, because, as argued by Vygotsky, at the same time as the mind of the language learner cannot be seen as independent from the sociocultural group, the individual has the ability to generate personal understanding and should be given the opportunity to "stand above the social collective" (Liu & Matthews 2005, p. 392). Here, the individual development is seen both as a conduct rooted in historical, cultural, and social influences and as the individual ability to stand above the social collective. Knowledge construction is, accordingly, a result of the situations in which the learners are located (Liu & Matthews 2005, p. 392). This aspect becomes evident when the participants, despite longing for their home country and for recognition from their own ethnic group, clearly took different actions when dealing with the most vital issues of their everyday lives. This is a result of the quality of the life-world they had before migrating to Sweden and the quality of the life-world they will eventually develop in Sweden. For example, Farida, who was a teacher in her home country, cannot give up on language ability, and she struggles with the idea of how to achieve her goals, while Salima, who had no professional identity in her home country, sees her situation as rather hopeless and uncertain. Here the attitudes, and the motivation to accomplish something, vary between Farida and Salima.

The male participants, in general, find it difficult to believe that they can have the chance of becoming confident professionals by learning the language; they believe that the way to employment satisfaction is paved with many social difficulties. Nor, who has been brought up in a family with high expectations with regard to high-

⁶³ One way to explain the term life-world as it is used in this study is to emphasize what surrounds the participants: "The life-world with which ordinary people in their everyday living have direct contact. /.../ The life world is accordingly a world of perception" (Yu 1999, p. 159).

er education, sees her educational and employment achievements as most vital. What I am trying to say here is that the participants' need for their ethnic network, their feelings of displacement, and their strategic thinking in dealing with life and the Swedish language, can be individually characterized, even if their strategies (as I will explain later) might have some similarities. This means that it is crucial to underline the fact that motivation and knowledge construction, among other factors, also depend on where the participants are positioned mentally, socially, and cognitively.

In this context even issues related to diaspora become significant, in the sense that we need to understand in what way and to what extent "questions of 'home', 'place', 'belonging' and 'identity' generate perspectives on how they are constituted" (Faist 2010, p. 27) and what meaning the generated perspectives have for the motivational factor.

What's In It for the Participants?

The participants constantly struggle and calculate in order to know how to build a meaningful life. What they think and how they act is based on the notion of *what's in it for me*. Is it worth sitting in the classroom? Is it worth doing an internship in a place one or two hours from home? Is it worth living in Sweden even if you cannot work as you did before, as, for example, a teacher, a lawyer, a media worker, or a goldsmith? At the beginning, migrating to Sweden was, for the participants, an action aimed at finding a safe life, but it has eventually also become an investment both in their own wellbeing and in that of their family. Therefore, learning the language of the migration country becomes an investment as well. What makes the investment worthwhile for the participants is a) the feedback they receive or imagine that they will receive from society, and b) the conditions they live under. Individuals define their situation within their own sociocultural setting and decide how to invest in that situation (Syed 2001, p. 128). So, in connecting with second language learning as a social process the question raised by McGroarty (2001, p. 77) becomes central: "What makes life in classrooms worthwhile for participants?"

How the participants choose to invest in the Swedish language depends on a series of other facts as well. Learners' academic interest, their ambition with regard to acquiring a certain level of competence, their personal goals, earlier experiences of learning a language, and their feelings toward Swedes, have a huge impact on their motivation to learn the second language (Ushioda 2001, p. 102). Therefore, schools have to create forums where language learners can discuss and problematize their background, their goals, and their attitudes towards the migration society and its language. They need to understand their own unique position and how they can organize their life based on their own goals and their understanding of the migration society. How language learners think and what they say need to be taken seriously. Most of the participants in this study are not aware of, or are not invited to discuss, some major problems that have a huge impact on their motivation. The pre-existing attitudes mediated by the social networks to the participants are not problematized together with the language learners at the BAE. Regarding the students at Malmö University, they never had the opportunity to discuss similar matters when they studied SFI, which partly explains why they still make assumptions about the Swedes and their norms, and about how they themselves are understood as migrants.

Some of the participants see their success as related to coming close to the Swedish system and acquiring skills needed to blend in. Other participants believe that irrespective of language ability they cannot get a good job and be integrated. Furthermore, some of the participants believe that they will always be categorized as second rate citizens with less opportunity to become members of society. Some refer to their friends and relatives and explain that they will have the same destiny as they, namely, not getting a good job and being excluded from society. Some of the participants perceive Swedes as a dominant group who try to impose their norms, cultures, and way of living. The feeling of otherness is strengthened as a result of hearing anecdotes about discrimination and about the hopelessness of the future. Most of the participants believe totally in the importance of language ability, but at the same time they cannot see the language as their pathway to a realized integration

and to self-accomplishments. Among other factors, the lack of emotional identification with the host society, and a favourable attitude towards one's own language community, decrease the motivation to invest in the Swedish language and communicate in it. This situation becomes rather paradoxical. While all of the participants agree that Swedish language ability is extremely important, many of them do not make strong efforts to learn the language. The reason, again, can be rooted in the idea that they, unconsciously, do not perceive the Swedish language as the main key to wellbeing and self-realization in Swedish society. Here, each of the participants has their own reason for how they 'treat' the Swedish language and Swedish society. So, motivation becomes "a property of the language learner – a fixed personality trait" (Norton 1995, p. 17). Therefore, a move from the concept of motivation to the concept of investment is necessary, because the notion of investment makes it possible to understand the language learners' relation to a changing social world (*ibid.*, p. 17). Here the very concept of identity negotiation in the context of the motivation to use a second language needs to be considered seriously. Identity negotiation and language use are interrelated, or, as explained by Norton:

The notion presupposes that when language learners speak, they are not only exchanging information with target language speakers but they are constantly organizing and reorganizing a sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world. Thus an investment in the target language is also an investment in a learner's own social identity, an identity which is constantly changing across time and space. (*ibid.*, pp. 17, 18)

In the context of motivation for and investment in language, the concept of life-world can be useful, in the sense that people's everyday life is constructed around themselves and their interests. As asserted by Meisenhelder, "[m]y own 'here and now' is the center coordinates of my life-world". Within our "spatial and temporal zones of personal relevancy" we find what is interesting for us, and what is interesting for us embodies our knowledge and our previous interests. We constantly live with a conscious attention di-

rected at ourselves that is rooted in our pragmatic interests (Meisenhelder 1979, p. 23). In this way, our life-world helps us to understand our everyday existence and those conditions we are situated in (*ibid.*, p. 23).

As members in small life-worlds, the participants try to create new life-worlds, and to organize these life-worlds so that they fit their authentic personalities in a meaningful way. The participants, having an egocentric interest in their own welfare, are attached to the small world clusters of existence and need a sense of stability (see Luckmann 1970, pp. 590-591). What provides this kind of stability (even if imagined) becomes the source of motivation.

In coming to an end, the most vital statement of this section, in line with Bonny Norton's idea, is that we need to move from motivation to investment. The reason is that the use of the concept of motivation cannot provide an understanding of "the complex relationship between relations of power, identity, and language learning" (Norton 1995, p. 17). Language learners invest in a language not only in order to be able to produce sentences, but also to "increase the value of their cultural capital. Learners will expect or hope to have a good return on that investment – a return that will give them access to hitherto unattainable resources" (*ibid.*). Investment in a second language is, just as much as it is an investment in a new better life, an investment in becoming a recognized person in the migration society.

The Role of the 'Significant Others'

The conversations and interviews with the participants indicate several crucial dimensions with regard to what affects the participants' motivation in their efforts to learn and communicate in a new language. The first dimension involves the participants' attitude towards Swedish language ability as a useful tool. Here it can be noticed that having a job is perceived as a facilitating mechanism in order to become better at speaking Swedish. In other words, according to some of the participants, it is the job that leads to better language skills and not language skills per se that lead to finding a good job. For most of the participants it was crucial to emphasize that they were looking for "good jobs", which meant

finding either a job that they were trained for or a job that could provide a sense of pride and self-accomplishment. Hence, it could be concluded that the attitude that language ability does not necessarily end in finding a good job is not helpful, seen from a motivation perspective.

Another dimension that impacts some of the participants' motivation is that these participants have 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 and demonstrate the influence of ethnic relations. This reliance on *what has happened to my countrymen in Sweden* becomes a frame of reference. The social capital in its institutionalized form provides access to a "durable network" and "mutual acquaintance and recognition". But what is vital is that social capital involves obligations, trust, and building short and long term social relationships (Bourdieu 1986, p. 249). In the participants' case, the social capital is an apparatus for the construction of a missed and precious sense of belonging and trust. Thus, what is said within this collective sphere characterized by solidarity and understanding becomes the true word. Here, the experiences of their countrymen and what they say influence the newly arrived migrants' attitudes towards the migration society and second language ability. It seems that the participants see the input from other migrants around them, whom they have a relation to, as valuable support. Other migrants, who have lived in Sweden longer than the participants, attempt, based on imaginary perceptions or true experiences, to protect the participants (their friends and countrymen) from future disappointments.

In this context, it is relevant to stress that what gives social capital a specific importance is that it cannot be stored in material assets in the form of texts, institutions, theories, degrees, and titles. Social capital is about bonds between people, about being a member and benefiting from the knowledge and the support which exist within a specific group (Broady 1991, p. 128). For most of the participants, the access to social networks is a non-formal way of getting control over their situation in the migration country. Since social networks can be seen as associated with social movement, they

challenge the existing social conditions; this requires an understanding of social networks at a deeper level (Poros 2008, p. 1612). The participants often refer to their relatives and friends in explaining what happens in their life now and what might happen in the future, which means that the knowledge constructed by social networks plays a crucial role. The ambiguous feelings with regard to the future and the reliance on social networks in discovering the new society might, in some cases, have negative effects on the motivation to invest in the Swedish language or communicating in Swedish. The formation of social capital, and its existence in terms of ethnic relations and ethnic social networks, replaces, even if only temporarily, the function and usefulness of the Swedish language.

When immigrants arrive in a new country they have limited language skills and therefore “many immigrants move close to their own countrymen in order to take advantage of the informal networks of friends, relatives and acquaintances and be able to be a part of the ethnic enclave. The enclaves provide a means for costless communication, labour market opportunities and transportation” (Beckhusen et al. 2012, p. 2). What a network offers is a common language that facilitates social interaction, lessens information barriers, and helps in finding a job and achieving economic success in the new country. In such situations the migrant’s first language plays a crucial role. At the same time it must be noted that language proficiency has different meanings for different groups of migrants (*ibid.* see also Borjas 1998; Chiswick & Miller 1996, Chiswick et al. 2002). Although it is beyond the scope of the present study to investigate the construction and importance of social networks, it is essential to discuss the causing factors that encourage the need for a social network, because of its significance for the motivation and the need to engage in the language of, and come close to, the migration society.

What can be discussed further in this context is the participants’ ‘unawareness’ about the importance of language ability. It seems that they underestimate the symbolic power embedded in language ability⁶⁴ (here Swedish language ability), which they need in order

⁶⁴ Symbolic power, as I use it here, refers to the participants’ reflection on the great importance of what language use can enable us to accomplish. In the same way, Bourdieu argues that: “Symbolic

to achieve their goals. Most of the participants are aware that their earlier habitus and capital, in terms of capabilities, degrees, and assets, are not recognized in the same way as in their home country and perhaps they need to require a new set of capital (for example, knowledge about how the migration society functions and what kind of knowledge is appreciated in that specific society). But the participants cannot give up on their earlier capital and they struggle to find other complementary channels that split their habitus. In this way they try to perpetuate their relation to their home country, their mother tongue, and to other migrants and countrymen, at the same time as they try to find ways into the Swedish society. But the present study indicates that while trying to find ways into the Swedish society by using the Swedish language, the participants face a series of challenges. The greatest challenge for the participants is to be recognized for what they are. The struggle for recognition leads to disappointment, feelings of displacement, and a reduced motivation; in some cases it leads to longing for the home country where one's capabilities were recognized and life was simpler. The participants try to maintain the worth of their earlier capital and habitus and unconsciously try to preserve what they possess in terms of knowledge and find a position based on that.

Bourdieu's use of concepts such as strategy, interest, investment, and profit (Broady 1998, p. 2) is useful in this context, as the empirical material illustrates how most of the participants consider different strategies, show different interests, invest differently, and target different profits in trying to find a meaningful life that harmonizes their habitus and capital. For some of them, by blending into the Swedish mainstream, they hope to get a good job, while for others having their children in Sweden and hoping that they will achieve a purposeful future is the biggest profit. Generally speaking, the latter group ignores their own personal growth if living in Sweden benefits their children. While some consider moving back and getting their capital and habitus recognized in their home

power is the power to make things with words. It is only if it is true, that is, adequate to things, that description makes things. In this sense, *symbolic power is a power of consecration or revelation*, the power to consecrate or to reveal things that are already there" (Bourdieu 1989, p. 23).

countries, others see Sweden as a better alternative and show an interest in learning the 'Swedish values' and the Swedish language.

Different kinds of 'significant others' influence the participants' attitudes and the decisions they make. The children and their future, the opinions of one's own ethnic group in Sweden, people and relatives left behind in the home country, and, finally, the majority population, all have a great impact on the participants' thinking and how they organize their lives. The participants' existence becomes, consequently, more complicated and less autonomous. At times they feel displaced and dream of things being like they once were, namely, 'simple' and familiar. These thoughts partly motivate the idea of going back and consequently reduce the motivation to invest in Swedish language training. At the same time the participants can live many years in Sweden and still maintain their dream of going back, while never actually returning. What is most significant here is that as long as the participants experience in-betweenness and consider moving from Sweden, the chances and the motivation for learning the language and interacting with the host society can be restricted or affected negatively. The empirical material demonstrates that those with a habitus closer to the Swedish system, or more interest in it, find it easier to blend in and learn the language.

The lack of motivation for learning the language can be explained by yet another issue. Ethnic concentration, closeness to one's own group, and maintaining loyalty with one's own group and the home country, can lead to lacking language ability. Language ability can be perceived as a threat to ethnic identity. Being loyal towards one's own group and towards the home country sometimes conflicts with the idea of a migrant who speaks fluent Swedish or 'behaves like a Swede'. In the migration context, this idea of loyalty requires a close contact with one's own ethnic group. This kind of contact, and, in some cases, a physical closeness to one's own ethnic group in terms of residence, means a reduced need for the Swedish language. Here it is essential to refer to Bauer et al.'s study, which indicates that there is a correlation between areas with a high concentration of migrants of the same native origins and less language ability, while in communities with

smaller concentrations of one's own ethnic groups migrants become more fluent speakers of the second language. On the other hand, we have to ask the question to what extent the existence of an ethnic group plays a role in having access to a useful social capital, something that is perhaps a necessary feature at a particular moment in a migrant's life. As argued by Coleman, social capital is the source of useful everyday information that makes it easier for the migrants to know how to act. In this way, having access to social capital is essential, because it provides self-identity, confidence in speaking one's opinion, and emotional intelligence (Coleman 1988, pp.104–105).

From what the participants say, the need to be close to one's own group and language becomes the marker of one's real identity. The closeness to one's own ethnic group, to the home country and the original language become inevitable. For example, satellite television helps the participants preserve their bonds to their home countries and maintain language skills in their languages of origin. What the participants express indicates that people who do not want to be attached to their past, their home countries or ethnic groups can be perceived as traitors. Many of the participants do not want to be considered as traitors who have forgotten where they come from. Here a collectively organized establishment preserves the symbolic power of the group as the key to honor and autonomy. Suffice it to say that this process nurtures itself on the social capital that the participants have access to; this kind of social capital lays the foundation of a self-regulating familiar world which exists within the Swedish world and operates as a guideline to an alternative life in Sweden.

The fact that the participants, in maintaining their ethnic and transnational relationships, do not seem to need the Swedish language might have a negative effect on the motivation for and attitudes towards learning the language of the migration society. One might say that there is an invisible competition between the migration society and the environment to which many of the participants have a practical and emotional relationship. Generally speaking, there is a risk that as long as the participants find it easier to find information and perform certain things with the help of their social

network, they cannot, using Bourdieu's words, learn to play the game and gain entry to the field where the game is played, in order to increase their capital and to be able to alter the intrinsic rules of the game (Bourdieu & Wacquant 2007, p. 99). Playing the game here refers to the rules of entering a certain social field in order to be able to play its games. Individuals' possession of a certain capital provides them with the ability to play the game, but they must also be interested in playing and motivated to play the game. Bourdieu called this interest 'illusion', which is about taking and playing the game seriously; it is about believing in the game and believing that it is worth playing (Bourdieu 1998a, pp. 76-77). The question, consequently, becomes: do we need more knowledge and awareness about to what degree adult migrants reflect upon their language and communicative ability as the key to enter the migration society and about what they see as obstacles to achieve this entrance?

Concluding Remarks

- Adult migrants often, at least during the first years after migration, maintain an emotional attachment to their home countries and seek contact with their own and other familiar ethnic groups in Sweden. This might affect their attitudes towards, and the need and motivation for learning, the Swedish language.
- How the participants think and act can partly be influenced by their earlier habitus and the sense of maintaining their honor. The confrontation between the participants' earlier habitus and the existing dispositions in Swedish society leads to feelings of displacement, duality, and otherness.
- It is vital to understand the role of language learners' need for symbolic capital within the context of language learning, and how language learners' loss of symbolic capital (honor and dignity) should be compensated for pedagogically.
- Motivation, in the case of the participants of this study, is about finding benefit in investing in something which seems to be achievable and can end in favourable circumstances. The educational system needs, at an early stage, to communicate

with language learners about learners' needs, their expectations, and the role of motivation in relation to adult migrants' social reality.

- The negative input made by other migrants about language learners' future in Sweden should be compensated for by having a dialogue with language learners, or providing the opportunities to problematize this issue in groups in classrooms.
- Taking migrants' interests into consideration, and implementing motivational research outcomes in the teaching contexts, could be a fruitful way of motivating the language learners.
- When ethnic relations, ethnic social networks, and receiving information in one's mother tongue, get a dominant role, there is a risk that the motivation for learning and using the Swedish language will decrease. Therefore, the educational system needs to implement methods which can help the participants to problematize and recognize this risk.
- Adult migrants' understanding of their own role and desires in the context of second language development should be considered in a teaching context.

The Participants' Sociocultural Experiences of Communicating in the Swedish Language

What are the sociocultural experiences of the participants with respect to using the Swedish language through communicative interaction?

The Construction of the Other and Its Meaning for Language and Communication

The empirical material indicates that the communication strategies used by the participants are formed based on their subjective experiences of what surrounds them. Some of the participants, both at the BAE and at Malmö University, experience that how they are seen in the classroom, or in other communication situations, is built upon an imaginary cultural understanding of them. The idea of a culturally constructed picture of the participants reinforces their feeling of being the other in communicative settings. The participants believe that they are culturalized in different contexts in

society, and this contradicts their own self-understanding, since some of them actually perceive themselves as ‘Swedes’ and not as the ‘other’, who is a stranger.

Some of the participants consciously make efforts to ‘free’ themselves from presumptions about cultural belongingness, but they experience that it is not easy to be seen as an individual. This construction of the other in classrooms and in other communication settings is more visible for the language learners at the BAE and the students at MU than for the teachers at the BAE or the Swedes whom the participants meet (for example, staff at day care centres and other institutions). The empirical material indicates that the teachers do not reflect upon the possibility that the students’ underachievement might be a result of their experiencing themselves as marginalized, subordinated, confused, and in-between within the school context. The students, as discussed in the study, are not given a democratic chance to influence the teaching context and discuss their experiences in school. Other studies also confirm the importance of students’ experiences with regard to issues related to inclusion and exclusion in educational settings. Foreign students often experience that they are marginalized, silenced, and alienated because “actual practices can be elitist or tokenistic” (Gibson & Carrasco 2009, p. 254).

The lack of a systematic critical discussion between the participants and the significant people around them makes the participants feel vulnerable; they unconsciously interpret their surroundings in terms of ‘us and them’. Many of the participants feel that a) they are taught to acquire the Swedish culture, b) what they do and how they do things is related to their cultural backgrounds, and c) they are criticized for how they do things, because a Swede, in general, would not have done it in the same way.

The feeling of otherness is a result of a constructed alienation, made not only from how the participants interpret the society, institutions, and people around them, but also, directly, by the educational system. As argued by Bourdieu, the classroom teaching incorporates what is out there and appreciated in society into the classroom context. Bourdieu’s incorporation refers to habitus, in terms of dispositions incorporated in people’s bodies that decide

how they think, act, understand, and value different things in determined social contexts. (Broady 1991, p. 162). In the same way, at the BAE, school attempts to integrate the cherished ways of thinking and acting (which they believe are treasured in Swedish society) into the existence of the language learners. What school forgets is that the practical use of habitus is normally acquired over different periods of time and usually begins in childhood. This means that, as discussed in one of Bourdieu's most significant statements, individuals live under specific social conditions because similar conditions have formed them in bodies and souls (Bourdieu 1964, p. 45). So, with this understanding in mind, it is not enough to only examine what is going on in the heads of the language learners, but also what is going on in the heads of teachers and other education authorities, such as those who design the curriculum, study advisors, and principals.

The participants and the teachers who have contact with the participants have their own understandings of what is good. The efforts of school in changing or ignoring what has been built over time, in layers of learned experiences, lead to a misrecognition of the participants; underestimating what the participants already possess in terms of capital is one of the most significant issues in discussing migrants' language and communicative achievements.

During my fieldwork and my conversations with the participants, all of them showed a great interest in telling me about their home countries, their families, their past, and their perception of the Swedish society. This indicates that the participants feel a strong need to express themselves and tell the stories of their lives, that is, to remind others of who they were in the past and who they are today. The state of non-recognition and an unrecognized symbolic capital, the constructed otherness, the perceived expectations from school, institutions and other people around the participants, and the construction of negative attitudes towards communicating in Swedish and coming close to the migration society, all those aspects go side by side.

There is a danger in this scenario. Believing in the statement that cultural capital is what is recognized and valued in the market (Broady 1998, p. 5) indicates not only the uselessness of the partic-

ipants' cultural capital, but also the difficulty of integrating into different sections of a society that is introduced and maintained according to what is recognized by the mainstream. The kind of cultural capital that school and the migration society in general recognize can differ remarkably from the kind of cultural capital that most of the participants possess. The participants' cultural capital is not valued in the migration society and that is why, for some of the participants, being connected to a 'worthless' cultural capital puts a question mark on their existence and their motivation to learn the language and partake actively in the migration society.

As the expectations of school and society become somewhat stereotyped, the participants choose to live with a split habitus in order to master the situation and prove that the majority is wrong about them. This means that, as stated by Bourdieu, there are some invisible barriers in the context of education that are related to learners' social origins and that encourage the individual to reconstruct him/herself in order to be good enough. This, according to Reed-Danahay, involves a socialization process into something one is not born into but needs to learn. For Bourdieu himself it was a matter of a transformation from a rural background into a context of "elite institutions" (Reed-Danahay 2005, p. 38); for adult migrants in this study, generally speaking, it involves a transformation from the familiar social and cultural structures of the society of origin into the unfamiliar social and cultural structure of the migration society. The situation of living with a split habitus and its effects on language development need more attention in an educational context.

The Consequences of Feelings of Otherness

Bourdieu speaks of the social heritage that can, for example, explain the educational achievement or underachievement of individuals (Bourdieu 1995, p. 23). I believe that in the same way the term cultural heritage can be used to explain the participants' underachievement with regard to language learning and their feeling of otherness in communication situations. Some of the participants experience that school and other people and institutions culturize them and make assumptions about them. The participants see this

as disturbing, as hindering, and as constructing otherness. The paradox here is that at the same time as the participants blame the 'majority' for attributing a cultural identity to them, some of the participants themselves affirm cultural belongingness and try to preserve their cultural identity. The classroom observations and interviews indicate that the reason for preserving cultural belongingness lies in the very need for belonging, recognition, and having access to a social platform where one's symbolic capital can be acknowledged. By being close to people from their home countries or other migrants with similar experiences, some of the participants become individuals in a group, take positions, build cultural or economic capital, and construct networks which represent a particular kind of access, namely, the social capital that all members of the group can benefit from (Broady 1991, p. 128).

Expecting that the participants will behave in certain ways because of their culture degrades their efforts to acquire a new form of cultural capital that is appreciated in school and in Swedish society. Here, the efforts of school and of society in replacing what they believe to be the participants' cultural heritage contributes to turning them into 'the other', something which is devastating with regard to attitudes towards and motivation for learning and communicating in the language.

Since the recognized and respected cultural capital gives a head start in terms of getting the opportunity to receive information about how to benefit from different social fields, the majority of the participants will automatically be at a disadvantage by not being recognized as possessing the same kind of valued capital as the majority. And since they will not be recognized as having the treasured knowledge and experiences, they will be placed in a subordinated position. Here, talking about the cultural heritage in the same way that Bourdieu speaks of social heritage constructs the picture of an unchangeable baggage that people carry their whole lives (Broady 1991, p. 127). According to the participants' experiences, culture becomes a static part of their life against their will.

In such cases, the participants' acceptance of certain cultural beliefs and norms inherited from the home country, whether they really believe in them or not, is the key to membership and provides

the great advantage of having access to a kind of social network that can facilitate the diasporic life in the migration country. The participants' need for cultural affiliation, which per se reinforces the existence and maintenance of the ethnic social networks, is another step towards the autonomy of the migrant groups and their 'freedom' from the migration society. The participants, by agreeing about a cultural identity which makes them into a group, gain access to a world of opportunities and cultural affiliations that become useful tools. By maintaining their cultural identity, the participants receive recognition; they can have access to the group and the information existing within the group. The group also provides a platform for social events. The construction of this kind of social capital (within the ethnic/migrant groups) leads to the fact that the Swedish language will be used less and will not be the significant tool for coming close to a society that one cannot do without.

The need to have meaningful relations outside the classroom creates emotionally and culturally connected migrants. They ignore some of the differences that separate them only if they can have access to a group that, in general, share their new situation after migration to Sweden. The participants construct a shelter built upon a collective category, which unites them outside the home country. However, this collective category nurtures itself, unconsciously, on the idea of creating a safe society with a recognizable structure. On the other hand, knowledge about the Swedish language and the migration society becomes subordinated to the idea of benefiting from the social capital available within the ethnic groups.

This collectively produced phenomenon, in terms of the construction of a society within the Swedish society, creates a social room where communication occurs according to the terms of the participants. In these social rooms, maintained by the power of the society within the society, other languages than the Swedish language solve problems and other forms of communities are discussed, created, and maintained. The society within the society gets its strength when the participants gather together with their friends, for example, in libraries, and read the newspapers of their home countries, when they gather and arrange lunch meetings, when they choose to seek a doctor who speaks their language,

when they seek contact with other ethnic groups in finding schools for their children, when they seek information about the Swedish society through their social network, when they watch parabola TV and listen to local radios, when they buy tickets for travelling or groceries, etc. In these social rooms, the attitudes towards the majority society and its culture are formed, as opposed to their own constructed and collectively produced 'miniature society'. The participants develop positive attitudes towards the culture, the collective construction, and the language that are easier to understand and easier to be part of, and that attract them in a less complicated way.

Seeing things from another perspective, the feelings of being an outsider in a communication situation cannot be blamed only on school and society. Most of the participants' subordination in communicative situations also depends on not having the Swedish language as their mother tongue and therefore not possessing the feel that one has for a language which has been learned from early days. Some of the participants refer to unwritten communication codes which are difficult to learn. They mean that Swedes have the advantage of speaking a language they know in a society they have knowledge about and have access to. One could say that the participants speak of a kind of communicative habitus, which involves knowledge about the kind of collective communicative awareness that exists in all societies. In this context, Swedes' collective awareness about how to communicate and use the Swedish language in different situations (learned throughout an entire life) is, as stated by Bourdieu, a kind of capital which involves a social relation, that is, a social energy that exists in a field where it is produced and reproduced. This kind of capital needs to be understood in its particular social context (field), where it is accumulated, transferred, and operated according to a series of various preferences and knowledge about specific fields in which the capital is practiced (see Bourdieu 1994, p. 226). This means that due to the lack of this collective awareness, the participants constantly need to evaluate the communication situations, problematize them, use strategies, and make the right decisions. This is a time-consuming and challenging task, something that the participants do not need to do

when they communicate with other migrants or with people from their own country. In communicating with one's own ethnic group, the communicative habitus is usually the same, and in communicating with other migrants there is a shared understanding of what it means to be a migrant; this understanding, in general, can facilitate the communication.

Since many of the participants strive to adapt to what they believe to be the Swedish norms and since school assures the existence of these norms, the Swedish norms are given the power of determining the normal behavior, which automatically leads to the participants' culturally and socially learned behavior appearing stereotyped. By giving the Swedish culture the honorable top position, a special kind of 'Swedish-ness' is constructed, and thereby a certain appreciated way of doing things in Sweden determines how significant values should be defined, values such as who is a good citizen, what is just, the meaning of freedom and equality, etc. Notice that how to communicate in and use the Swedish language is constantly influenced by these values. Here it is not only the superior position of the Swedish norms that is the real danger, but also how the participants become a symbol of backwardness; they are portrayed as people in need of being fostered. The "non-modern" migrant becomes marginalized in the shadow of a constructed image.

Different Generations – Same Problem?

Most participants at the BAE still struggle with the first 'phase', namely, to learn to speak a new language in a new society. On the other hand, for most of the participants from Malmö University the issue does not involve language ability in its technical sense but communicating 'excellently' in different contexts. For these students, language is a link to the future and the social life it holds; it is, in other words, a linkage to social membership. For the students at Malmö University it is more about a social and cultural language and about their own role in, and influence on, the process of fulfilling their dreams. For the students at Malmö University, language proficiency is not as big an issue as it is for their parents or the participants at the BAE; these students are more concerned

about integration through communication and about gaining the right social position.

It can be concluded that the diasporic condition appears in a different way for the students compared to the participants at the BAE. While an evident diasporic condition and the tale of the past interfere with language learners' concentration and motivation in learning the language at the BAE, for the students at Malmö University it is a bit different. Many of these students have grown up in Sweden but still experience difficulties in mediating their desired identity. While they master the verbal language, they still have some doubts about the non-verbal communication and about the different social jargons embedded in communicative situations. This can perhaps be better recognized by understanding the complexity of the situation that these students exist in. Part of this complexity depends on the fact that many young second-generation migrants 'live' near different social systems and find it difficult to evaluate social belonging (Getrich 2006, p. 552).

What is noteworthy here is that the students at Malmö University are totally aware of how they are placed in "several systems of classifications": they are second-generation migrants, and they are people who naturally are going to be a productive part of the Swedish society, but they still have to handle the complex issue of belonging, which appears as most evident in communicative situations. Being a natural part of, and feeling as an 'insider' in, communicative situations does not seem to be the most evident outcome for these students. This explains why some of the students, despite living in Sweden since they were children, are still puzzled as to how to negotiate the right identity and find a comfortable social and communicative position when they are at school, university, the workplace, etc. This per se, as discussed by Getrich, leads to the fact that "the national immigration 'debate' will be significantly reframed yet again in the future—perhaps even by the children of immigrants as they mature into adults and contest the exclusionary discourses and practices that have so profoundly affected both them and their inner circles" (Getrich 2006, p. 552).

While the participants at the BAE feel excluded partly because they experience hopelessness at the thought of not achieving a fu-

ture where they have jobs, can speak the language satisfactorily, and feel needed and competent, the students at Malmö University want to solve the riddle of becoming the 'real one'. For the students at Malmö University, in general, the problem does not involve finding a job or speaking the language satisfactorily; it is, rather, about achieving self-accomplishment through communication, and about securing the idea of being seen as individuals and not as inheritors of the past.

The feeling of displacement might be differently constructed, but most of the participants in both groups feel displaced, different, and like 'the other'. Consequently, feelings of otherness and displacement are unsolved issues for many of the students at Malmö University, just as it is for the participants at the BAE. While the participants at the BAE comprehend their lack of contact with Swedes, their age, and having left their beloved home country behind, as the most important barriers for second language learning, the students at Malmö University have gone a step further and see the structural behavior and communicative norms in the host society as significant for communicative interaction and inclusion.

Here it is important to recognize, based on what the participants say, the significance of two conjectures, namely, that a) most of the participants see the way the Swedish society demonstrates and practices traditionalism and monoculturalism as delivering an excluding policy, based on the idea of constructing 'us and them', and b) it seems that the participants born in the 1960s, '70s or '80s, regardless of at what age they moved to Sweden and what socioeconomic background they possess, can see themselves as 'the other' at least during a period of their life.

The experiences of otherness and the need for recognition seem to be similar for both the participants at the BAE and the students at Malmö University. By this I do not mean that both groups will have the same feelings in the future, but during certain periods of time both groups might share the same experiences of not being able to enter the Swedish society and of not feeling satisfied with the way the communication with the majority occurs. What I mean can be explained by what Bourdieu has been accused of, that is to say, a deterministic view of man: that people's behavior grows out

of social circumstances, that is, that there are social determinants. This means that in the encounter between habitus and social circumstances, some strategies, some thinking, and some conducts are constructed. Just as it is evident that people have intentions, will, and ability, it must be recognized that their wills, intentions, and abilities are internalized in a given field embedded in social determinants (Broady 1991, p.163). Since the social determinants of inclusion into the communicative situations can be the same for both of the groups, they can have similar feelings. But the students at Malmö University and the language learners at the BAE choose different strategies to face the displacement they experience with regard to communicating in Swedish, getting close to Swedish society, and interacting with Swedes. So the feelings can be the same, but the methods in dealing with the feelings vary, since the two groups of participants have different opportunities and personal preferences.

Concluding Remarks

- Attributing a cultural identity to migrants can lead to feelings of otherness and indirectly influence attitudes towards and the motivation for learning or using the Swedish language.
- Instead of seeing the ‘cultural background’ as an obstacle for language-related internship and language learning, individual conditions should be focused on, for example, how language development or internship could be designed in accordance with learners’ ability and life situation.
- School and society should be observant of the fact that some of the participants simply copy the Swedish way and thereby end up in a field of constant dualities which might affect their self-confidence in communicative situations.
- The educational authorities should have knowledge about in what way language learners’ need for belongingness and inclusion might affect their attitude towards and motivation for learning the Swedish language and how this can be considered in a teaching context.
- All the participants need to discuss the social jargons and communication codes of the Swedish society in order to defuse

- the difficulties involved in communicating with Swedes.
- Different generations of migrants might face the same identity-related problems while using the Swedish language, such as feelings of otherness and lack of knowledge about the social codes in different communication situations. The educational authorities should be aware of these problems and use proper methods to deal with them.

SUMMARY

In chapter one I formulate the study's research problem, focusing on the study of adult migrants' second language learning in a non-linguistic context, more specifically on second language learning in a sociocultural context. In this chapter I emphasize that the study of how language is used in different situations is as important as how it is taught. The chapter argues for an approach based on language learning as a social action that takes place in a multi-faceted sphere where migrants with different backgrounds have to deal with different life situations. Here it is stressed that what is going on in the mind of migrants deserves a closer examination in order to shed light on issues of attitude, motivation, and desire to learn and use the Swedish language. The study's three main approaches are formulated based on a triangular matrix: a) how the sociocultural influences are shaped in the teaching context, b) how the participants' life-worlds and the sociocultural features influence their attitude to and motivation for learning and using the Swedish language, and c) how the participants, from a sociocultural perspective, experience the communicative situations where they use language.

The second chapter describes the methodological approach of the study, which is a qualitative method with hermeneutics as a scientific approach to the understanding and analysis of the material. It describes that two groups have participated in the study, students at the BAE and a group of students at Malmö University who studied communication.

Informal conversational interviews and semi-structured individual interviews were conducted in order to get closer to the participants' life-worlds and how they reason about language as a social medium when used by adult migrants. The reason for having two distinct groups, that is, students from Malmö University, who are qualified for higher education, and students at the BAE, who study Swedish at a basic level, was to be able to see if there are any differences and similarities between those two groups in terms of attitudes to, and the use of, the Swedish language, differences and similarities that could perhaps demonstrate something significant in the context of the study.

Classroom observations have also been carried out systematically in order to observe how the language is taught, what is taught, if significant sociocultural elements could be identified, and how the students reacted and behaved in the classroom situation.

Chapter three lays the foundation for the theoretical frame that will, especially in the last chapter, serve as a tool to understand what aspects emerged and were observed during the study. Here I describe how the theoretical concepts, that is, life-world, habitus, social capital, symbolic capital, and the game, are relevant to an understanding of the participants' statements and of the observations done.

The three empirical chapters, starting with chapter four, are mainly based on my classroom observations. Here I describe what is taught in the classroom, how it is taught and what reactions this arouses among the participants. In this chapter I also start to connect the observed material to what other researchers in the field have emphasized in their research. The main perspective of chapter four is to show what place sociocultural aspects have in the classroom and how these sociocultural expressions are illustrated in the teaching context. Furthermore, reflections are made upon the teaching context and the methods used in relation to the participants' social realities, life-worlds, and backgrounds, and to the fact of being an adult migrant with a previous life, sitting in the classroom learning a foreign language while you must create a new life in the migration society.

Chapter five focuses on the participants at the BAE. How do they experience their migration to Sweden? What attitudes do they have towards language learning and to building a life in Sweden? What affects their motivation? How can the former social dispositions affect a new beginning in the migration society and learning the Swedish language? Here it is clear that diaspora and life-worlds play a crucial role. Migrants cannot just become new persons, in order to adopt new values and learn social codes rapidly after migration to Sweden. Here the participants' statements indicate that the connection to a past life, the love and longing for the homeland, and the need to be with other migrants and countrymen have implications for the need to use the Swedish language and the motivation to learn it. The participants need what is recognizable to them and therefore construct contacts with people in similar situations. This creates a distance between them and the majority society and hence the Swedish language. Swedish language proficiency loses its significance because the participants' needs are met by having access to the social capital that they create outside the Swedish society. This miniature society that most of the participants seek to be members of is located within Swedish society and represents the most practical aspects that a legitimate society offers its citizens. One conclusion is that if you do not live in a society actively and use its services to some extent, then you do not even need its language and find no reason to invest in its language.

But the question of why this is so and why the participants seek membership in a secondary society is an interesting question that needs more research. This study shows that for some adult migrants it may be more difficult to find ways into a society which, like all other communities, consists of complex social and communicative codes. But it is the sense of alienation that plays a crucial role here in the Swedish society. The sense of alienation, according to this study, may be a result of the migrants not being seen as 'whole' and competent human beings by school. School as a mirror image of the rest of society sees students in need of sociocultural upbringing. When affiliation and networking become uncomfortable in situations such as in school, meeting with the doctor and the authorities, etc., and an equal communication encounter feels

strange and unreachable, it is easier to seek out those who are in the same situation as oneself and have an understanding for one's situation and alienation. Then the participants look for other alternatives, for example, a doctor who speaks their mother tongue, or people at a travel agency who have knowledge about their background or share the same frame of reference. The stepwise dissociation makes it more justified to engage with the miniature society and other activities without using the Swedish language, for example watching satellite TV, reading newspapers from the home country, etc. What is most significant in this chapter is that the symbolic capital that participants possess in terms of life experience, integrity and self-esteem loses its status in the migration society. This mainly depends on the fact that the skills and experience they had before migrating to Sweden are forgotten in the school context; school is a place where they first encounter the Swedish society and form an idea of life in Sweden, and therefore it has a strategic significance.

In chapter six it is the experience of the communicative situation that is interesting. Is there any difference between the migrants studying at Malmö University and students at the BAE regarding the feeling of being among the Swedes and communicating in the Swedish language? How are identity issues manifested when the two groups communicate in the Swedish language, and what importance do identity-related issues have in the communicative situation for the continued desire to communicate more and develop the language? Here, it appears that both groups may feel uncomfortable during the communication because of the invisible social codes. Some of the participants make use of strategies to overcome these barriers and some give up. To feel affiliation to the majority society through communication, according to the participants' statements, is not so easy; it is an art which deals with identity negotiation in which participants can lose a part of their identity and be forced to constantly struggle to become a worthy part of the communicative situation. "Cultures" may also play a role here. Some of the participants feel that, in their dealings with the majority, they are defined based on a culture that is attributed to them and that they are expected to belong to and act according to.

The most important aspect in this chapter is that, regardless of background and education, most of the participants share a sense of alienation and in-betweenness in communicative situations. This kind of feeling can be an experience that does not need to be consistent with reality, but this feeling influences belonging to, participation in, and communication with the migration society in a negative way. This can also have an adverse impact on language development, as it restricts the desire to communicate and the self-confidence in communicative situations.

In the last chapter I pull the strings. Using the study's theoretical concepts I attempt to understand and illustrate an image of an adult migrant who participates in classroom teaching and tries to learn the language while he /she has to simultaneously deal with the life-worlds consisting of memories of a country that in many cases they have left under traumatic circumstances and a life that has to be formed in the migration country in a meaningful way. Meanwhile, the participants think and act according to what they are able to, that is, the familiar social dispositions, in this study called *habitus*. The *habitus* changes over time but it is important in its old form in the early time after migration because it provides security. The conditions of and the complex elements of a diasporic existence require a connection to the old dispositions and the past. At the same time as the strong attachment to and the idealization of the past and the home country creates security, it also distances the participants from the social and communicative dispositions valued in the Swedish society.

What is furthermore discussed in the last chapter is the need of a new approach to adult migrants' second language learning in school. The question whether we are using the right education and the right approach for this group is highlighted here. The study points out that we need to problematize the philosophical basis for second language learning: does the system see it as vital to educate independent people who can think and choose for themselves or does it prefer to provide them with the knowledge school believes they need. Another question that needs to be discussed is whether second language education is supposed to prioritize culture-teaching with the main focus on Swedish values and norms, or

whether communication skills should be the main focus of the education.

The main aspect here is the need to take into account the sociocultural influences in teaching and what consequences this approach might have on students' language development. In shaping the education we need to seriously ask the following questions: Whose social reality is to be lifted in the classroom and why? For whom is learning created and what life-worlds should teaching be designed according to?

This chapter concludes by expressing a concern about what it means if different generations of migrants share similar feelings of alienation in communicative situations. How do we treat identity issues as related to language and communication, not only in second language learning classrooms but in other social contexts as well? How do all other social institutions, such as schools, medical centers, travel agencies, banks, etc., need to prepare themselves to respond to people who do not know all the social codes and linguistic expressions and feel left out? The question is if it is not the constant invisible creation of exclusion that is the reason why many migrants, despite living in Sweden for many years, cannot develop their language and do not feel as an equal part of society. The question is: do we see them and hear them or are their voices invisible?

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APPENDIX

Information about the Participants

Female Participants from the BAE

Halima, 36, Iraq, five-year primary education, has lived in Sweden for five years.

Leila, 35, Iraq, five-year primary education, has lived in Sweden for seven years.

Farida, 33, Iraq, teacher education, has lived in Sweden for three years

Hana, 32, Syria, five-year primary education, has lived in Sweden for six years.

Zeynab, 31, Iraq, nine-year secondary education, has lived in Sweden for five years.

Asra, 37, Lebanon, five-year primary education, has lived in Sweden for five years.

Salima, 32, Syria, five-year primary education, has lived in Sweden for six years.

Sahar, 45, Iraq, nine-year secondary education, has lived in Sweden for seven years.

Male Participants from the BAE

Nadir, 40, Afghanistan, former police officer in Afghanistan, has lived in Sweden for five years.

Morad, 38, Iraq, former goldsmith in Iraq, has lived in Sweden for seven years.

Amir, 39, Syria, five-year primary education, has lived in Sweden for seven years.

Mustafa, 40, Iraq, nine-year secondary education, has lived in Sweden for five years.

Wahid, 39, Iraq, former lawyer, has lived in Sweden for three years.

Ali, 37, Iraq, five-year primary education, has lived in Sweden for twelve years.

Hamid, 33, Iraq, nine-year secondary education, has lived in Sweden for four years.

Participants from Malmö University

Female Participants from Malmö University

Safa, 25, Iran, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for ten years.

Maria, 27, Afghanistan, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for fifteen years.

Nor, 32, Iraq, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for twenty years.

Sara, 28, Iran, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for twelve years.

Mira, 29, Iran, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for fourteen years.

Minoo, 27, Iran, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for thirteen years.

Shirin, 29, Lebanon, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for fifteen years.

Nila, 30, Iran, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for seventeen years.

Ingela, 26, Germany, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for four years.

Denise, 29, Scotland, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for seven years.

Sunaya, 28, Singapore, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for four years.

Linda, 33, Luxemburg, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for five years.

Male Participants from Malmö University

Naser, 33, Lebanon, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for four years.

Reza, 39, Iran, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for eight years.

Titu, 29, Zimbabwe, student at Malmö University, has lived in Sweden for six years.

Presentation of teachers

Annika, has taught SFI (Swedish for immigrants) for 15 years.

Margareta, has taught SFI (Swedish for immigrants) for 10 years.

Irene, has taught SFI (Swedish for immigrants) for 18 years.

Mats, has been the principal of the school (BAE) for 4 years.

Ellen, Malmö University, has taught Swedish as second language for 11 years.

This book attempts to provide an understanding of non-linguistic aspects involved in teaching, learning, and using a second language. With the help of qualitative interviews and conversations, this book sheds light on how three perspectives interact and affect adult migrants' learning milieu, attitudes to, and motivation for learning and using the Swedish language. These perspectives are a) the teaching context, b) migrants' living environment and life conditions, and c) the sociocultural influences involved in communicative situations. Adult migrants, especially at the beginning of their stay in Sweden, constantly hover between different social realities while organizing a new life in an unknown country. Longing for home, having feelings of displacement, and discovering and adjusting to the unwritten rules of the migration country become a difficult challenge. In such a situation contact with people with a similar background and with the home country isolates the migrant from the Swedish language and Swedish society, at the same time as it is a survival mechanism. Similarly, a monocultural teaching approach that is isolated from learners' social reality contributes to the feelings of alienation and ineptitude. As a result, there is a risk that the attitudes toward, and the motivation for, learning and using the Swedish language will not be prioritized and that adult migrants will continue to prefer to manage their lives without the Swedish language by relying on their access to other communities (i.e., their social capital).

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