First Language Use in Second and Foreign Language Teaching

Förstaspråksanvändning i andra- och främmandespråksundervisningen

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The Swedish curriculum for the subject English in upper secondary school clearly states the English should be used “as far as possible” in the classroom. However, the possible amount of first language usage is never mentioned. This fact piqued our interest for investigating how much, if any, first language use is beneficial for learning a new language. For this reason, we decided to pose our research questions as follows:

1. What are the different views on the usage of the L1 in an L2 and foreign-language classroom according to the teachers and learners?
2. What has been said about only target language usage from a historical and a contemporary perspective?
3. Does the use of the L1 in a second-language/foreign-language classroom have a positive or negative effect on the learners’ language learning?

To answer these questions, we have read and analysed sixteen empirical studies. Firstly, the research shows that both learners and teachers prefer to use the second language/target language as much as possible. However, they also recognise the benefits that the first language can have. The second question we have answered using both empirical studies as well as theorists from second language acquisition research and sociocultural theory. Our literature describes a shift in language learning and teaching, from the bilingual grammar-translation method towards a more monolingual classroom where the first language has no place. However, the empirical studies signal a new shift in second-language/foreign-language education, reverting back to a more bilingual approach. Finally, all studies agree that the first language has a complementary role in the language classroom, and if used properly, it can have a positive effect on language acquisition. Through our results we argue that the first language can increase the learners’ motivation, move the tasks along and create a non-threatening environment where learners can feel safe to use the target language. Although the first language can benefit second-language learning, learners and teachers must be aware of the danger of extensive usage, as it should remain a supplement to the target language.

**Nyckelord** Keywords
First language, second language, foreign language, code-switching, medium of instruction, second language acquisition
# Table of content

1. **Introduction** ......................................................................................................................... 1  
   1.1 Aim and Research Questions ........................................................................................................ 1  
   1.2 Outline ........................................................................................................................................ 1  

2. **Background** ............................................................................................................................ 2  
   2.1 The Historical Development towards Monolingual Education ....................................................... 2  
      2.1.1 Grammar-Translation Method ..................................................................................................... 2  
      2.1.2 Direct Method ............................................................................................................................. 3  
      2.1.3 Audiolingual Method .................................................................................................................. 3  
      2.1.4 Communicative Approaches ........................................................................................................ 3  
   2.2 Bilingual Education ..................................................................................................................... 4  
      2.2.1 Immersion Programmes .............................................................................................................. 4  
      2.2.2 Content and Language Integrated Learning ............................................................................... 5  
   2.3 The Swedish Curriculum .............................................................................................................. 5  

3. **Method** ...................................................................................................................................... 7  
   3.1 The Nature of the Sources ............................................................................................................ 7  
   3.2 The Procedure for Gathering Sources ............................................................................................ 8  
   3.3 The Procedure for Processing and Analysing Sources .................................................................... 8  

4. **Research Review** ....................................................................................................................... 9  
   4.1 Theoretical Perspectives ............................................................................................................... 9  
      4.1.1 Second-Language Acquisition Research ..................................................................................... 9  
      4.1.2 Sociocultural Theory ................................................................................................................ 12  
   4.2 Empirical Studies ........................................................................................................................... 13  
      4.2.1 Monolingual Education .............................................................................................................. 13  
         4.2.1.1 Qualitative Method ............................................................................................................... 14  
         4.2.1.2 Mixed-Method ..................................................................................................................... 15  
      4.2.1.3 Synthesis of Monolingual Education ....................................................................................... 16  
   4.2.2 Bilingual Education .................................................................................................................. 16  
      4.2.2.1 Qualitative Method ............................................................................................................... 17  
      4.2.2.2 Quantitative Method ............................................................................................................. 17  
      4.2.2.3 Mixed-Method ....................................................................................................................... 18  
      4.2.2.4 Synthesis of Bilingual Education .......................................................................................... 19  
   4.2.3 Literature Surveys ..................................................................................................................... 20  

4.3 Synthesis of the Literature Review .............................................................................................. 22  

5. **Discussion** ............................................................................................................................... 25  
   5.1 Different Views on the L1 in an L2 and FL Classroom ................................................................. 26  
   5.2 A Historical and a Contemporary Perspective on TL usage .......................................................... 27  
   5.3 The L1’s Effect on Learners’ Language Learning ......................................................................... 28  
   5.4 Conclusions ............................................................................................................................... 29  
   5.5 Follow-Up / Future Research ...................................................................................................... 29  

**List of References** ......................................................................................................................... 31  

**Appendix** ..................................................................................................................................... 36
1. Introduction

The Swedish curriculum for the subject English in upper secondary school states that English should be used “as far as possible” as the medium of instruction (MOI) (Skolverket 2011a: 53). As future upper secondary school teachers, we feel confused as to how much of the learners’ first language (L1) can be used without removing the focus from language learning. If it is possible to use the L1 in the language classroom, teachers need to know in what ways it should be used to ensure that it is of help to learners, and not a hindrance for language acquisition. Furthermore, it is important to know how much English is feasible to use as the medium of instruction (MOI), since the learners are at different proficiency levels. In order for us to become better teachers, we felt the need to investigate how much L1, if any, is useful for the learners.

1.1 Aim and Research Questions

Using our literature review we will analyse how and why teachers and learners of a foreign language (FL) or second language (L2) use or do not use the first language (L1) in the classroom. We have further chosen to investigate the effect that the L1 has in a FL/L2 classroom. In order to investigate these areas in our literature we have posed three research questions phrased as follows:

- What are the different views on the use of the L1 in an L2 and foreign-language classroom according to the teachers and learners?
- What has been said about only target language use from a historical and a contemporary perspective?
- Does the use of the L1 in a second-language/foreign-language classroom have a positive or negative effect on the learners’ language learning?

1.2 Outline

This literature review is divided into five chapters. Following this initial introduction we will present a historical background of FL/L2 teaching, describing the move towards a monolingual use of the TL, and how this is now reversing to accept the use of the learners’ L1 in teaching a FL/L2. We then describe the Swedish curriculum for upper secondary school, from 1970 to the present in order to trace the development in a Swedish context.
After the background chapter, we will describe our methodology, what type of literature we have investigated, our method of finding the relevant literature and how we have processed it. Chapter four is our research review, where we analyse our literature based on our research questions. Finally, in the discussion chapter, we will answer our research questions and draw conclusions based on the findings. To finish our discussion chapter, we will make suggestions for future research.

2. Background
In this background chapter, we will present a historical overview of the changes within the field of FL teaching, towards a monolingual education. Beginning in the late eighteenth century, we will be working our way towards the present and how these changes have affected our Swedish curricula for upper secondary school. However, there are private schools, which use immersion programmes as their MOI for teaching learners, thus positioning themselves as bilingual schools. Hence, we will also include two major bilingual education settings.

2.1 The Historical Development towards Monolingual Education
When discussing monolingual education, Lee (2012: 139) mentions that monolingualism “implies that languages other than the target one should be avoided in language teaching and learning processes at all costs.” Along the same lines, Garcia (2009: 142) defines monolingual education as when the first language (L1) is removed completely from the classroom in order to conduct all FL lessons in the target language (henceforth abbreviated as TL), thus making the FL classroom monolingual. However, this only applies to foreign language classes, and not the entire curriculum.

2.1.1 Grammar-Translation Method
With the spread of Christianity during the fifteenth century, the grammar-translation method arose as the primary method of acquiring a new language, at the time, Latin. The Grammar-Translation method used translations between the L1 and the TL while focusing its teaching on grammatical rules, vocabulary, memorisation and written language (Yule 2010: 189). This method is still in use for vocabulary learning, using word lists with translations between the TL and the L1. However, it is argued that this is not the most efficient way to acquire vocabulary since the words need to be revisited and revised multiple times by learners (Hedge 2000:119).
Hedge (2000: 138-139) concludes that contextualised vocabulary learning relies on the learners taking their own responsibility for vocabulary development. Furthermore, “[h]elping learners to learn topic words and phrases can take up a lot of class time and is not necessarily the best way of approaching something which ultimately depends on rote learning.” (Willis & Willis 2007: 215).

2.1.2 Direct Method
As a reaction to the grammar-translation approach, the direct method was developed. The aim of the direct method was to remove the use of the L1 from the second-language classroom. The learners were exposed to the TL only, and teaching was focused on oral skills above all else (Jin & Cortazzi 2011: 564). Jin and Cortazzi (2011: 564) further describe that “the order of skills for development and lesson organization is listening, speaking, reading and writing” so that the learners receive a natural order of language acquisition.

In 1878, Maximilian Berlitz recognised the success of pure TL use when he invited a French tutor, Joly, to cover his French class. Since Joly was not proficient in English, his classes were taught using the TL only. The success of the learners inspired Berlitz to develop the Berlitz Method, which excludes the use of the L1 in the second-language (L2) classroom. This method still inspires foreign-language teachers today (Hall & Cook 2015: 275).

2.1.3 Audiolingual Method
The audiolingual method was a development from previous methods, and it uses central ideas from both the direct method, such as the discouragement of the learners’ L1, and the grammar-translation method with the memorisation of grammar rules and basic dialogues. The main focus within the audiolingual method is speech, where the lessons would start “with a dialogue which exemplified structures [...] and pronunciation”, which the learners would mimic and achieve rote learning (Jin & Cortazzi 2011: 567).

2.1.4 Communicative Approaches
Communicative approaches are “more recent revisions of the L2 learning experiences”, and derive partially as “a reaction against the artificiality of ‘pattern-practice’” (Yule 2010: 190). This fourth approach to foreign language teaching promotes the use of the TL as the
means of communication in the classroom, in order to maximise the learners’ exposure to
the TL (Butzkamm & Caldwell 2009: 18).

Butzkamm and Caldwell (2009) also mention that a “consensus has been reached in
favour of a kind of monolingualism”, and “[i]t is not only what the experts believe, who
are asked by governments to write official guidelines for schools - it is also what the
majority of teachers believe” (Butzkamm & Caldwell 2009: 18).

2.2 Bilingual Education

In contrast to the aforementioned monolingual education, bilingual education is where
other subjects in the curriculum are taught using the TL as the MOI, not only the FL/L2
(Garcia 2009: 145). The aim of bilingual education is to create bilingual individuals
(European Commission 2006:7). Here we will discuss two of the different programmes
used in bilingual education, namely immersion programmes and Content and Language
Integrated Learning (CLIL).

2.2.1 Immersion Programmes

Immersion programmes were developed during the middle of the twentieth century in
Canada, as a programme for young children to acquire proficiency in French (Swain &
Johnson 1997: 2). This new programme came as a suggestion from parents who opposed
the monolingual teaching of the curriculum in English, and the small amount of French
lessons with “focus on grammar, memorization, and drill”, which left children without
“sufficient skills to work in French, or to socialize with French speakers” (Swain &
Johnson 1997: 2).

Immersion programmes use the TL as the MOI in other subjects, not only in the FL
classroom. The European Commission (Eurydice 2006: 7) acknowledges two main
immersion programmes: ‘total’ immersion and ‘partial’ immersion. ‘Total’ immersion is
when the entire curriculum is taught through the TL, whereas ‘partial’ immersion is when
the TL is used only for some subjects (Eurydice 2006: 7). Swain and Johnson (1997: 3)
state that the content of the curriculum “could be adequately covered” using the TL.

The original immersion programme in Canada was ‘total’ immersion in the French
language. However, this programme “is not directly transferable to Europe” and thus
‘partial’ immersion emerged (Eurydice 2006: 7).
2.2.2 Content and Language Integrated Learning

Coyle, et al. (2010, referenced in Lo 2015: 270) define Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) as an “education approach in which various language-supportive methodologies are used which lead to dual-focused form of instruction where attention is given both to the language and content”. Lo (2015: 3) further states that one of the major features is “the dual goal of both content and L2 learning” (original emphasis). Much like immersion programmes, CLIL may use the TL as the medium of instruction for all subjects.

While the division between immersion programmes and CLIL is not watertight due to their many similarities, Lasagabaster and Sierra (2010: 370) point out a major difference between the two.

The language used in CLIL is not a language spoken locally: unlike immersion programmes, which are carried out in languages present in the students’ context (be it home, society at large, or both home and society), the languages of instruction for CLIL programmes are foreign languages and many of the students only have contact with them in formal instruction contexts.

There is a private school in Sweden, the International English School (Internationella Engelska Skolan), which is situated in bilingual education. The difference expressed by Lasagabaster and Sierra (2010: 370) indicates that the education of the International English School is set in the CLIL programme since the English language has a special status in Sweden, but is, however, not “present in the students’ context” (Lasagabaster & Sierra 2010: 370).

2.3 The Swedish Curriculum

The curriculum for the Swedish upper secondary school is a relatively young institution, dating back to the middle of the 1960’s. It was during this time that the upper secondary school, or non-compulsory school system as it was called, began to see a reform where the Swedish government set the rules of how the teaching should be conducted (Lundgren 2014: 96-98). As this thesis focuses on the teaching of English, we will present the development of the subject English through the Swedish curricula.

The first Swedish curriculum for upper secondary school, Lgy 65, and the following one, Lgy 70, highlighted the same main area, namely reading texts. Moreover, both of these curricula had a big focus on grammatical functions, vocabulary and written language
These areas, which were very important in the curricula, were also main features of the grammar-translation method.

During a period of close to 25 years, a lot happened in FL education in Sweden, which lead to a new curriculum being devised in 1994, called Lpf 94, the successor to Lgy 70. In this new curriculum, the main focus was moved from reading a text to producing the TL (Utbildningsdepartementet 1994: 37). The teachers were advised to use the learners’ own fields of interest, in order to motivate them to produce the TL. Thus, the concept of individualising the FL education for each learner began to show in the curriculum. Furthermore, in Lpf 94, the structure of the subject English was stated in the order of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Utbildningsdepartementet 1994: 37). This order was described as the “natural order” for language acquisition in the direct method.

The next curriculum implemented came with the new millennium, Gy 2000. While the focus on producing the TL remained, one difference between Gy 2000 and Lpf 94 was that Gy 2000 was the first curriculum to mention different strategies the learners could make use of to work around communication breakdowns, such as paraphrasing, synonyms, questions and body language (Skolverket 2000). Another difference was that Gy 2000 (Skolverket 2000) clearly stated that “English should not be divided into separate elements which are taught in a set order”\textsuperscript{1} (authors’ translation). The learners still had to learn the TL’s features, such as vocabulary and grammar, which were of considerable importance to the audiolingual method.

The current curriculum was enforced prior to the school start of 2011, thus named Gy 11. This curriculum is very similar to Gy 2000, but with the creation of Gy 11, the Swedish National Agency for Education (Skolverket) indicates for the first time to what extent the TL should be used in the classroom with the phrasing “as far as possible” (Skolverket 2011a: 53). The focus of Gy 2000 and Gy 11 is heavily placed on communication. However, unlike Gy 2000, Gy 11 never specifies which communication strategies the learners can use to avoid a breakdown. Another difference from the previous curriculum is the importance of interactions for learning. To use the TL almost exclusively and to have a main focus on communication are highlighted as characteristic of the communicative approach.

When reading through the previous curricula regarding FL teaching in Swedish schools, it is evident that these reflect the changes in the field over time. The mentioning of the

\textsuperscript{1} “engelska bör inte delas upp i separata moment som lärs in i en given ordning”
ability to interpret and translate has been removed from the curricula in favour of the communicative approach and the possibility to conduct teaching only through the TL (Skolverket 2011b: 11).

Since the creation of Lpf 94, individualised teaching has had an important role in the curricula. To offer individualised teaching is not only beneficial for the learners, but also stated as their right and the school’s obligation by the Swedish law (SFS 2014:458 chap 3, §3).

3 Method
In this chapter, we will present the nature of our sources and how we have gone about finding them for our literature review. Furthermore, we will explain our criteria when choosing our literature and how we went about processing it.

3.1 The Nature of the Sources
For this literature review we have been using articles, dissertations, the curriculum for English as a foreign language in the Swedish upper secondary school together with its commentary. We have also used books, both chapters from anthologies and handbooks, in order to get an overview of the general field of FL/L2 learning and teaching. Two of the handbooks discuss language teaching within monolingual education as well as the procedures and practices for success amongst learners (Hedge 2000, Säljö 2014). The other two handbooks refer to teaching a FL from within bilingual education, used mostly for background and terminology of the methods used by bilingual teachers (Butzkamm & Caldwell 2009, Swain & Johnson 1997). The articles and dissertations are mostly empirical studies conducted in different parts of the world, to acquire a realistic and representative view of FL learning and teaching relevant for the field of investigation.

In order to achieve a balanced representation of the field, the sources we chose are international and Swedish. As we are set in a Swedish context, we decided to analyse studies conducted in the Swedish school system. Furthermore, to broaden our perspective in order to draw more generalised conclusions, we also decided on using international sources. They were also printed in peer-reviewed journals to ensure their reliability. Furthermore, the sources are primarily from the 21st century, a choice we made since the foundations are from older research but give us contemporary perspectives. However, we
have used one article by Atkins from 1987, both because of his status within the field and to acquire a historical background.

We have included the current and the preceding curricula for Swedish upper secondary school in order to see how English as a foreign language (EFL) teaching has changed over recent time.

3.2 The Procedure for Gathering Sources
Our main method for finding articles has been to search through Linköping University Library’s collective database Unisearch and the database ERIC, where we used search strings combining keywords such as: TL use, EFL, ESL, second language acquisition, code-switching, L1 in an L2 classroom and L1 in an L2 setting, in order to narrow down our search results. By reading the abstracts of interesting articles, we decided which seemed the most relevant for our research. Then, to find more articles within our narrowed-down field, we combined our search strings with keywords from the aforementioned articles and looked through their reference lists for well-cited authors, all in order to ensure that our sources are representative of the field.

From the pool of sources we found, we decided to limit our articles to research conducted on learners enrolled in different school systems, primarily since our focus lies on structured language learning and teaching. Thus, articles investigating FL learning in kindergarten were excluded, as these children lack a structured foreign language education. Another limitation we made to what sources to use was whether they had any connections to our research questions. It should be noted that our interest in the usage of the L1 affected the selection of the sources. We did not use any literature investigating L2 usage only, but did identify general trends concerning this in other sources. Thus, the thesis does not provide a complete picture of potential benefits of using the TL in the classroom.

3.3 The Procedure for Processing and Analysing Sources
After we had selected our literature, we read, analysed and sorted the sources according to research questions and methods, results, setting (bilingual or monolingual classrooms, but also where in the world the study was conducted), as well as the number and age of the participants.

Our first step was to create a spreadsheet where we filled in information about the findings, settings, research questions and methods to acquire an easy overview of similarities and differences. For the analysis of the sources, we decided to first divide the
articles based on their setting. Within this initial division, we then decided to compare those using the same research methods. The methods used in the literature were both qualitative methods, using classroom observations and interviews, and a mix of qualitative methods along with quantitative methods, using questionnaires, more commonly known as mixed method. We also had one article using only quantitative method to find its results.

**4 Research Review**

This chapter will first explain the two major theoretical perspectives used in our sources. Then we will analyse the literature based on their educational approach and method used in the studies. Lastly we will conduct a synthesis where we compare the studies.

**4.1 Theoretical Perspectives**

The two major perspectives we will explain are second language acquisition research and sociocultural theory. Second language acquisition research was chosen both because it is a theory on which many of our articles base their research as well as it being an important theory for L2 learning. Sociocultural theory was chosen because it is a theoretical framework in which many authors situate their studies and since it is evidently present in the Swedish curriculum, for example through the interactions with others and the communicative aspects of learning and teaching (Säljö 2014: 37, 104).

**4.1.1 Second-Language Acquisition Research**

One of the main theorists within SLA research is Stephen Krashen (1985: 1-3) with his five hypotheses: “the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis”, “the Natural Order Hypothesis”, “the Monitor Hypothesis”, “the Affective Filter Hypothesis” and finally “the Input Hypothesis”. We will first describe the initial four hypotheses and then focus our attention on the Input Hypothesis.

“The Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis” is defined by its two contrasts. Acquisition is a “subconscious process” where learners are exposed to the TL and use the same process as when “acquiring their first language” (Krashen 1985: 1). In contrast, learning is a “conscious process” where the learners have to think about the TL to understand how it works (Krashen 1985: 1).

Another hypothesis that Krashen (1985:1) presents is “The Natural Order Hypothesis”. He describes that all languages are learnt in a specific order, regardless of when or how the
academic journey begins. All teachers and learners follow the same predictable path in the learning process (Krashen 1985: 1).

“The Monitor Hypothesis” states the importance of “self-correction” in the production of the TL. In order to perform “self-correction” the learner must use the knowledge about the language stored subconsciously to produce utterances to which they can apply the grammatical rules (Krashen 1985: 1-2).

“The Affective Filter” is seen as a hindrance to learning a language. It can be described as a mental block, such as anxiety, a lack of motivation or low self-confidence, which can prevent the learner from fully comprehending the input. The goal is to have close to no “affective filter”, which is the case when the “acquirer is not concerned with the possibility of failure in language acquisition and [...] is so involved in the message that he temporarily ‘forgets’ he is hearing or reading another language” (Krashen 1985: 3).

“The Input Hypothesis” is the fifth and central hypothesis that, together with the four hypotheses described above, constitute Krashen’s (1985) second-language acquisition theory. The idea behind the “input hypothesis” is that “humans acquire language in only one way - by understanding messages, or by receiving ‘comprehensible input’” (Krashen 1985: 2). In Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning, Krashen (1988: 9) defines comprehensible input as when the level of the input is slightly above the level of the learners’ current language understanding, but where the input language has a focus on the message conveyed rather than the grammatical form of the utterances. Comprehensible input results in learners building up competence from which speech can emerge. Speaking is thus proclaimed as a “result of acquisition and not its cause” (Krashen 1985: 2). When learners are exposed to enough comprehensible input, they automatically receive grammatical structures, thus eliminating the need for language teachers to explicitly teach grammatical rules (Krashen 1985: 2). It is therefore evident that “comprehensible input is the essential ingredient for second-language acquisition” (Krashen 1985: 4).

To present evidence supporting his hypotheses, Krashen (1985: 16) describes the connections between his theory and the success of immersion programmes. The programmes which succeed show a “solid subject-matter teaching in the first language, together with comprehensible input in [the L2]”, a method which works just as well as “all-day English programmes”, but often shows even better results (Krashen 1985: 17-18). Even though the L1 is used, when comprehensible subject-matter is taught through the L2,
language acquisition still occurs. Krashen (1985: 16) emphasises that “comprehensible subject-matter teaching *is* language teaching”.

Although Krashen is a highly influential theorist within the field of SLA research, his SLA research has received a lot of criticism. Gass and Selinker (2008) present some of this criticism in *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course*. According to them, Krashen’s hypothesis on Acquisition-Learning, with them being two separate systems, is not applicable and cannot be proven. This is evident when studies are conducted in classrooms where the TL is taught using the learners’ L1 as the MOI (Gass & Selinker 2008: 246). Had Krashen’s theory been correct, they would not be able to produce any coherent speech in the TL.

Furthermore, the critique towards the Natural Order Hypothesis is that Krashen has used results from morpheme studies, and this is a generalisation that is not applicable to all L2 learning (Gass & Selinker 2008: 376).

Moreover, the Monitor Hypothesis is where the learnt system, knowledge of rules and grammatical structures, monitors the correctness of the utterances produced by the acquired system. In this regard, Gass and Selinker (2008: 254) raise a valid question: if learners only use their L1 in the classroom to create a learnt system, how can they acquire the TL as learning requires “comprehensible input”, on which they use the learnt system as a monitor? Their criticism is based on the fact that learners can learn the TL through the L1 as MOI, which is contradictory to Krashen’s ideas about the acquired system being responsible for language learning.

Likewise, the biggest criticism of the Affective-Filter Hypothesis is that an “inappropriate affect was to blame”, which means that the classroom environment for language learning is far from optimal, and thus in itself causes learners to apply a mental blockade (Gass & Selinker 2008: 402). The Affective Filter is seen as a reason behind the differences between the L2 learners as Krashen points out that every child can learn their L1, therefore they do not have a filter to block their L1 acquisition (Gass & Selinker 2008: 402). However, as to how the affective filter works, Krashen never specifies and thus leaves many unanswered questions, especially regarding the different presence of the filter in children and adult learners (Gass & Selinker 2008: 403).

Finally, the critique against the Input Hypothesis is split into different issues. The first being the lack of definition of levels of knowledge since the learners can only acquire the next level. Second, there is the “issue of quantity” as Gass and Selinker say, “what is
sufficient quantity”, and “how do we know if the quantity is sufficient or not?” (Gass & Selinker 2008: 310).

In general, the main critique posed against Krashen is that his hypotheses cannot be proven with empirical studies and some concepts are hard to understand as he does not give adequate explanations for these (Gass & Selinker 2008: 246, 254, 310, 376, 402).

In more recent SLA research, theorists are discussing different interface positions depending on how to “conceptualize the interface between different knowledge types”, no interface, a weak interface and a strong interface (Gass & Selinker 2008: 246). The Acquired-Learning Hypothesis with the view that they are two separate systems where knowledge cannot transfer from one system to the other places Krashen’s theory in the no interface position (Gass and Selinker 2008: 246). The weak interface position is represented by Ellis (referenced in Gass & Selinker 2008: 247) and his view that explicit and implicit knowledge are both cooperatively “involved at all steps of the way in any cognitive task”. In the third interface position, the strong interface, we find DeKeyser (referenced in Gass & Selinker 2008: 247) with his theory that “second language learning is like other forms of learning”. First one has to see how the language works, followed by performing actions in the TL such as producing it or understanding input and then finally spend time practicing it in real-life situations.

4.1.2 Sociocultural Theory
As a reaction to Krashen’s “input hypothesis”, in 1985 Swain (2013: 99) argued for another hypothesis, which draws on some features of sociocultural theory, the “output hypothesis”, which focuses on learners producing the TL. This is giving learners the potential for noticing grammatical forms, as well as focus on meaning, which is suggested by the “input hypothesis” (Swain 2013: 99). According to the “output hypothesis” there are two requirements for “knowledge building”. The first is output and the second is “collaborative dialogue”, which she defines as “dialogue in which speakers are engaged in problem solving and knowledge building” (Swain 2013: 102). As Swain (2013: 100) observes, when learners are “interact[ing] while working together on tasks” they will “notice ‘holes’ in their linguistic knowledge”. The learners will then try to fill these holes using different strategies, “turning to a dictionary or grammar book, by asking their peers or teacher; [sic] or by noting to themselves to pay attention to future relevant input” (Swain 2013: 100). Collaborative dialogue is a concept also visited by Säljö (2014: 37), where he highlights the importance of communication for personal development and
learning. He describes communication as the link between thought and interaction(s) (Säljö 2014: 68).

The collaborative communication advocated by Swain (2013), Swain and Lapkin (2013) and Säljö (2014) creates the connection between the “output hypothesis” and Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The ZPD “is the area where the child cannot solve a problem alone, but can be successful under adult guidance or in collaboration with a more advanced peer” (Woolfolk 2005: 57). In order to help learners improve, interaction with peers is an essential help (Säljö 2014: 104). As Swain and Lapkin (2013: 124) note, “learning a second language is demanding”, and they further mention that “learning does not occur without a struggle”. The help provided by more advanced peers or teachers to move within the ZPD is called “scaffolding”, which is a necessity as learners cannot always make this transition by themselves (Swain & Lapkin 2013: 119).

In conclusion, learners need to produce the TL in order to achieve “accurate production” (Swain 2013: 99). However, learners cannot do this alone because learning occurs through collaborative dialogue and scaffolding.

4.2 Empirical Studies

In this part of our thesis we will conduct our research review by comparing 15 articles and one dissertation all concerning the L1 usage in the L2 or immersion/CLIL classroom. We have divided them into three categories, monolingual education, bilingual education and literature surveys, depending on the authors’ own classification of their studies. Within both the monolingual and bilingual part, we have grouped them together based on the methods used to gather the data analysed. We then finish with a synthesis where we make comparisons between all the studies.

4.2.1 Monolingual Education

When reading through our sources, while keeping the definitions of the educational modules in mind, we found that some of our authors place their work within the field of monolingual education (Amir & Musk 2013, Carless 2008, Creese & Blackledge 2010, Gorbani 2011, Storch & Wigglesworth 2003, Ünstünel 2004), that is, when the teaching of the FL is conducted only through the TL. All of these sources used some sort of classroom observation, either their own or reusing previous research.
4.2.1.1 Qualitative Method

Amir and Musk (2014), Carless (2008), Creese and Blackledge (2010) and Üstünel (2004) all used qualitative methods for their research within the field of monolingual education. Amir and Musk (2014: 96) analysed an EFL classroom by using video recordings along with conversation analysis (CA). They did this to analyse language policing in the classroom, that is establishing the TL as the MOI in the classroom, and ensuring that learners actively work to maintain it as the language used throughout the classes (Amir & Musk 2014: 97-98). Carless (2008) conducted an interview study with the focus on teachers and their views on the use of the mother tongue (MT) in the classroom. Creese & Blackledge (2010: 103) used interviews with teachers as well, but also with learners, along with classroom observations in order to “describe a flexible bilingual approach to language teaching”. Üstünel (2004) used audio and video recordings to perform both discourse analysis (DA) and CA. She used these methods in order to analyse how “teacher-initiated and teacher-induced code-switching (CS) are sequentially organised in EFL classroom interaction” (Üstünel 2004: 80).

Through his interviews, Carless (2008: 336) found “challenges of stimulating and maintaining the MT” while at the same time there was a “risk of failing to encourage TL practice and communication”. Since the teachers interviewed were struggling with the learners’ use of the MT in the classroom, he argued that teacher educators could help with this issue by providing better guidance as to when the MT could be used in order to maximise the benefits. The study conducted by Creese and Blackledge (2010: 112-113) found benefits for using the MT to “keep the pedagogic task moving” and “provide[e] greater access to the curriculum and lesson accomplishment”.

Üstünel did not use interviews in her study. Instead, she mainly focused on CA and DA through classroom observations and transcriptions. She found that teachers used CS for different pedagogical functions, such as “[d]ealing with classroom discipline”, “[c]hecking comprehension in English” and “[g]iving encouragement to participate” (Üstünel 2004: 142-143). Moreover, Amir and Musk also used CA and classroom recordings. They found that sometimes teachers were very focused on only using the TL when requiring a definition of a word, to check for comprehension, which might be hard for the learners to produce. Thus this became very time-consuming (Amir & Musk 2014: 98). Further, Amir and Musk (2014: 103) found that learners sometimes would police teachers when they uttered a word in the L1 which, in turn, could lead to unnecessary discussions about the rule of upholding the TL as the medium of instruction.
The major differences between the studies concern the collection of data and the perspective of the studies. While Carless (2008) focused on the teachers’ and teacher educators’ views on the use of the MT in a task-based classroom, Creese and Blackledge (2010) looked at classroom discourse, and how the MT is used in complementary classrooms. Üstünel (2004) focused on which pedagogical functions teacher-initiated and teacher-induced CS can have in the classroom. Amir and Musk (2014) focused on language policing in the classroom and how learners are working with upholding the target language as the medium of instruction.

4.2.1.2 Mixed Method

The second method used in our sources within the field of monolingual education is mixed method (Ghorbani 2011, Storch & Wigglesworth 2003). Here mixed method means that the researchers use both qualitative and quantitative methods when conducting their research. Both of these studies were conducted on adult subjects from different universities, and the effect of the L1 when learning English using code-switching (CS) was studied. Storch and Wigglesworth (2003: 763) focused on the learners’ perspective when they recorded and transcribed conversations in pairs while completing tasks in order to calculate the percentage of L1 use. As a complement to the quantitative data, they also conducted interviews with their participants to analyse “students’ attitudes toward the use of their L1 [...] in completing tasks in an L2 setting”, hence the qualitative method. The quantitative method Gorbani (2011: 1655) used was classroom observations to count turns made by both teachers and learners where the L1 was used in an L2 classroom. He further used the qualitative method of DA to analyse the discourse in an actual classroom. Gorbani (2011: 1657) found that teachers used code-switching to deal with classroom discipline, to request information (e.g. ask for translations or checking comprehension) and to “provide individualized scaffolding assistance”. Gorbani (2011: 1658) further recognised one more function of CS, that of adding humour to the classroom, which was not only used by teachers but also by the learners.

Although learners’ use of the L1 served a number of functions as well, Storch and Wigglesworth (2003: 767) found in their study that the learners were somewhat reluctant to use the L1 because they felt “that use of the L1 [was] not allowed when completing tasks in an L2 setting”. In spite of this, learners stated in the interviews that “the L1 could be a useful tool” for learners to maintain control over the task (Storch & Wigglesworth 2003: 767-768). The study concerned the use of the L1 in pair/group work and found that...
learners’ use of the L1 would help them to “complete the tasks more efficiently” and to help “interpret and reach a shared understanding” (Storch & Wigglesworth 2003: 767). Ghorbani (2011: 1658) analysed pair/group work as well, and the learners in this study used the L1 for “private speech”, that is to say the act of talking to oneself, which could have the function of “mediation of thought and planning of an action”.

Ghorbani (2011) investigated the functions of using CS without mentioning the opinions of the participants while Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) analysed learners’ thoughts on the L1 usage in a FL classroom. Moreover, it is interesting to note that Ghorbani (2011) conducted his research in a real classroom, whereas Storch and Wigglesworth (2003) study was staged in a manipulated condition with volunteer university learners.

4.2.1.3 Synthesis of Monolingual Education

There is one factor which all of the monolingual studies share, namely what functions the learners’ L1 can have in an otherwise monolingual L2 classroom. Since the main function is to “keep the pedagogic task moving” (Creese & Blackledge 2010: 112-113), the L1 becomes a tool which makes the task accessible for the learner (Storch & Wigglesworth 2003: 767-768). Carless (2008: 336) asks for guidance on how to use the L1 in a beneficial way in the classroom, and the other articles describe several ways in which it is actually used. The L1 can serve several pedagogical functions in the classroom according to Üstünel (2004: 142-143) and Ghorbani (2011: 1657), such as resolving matters regarding discipline in the classroom and checking if the learners have understood the task. Furthermore, the usage of the L1 as a method to encourage learners to participate is brought up by Üstünel (2004: 143). In contrast to Üstünel (2004), Storch and Wigglesworth (2003: 767) show that learners are reluctant to use the L1 in the L2 classroom because they feel that they should use the L2. Amir and Musk (2014) conclude that the rule of only using the TL in the classroom might sometimes lead to discussions which are both time-consuming and sometimes unnecessary.

4.2.2 Bilingual Education

The second field in which we could place our authors was bilingual education (Corcoll 2011, Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2005, Lo 2015, Swain & Lapkin 2000, Wannagat 2007), which refers to school systems where the entire, or part of the curriculum is taught in the TL with the aim to create bilinguals.
4.2.2.1 Qualitative Method

Within bilingual education, there was one study that used qualitative methods for collecting and analysing the data (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2005). Through the methods of CA and classroom observations on adult learners enrolled in university classes, Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005: 246) found that for learners to feel at ease with using CS, a good classroom atmosphere together with a comfortable proficiency in both languages is required. Furthermore, Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005) analysed how the learners use CS. They found that the main usage of CS was “to avoid communication breakdown”, to make a point and to ensure that the rest of the class understands (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2005: 237ff.). In addition to this, their results showed that when L2 acquisition was the main goal shared by both the learners and teachers, the L1 could be allowed without “jeopardizing the language learning” (Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2005: 245).

It is interesting to note the difference between the teacher-induced and teacher-initiated CS that Üstünel (2004) analysed and the learners’ usage studied by Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005). While Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005: 245) showed that learners used CS for the benefit of the other learners, Üstünel (2004: 142-143) noted that teachers used CS for maintaining discipline and checking the comprehension of the learners. The main difference between these two studies, however, is that the teacher in Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain’s (2005: 245) study never initiated and seldom used CS.

4.2.2.2 Quantitative Method

We found only one article with a quantitative method used for the research, Swain and Lapkin’s (2000). The method they used was counting turns containing the L1 from transcribed audio recordings. In contrast to Storch and Wigglesworth (2003), Swain and Lapkin (2000) did not conduct any interviews. Their study looked at how much the learners used the L1 in an immersion classroom and for what reasons. They found that for the most part the L1 that was used by the learners “served important cognitive and social functions” (Swain & Lapkin 2000: 268). The L1 was used for the following reasons: to help move the task along, to focus the attention of the group on vocabulary and form and only a little for off-task talk and disagreements (Swain & Lapkin 2000: 265). The advantages of using the L1 were that it helped learners understand the task and accomplish the goal more efficiently. Thus, if the L1 is used properly it should not be forbidden in immersion classrooms as it can support L2 learning (Swain & Lapkin 2000: 268).
Interestingly, Swain and Lapkin (2000: 267) make the same observation as many of our other authors, concluding that the amount of L1 usage corresponds to the proficiency of the learners: the higher the proficiency the lower the usage of the L1.

4.2.2.3 Mixed Method

Some studies within bilingual education also used a mixed method for their research (Corcoll 2011, Lo 2015, Wannagat 2007). While Lo (2015) studied CLIL in Hong Kong education, Wannagat (2007) analysed the difference between the Hong Kong English as Medium of Instruction (EMI) and the CLIL programme in North-Rhin Westphalia, Germany. Corcoll (2011) situated her study in Barcelona, Spain and studied the effect of CS. The quantitative part of Lo’s (2015: 275) study consisted of grade ten classroom observations, which were audio and video recorded. These were then transcribed to analyse the proportion of L1 used by the teachers and learners in the classroom by analysing the time of the L1 utterances. She also conducted interviews with the teachers and the learners which accounts for the qualitative method part. Much like Lo (2015), Wannagat (2007) also used audio and video recordings along with classroom observations in grade ten, but also questionnaires, to collect the data used for the quantitative analysis. The data was analysed by measuring the length of the utterances in the learners’ L1 by counting the number of words. As a follow-up to the recordings, Wannagat (2007) also used guided interviews with selected learners and the subject teachers, in their L1, which were translated and transcribed. In her study, Corcoll (2011) researched how the use of the L1 together with the FL, through CS, might enrich the learners’ second language acquisition. She collected her data through classroom observations and group interviews. The research was carried out using four different classes, where the learners were 7-8 years old, within one school. One class was chosen to act as the treatment group while the three remaining classes became the control groups. The treatment group was exposed to CS in their lesson plan for the English subject in order to see how the learning curve of the learners differentiated from that of the control groups with a monolingual teaching method.

Lo (2015) investigated for what purposes and in what patterns teachers use the L1 in CLIL classrooms. Her study consisted of five schools which were observed regarding their usage of the L1 in the classroom. The schools ranged between 20-96.8% L1 usage (Lo 2015: 284), which exceeded the limit of 10-15% before CS changes nature from being a cognitive tool to the lesson “eventually stop being a foreign language lesson” altogether (Macaro 2005: 82). This result correlates to Wannagat’s (2007: 677) study, which showed
that often less than 50% of the lessons were held in English, going below 10% in schools with learners of weaker proficiency. Lo (2015: 284) described several reasons for the high usage of the L1, the first of which was the low proficiency of the learners, resulting in learners not being able to understand the teachers and the content of the lessons. In schools with higher achieving learners, the main usage of the L1 was for classroom management (Lo 2015: 279). A third reason for using the L1, Lo (2015: 279) mentioned, was for explanations and translations of difficult words and concepts. Although classroom management was not mentioned in Wannagat’s (2007: 676-677) study, he discussed the other two reasons for L1 usage.

Both Lo (2015) and Wannagat (2007) showed that CLIL or any late immersion programme presented difficulties when teaching English in Hong Kong. Wannagat (2007: 679) found in his interviews that both learners and teachers had similar views of the L1 usage in the classroom, concluding that in order “to focus the attention and to get students emotionally involved, both sides agree that L1 is much more appropriate”. In the German CLIL classroom, the use of the L1 was “expressively sanction[ed]”, but in some contexts it was considered “indispensable”, i.e. during evaluations and when education touched on “highly emotional topics” (Wannagat 2007: 679). These types of sanctions of when to use the L1 in the classroom were not mentioned in the Hong Kong context. Similar to Wannagat’s (2007) findings, Corcoll (2011: 36) found that CS enhanced learners’ “motivation, self-esteem and classroom atmosphere”. Although the teachers used CS for “pedagogical purposes”, Lo (2015) and Corcoll (2011) came to two different conclusions. Whereas Lo (2015: 285) suggested that it “might be better if they would reinforce the concepts in L2 again”, Corcoll (2011: 28) found that teacher-initiated CS served the pedagogical functions of “mak[ing] the teaching process more effective”. One potential reason behind this difference is the setting of the studies. Lo’s (2015) and Wannagat’s (2007) articles showed that the views of some of the teachers in Hong Kong might explain the high percentage of L1 usage in the classroom.

4.2.2.4 Synthesis of Bilingual Education

The main usage of the L1 in the articles about bilingual education is that of explaining difficult concepts and words (Lo 2015: 279). This point is supported by Wannagat (2007) and Swain and Lapkin (2000). By using the L1 to focus attention on new words and different grammatical structures the learners can complete tasks efficiently and understand the task better (Swain & Lapkin 2000: 268). Moreover, Corcoll (2011: 36) as well as
Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005: 246) note that for learners to feel more at ease with speaking the L2, a good classroom atmosphere is required and to acquire good classroom atmosphere the use of CS is a great help. Code-switching is presented as necessary in all articles about bilingual education. Corcoll (2011: 28) states that CS “make[s] the teaching process more effective” and Swain and Lapkin (2000: 268) also make this point clear. In contrast to this, Lo (2015) and Wannagat (2007) argue that the learners in Hong Kong have a very low proficiency in the L2 and thus there is a great need to use the L1, as learners would not understand the tasks or information if the whole class was only taught through the L2.

4.2.3 Literature Surveys
The third category we found amongst our articles comprises different literature surveys (Atkinson 1987; Cummins 2007, 2009; Dixon et al. 2012; Hall & Cook 2012; Garcia 2009). These articles aim at investigating and describing the field of language learning and teaching and share very similar results. They all challenge the monolingual approach in the language classroom.

The literature investigated by these surveys suggests that language teaching is now undergoing a shift from monolingual teaching towards a more bilingual approach. The use of the L1 is not banned but is seen as a useful tool for second language learning and teaching (Cummins 2007: 238). Cummins (2007: 238) also mentions that the learners’ L1 can “function as a stepping stone to scaffold more accomplished performance in the L2”, which indicates that when teachers make use of the learners’ L1, higher levels of L2 proficiency can be achieved. The use of the L1 can create a domino-effect starting with the creation of a “less threatening atmosphere” (Hall & Cook 2012: 287), leading to a more relaxed environment where the learners feel more at ease in producing the L2. Finally, it can lead to increased motivation for L2 learning amongst the learners (Hall & Cook 2012: 287).

Atkinson (1987: 243) recognises several functions for the use of the L1 in the classroom. The most useful functions for teachers to use the L1 are giving instructions, checking comprehension along with asking and providing translations and teaching grammar. When giving instructions the teacher can use the L1 to clarify to make sure that all learners understand what is expected of them. Regarding checking comprehension the teachers can use the learners’ L1 in order to see more effectively whether or not the learners understand the concepts of the task at hand. However, when describing the usage
of the L1 regarding translation and grammar, the L1 should not be used for more than a supplementary addition so as not to remove the TL communication in the classroom (Atkinson 1987: 243).

Not only does Atkinson (1987: 243) discuss the usefulness of the L1 for teachers, he also describes one major area in which the learners might find it useful, namely cooperation among learners. According to Atkinson (1987: 243), learners might use the cooperation strategy to compare their answers on different tasks, and also for learners who have understood the task to help clarify and explain what the teacher is trying to convey to the rest of the group.

Atkinson (1987: 245) further explains the development of learning strategies, where he describes different TL strategies which the learners should aim to use for working around problems that might arise: “circumlocution, paraphrase, explanation, and simplification”. These strategies enable the learners to convey the same meaning as intended when they do not know a word in the TL, instead of using the specific word in their L1 (Atkinson 1987: 245).

However, there are other useful purposes in using learners’ L1 in the classroom. Cummins (2009: 320) discusses how the use of the L1 in the classroom can be a way for learners to develop their own identity, whereas removing the L1 from the classroom can lead to learner anxiety, which is supported by Dixon et al. (2012), Hall and Cook (2012) and García (2009). In her study, García (2009: 153) mentions that the “social justice principle values the strength of bilingual students”, which means that the classroom atmosphere should be non-threatening to the learners’ identities, as well as promote the “linguistic human rights of students” where they are allowed to make use of all their languages. Cummins (2009: 320) agrees with this. He claims that “[l]egitimating students’ L1 as a cognitive tool within the classroom challenges the subordinate status of many minority groups and affirms students’ identities”.

Hall and Cook (2012: 291) emphasise that the learners’ L1 is the key to “activate learners’ prior knowledge” within language teaching. Cummins (2007: 232) defines prior knowledge not only as “information or skills previously acquired” but also as the “totality of the experiences that have shaped the learner’s identity and cognitive functioning”. Thus, when learners use their prior knowledge in the L2 classroom, they can understand the new language by noticing similarities between their L1 and the L2.

Moreover, Cummins (2009: 320) concludes that bilingual teaching “would challenge the educational and social injustices associated with the monolingual principle”, by
removing anxiety created in the learners by the incapability of expressing themselves in the L2 within the monolingual classroom.

In conclusion, Atkinson (1987), Garcia (2009), Cummins (2007, 2009) and Hall and Cook (2012) all emphasise that monolingual teaching is not enough and that language teaching and learning should move towards a more bilingual approach. As Atkinson (1987: 247) states, “to ignore the mother tongue in a monolingual classroom is almost certainly to teach with less than maximum efficiency”.

4.3 Synthesis of the Literature Review

Through the articles we have collected and analysed, one thing becomes abundantly clear. Regardless of whether the education is conducted in bilingual or monolingual contexts, and regardless of the research method employed, all researchers and studies show the usefulness of the learners’ L1 when learning a second or foreign language.

Üstünel (2004: 141-143) discusses teacher-initiated CS in relation to engaging the learners and to encouraging learning, as well as how learners, when lacking the confidence to continue talking, might benefit from some comforting words in their L1 in order to keep participating in the task. Similar to the findings of Üstünel (2004), Wannagat (2007: 679) finds that the learners’ L1 is highly beneficial to the acquisition of a second or foreign language. However, since his study investigates both a German CLIL and a Hong Kong EMI programme, one can see that there are different guidelines of how and when to use the L1 in the different classrooms (Wannagat 2007: 679).

Another interesting use of the L1 in the language classroom that Cummins (2007) and Ghorbani (2011) mention is scaffolding. Since scaffolding is the help learners make use of to develop through the ZPD, they both argue the worth of the learners’ L1 as a cognitive tool and as a “stepping stone” (Cummins 2007: 238). Whereas Cummins (2007: 238) generalises his conclusion that the usage of the L1 is somewhat limited to bilingual education and to helping learners feel more confident when working academically in both languages, Ghorbani (2011: 1657) discusses the usefulness of the L1 for teachers to provide learners with “individualized scaffolding assistance”. Ghorbani (2011: 1657) further notices how learners and teachers use the L1 for different purposes depending on the tasks.

In contrast to the positive uses of the L1, both Atkinson (1987) and Carless (2008) argue that there is a danger in overusing the L1 in the second language or EFL classroom.
Carless (2008: 336) highlights the risk that overusing the L1 in the classroom might discourage learners from producing the TL. In addition to this, Atkinson (1987: 244) discusses a similar concern, namely that the L1 is not supposed to replace the TL in communicative activities in the classroom. In contrast, TL instruction is important but can be complemented by the L1 to make sure that the learners understand the task and thus learn in an efficient way (Atkinson 1987: 244).

Although there is a risk of overusing the L1 in the TL classroom, Üstünel (2004), Ghorbani (2011) and Lo (2015) all note that the L1 has an advantage over the TL regarding how to keep control in the classroom. In her study, Üstünel (2004: 99-100) finds that, although there is seldom any CS to Turkish in the classrooms, the teachers actively try to avoid any usage of the L1. One of the occasions where CS occurs is to silence the class in order to continue working with an exercise. Lo (2015: 285) further notices that teachers use CS to maintain the classroom interactions. According to his findings, teachers try to “encourage and maintain teacher-student interaction in L2 [...] and perhaps treat L1 as a last resort”, but as they are working under strict time constraints with frustration over the lack of learner response or limited interaction, quite frequent CS to the L1 is observed to keep the learners working (Lo 2015: 285). Similar to Lo’s (2015) findings, Ghorbani (2011: 1656) finds that the rare occurrences of CS in the English classroom of an Iranian school mostly deal with explanations and questions about the task at hand, and not specifically with managing or correcting behaviour in the class.

To use the L1 to keep a task moving forward is something that Swain and Lapkin (2000), Storch and Wigglesworth (2003), Creese and Blackledge (2010) and Amir and Musk (2014) all discuss. Even though Storch and Wigglesworth (2003: 767) find that learners are reluctant to use the L1 in the second language classroom, the learners interviewed state that the L1 would have helped to complete a task and to move it forward in a more efficient way. Learners use the L1 “to interpret and reach a shared understanding” of a task and this makes the task easier to complete (Storch & Wigglesworth 2003: 767). Swain and Lapkin (2000: 268) along with Creese and Blackledge (2010: 112-113) make the same claim that learners use the L1 to discuss and reach an understanding and to make sense of the content and the task. Amir and Musk (2014: 98) also support this claim, and show through an example how the lessons cannot keep moving due to strict TL usage where there is no explanation or translation given in the learners’ L1. The teacher asks what a “wave of immigrants” (our own emphasis) means, but the learners are unable to produce a satisfactory definition using the TL.
Moreover, learners can help other learners understand by explaining to each other either in the TL but in a different way than the teacher or by using the L1 (Atkinson 1987: 243, Liebscher & Dailey-O’Cain 2005: 237). Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005: 237) find that learners use the L1 as a strategy to avoid communication breakdown. Rather than not finding the word and thus saying nothing, they use a word in the L1 to move the conversation forward. Similarly, Atkinson (1987: 245) notes strategies the learners use to move the conversation along and avoid a breakdown in meaning. Atkinson (1987: 245) further suggests that learners should try to find another word in the TL before resorting to the L1.

Furthermore, according to Cummins (2009), Dixon et al. (2012), Hall and Cook (2012) and García (2009), learners’ L1 also serves to develop a bilingual identity and to remove the anxiety learners can feel speaking a foreign language. Cummins (2009: 320) highlights the importance of “legitimating students’ L1”, which thus “challenges the subordinate status of many minority groups and affirms students’ identities”. Hall and Cook (2012) further investigate the correlation between CS and the learners’ identities. They suggest that “many learners will need to operate bilingually”, and that CS will help to strengthen their identity as they “will wish to preserve their own cultural and linguistic identity while speaking English” (Hall & Cook 2012: 276). The literature review made by Dixon et al. (2012) addresses the learners’ socioeconomic status and how it affects their language acquisition. Although they do not explicitly mention identity as a term, they discuss how the learners’ surrounding environment and the historical academic achievements of the family influence how much of the L2 the learners can learn, and that teachers have to “make sure the social and cultural context is taken into account (Dixon et al. 2012: 49). The social aspect is also highlighted by García (2009: 153), as she describes “social justice principles” as important in “enabl[ing] the creation of learning contexts” where the bilingual identities of learners and communities are not threatened. She also emphasises that a non-threatening environment creates a safe atmosphere in which learners can use translanguaging to “try out their ideas and actions and thus, learn and develop literacy practices” (García 2009: 153).

and Lo (2015: 279) note that teachers in Hong Kong use the L1 for translating and explaining difficult concepts. In contrast, while also checking for comprehension, the teacher in Amir and Musk’s (2014: 98) study does not do so using the L1, as the TL is the only language used in those classes.

One important feature that is required in order for learners to dare to use the TL in the language classroom is a good classroom atmosphere. This is stated by Corcoll (2013), Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005), Ghorbani (2011), Hall and Cook (2012) and García (2009). In her research, Corcoll (2013: 36) finds that using CS in the classroom can enhance the motivation and self-esteem of the learners which leads to a more relaxed and comfortable classroom atmosphere. This is right in line with Hall and Cook (2012: 287), who argue that by using the L1 in the classroom, the classroom atmosphere becomes less threatening and the learners feel more at ease with producing the L2. Interestingly, whereas Corcoll (2013) and Hall and Cook (2012) signal that CS provides a more relaxed and comfortable atmosphere, Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005: 246) state that the environment of the classroom has to be good for CS to occur. García (2009: 153) on the other hand, points out that the environment of the classroom should be non-threatening and that learners should be allowed to make use of all their languages in order to learn in an efficient way.

**5 Discussion**

In our discussion chapter, we will begin with connecting our literature with Gy 11, to see how it correlates with the findings of our sources. We will then answer our research questions based on the results from our review of the literature. After we have answered the questions, we will present our conclusions from what we have found. This chapter will then be finished with final comments and suggestions for future research within the field of using learners’ L1 in L2/FL education.

The current Swedish curriculum, Gy 11, states that English should be used “as far as possible” in the FL classroom (Skolverket 2011a: 53). Through the studies we have reviewed, we have noticed that all authors state that the learners’ L1 both could and should be used in the language classroom when learning a second language or foreign language. These findings show that the learners’ L1 can be a cognitive tool for learners. The quotation above from Gy 11 indicates that this possibility is also present for teachers in Sweden. Thus the teachers have some leeway when planning lessons and can adjust them
to the level of the learners. However, in the comments about the curriculum made by Skolverket (2015: 3), there is a mention of an issue that comes with a versatile and multicultural classroom: not every learner has Swedish as their MT. Therefore, the teachers have to make a “professional assessment”\(^2\) whether there are “situations where another language […] can benefit the learner’s understanding”\(^3\) and thus help them to meet the requirements (Skolverket 2015: 2, authors’ translation).

In order to meet the requirements of L2 learning, the Swedish curriculum states that English should be used “as far as possible”. This creates exposure to the TL, and “learners are stimulated to use English in the classroom, and naturally receive the possibility to develop different communication strategies”\(^4\) (Skolverket 2015: 3, authors’ translation). The importance of developing different communication strategies is also emphasised by Atkinson (1987: 245), Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005: 236) and Hedge (2000: 52). This is well in line with SLA research and sociocultural theory, in that the exposure to input and the opportunity to produce output are essential for language learning.

### 5.1 Different Views on the L1 in an L2 and FL Classroom

The idea of using the TL “as far as possible”, stated in *Gy II*, and the role of the teachers to find the right level of TL teaching i.e. what amount of the learners’ L1 should be used and how it should be implemented into the lessons is in line with the findings of Wannagat (2007), Lo (2015), Carless (2008) and Swain and Lapkin (2000). Their studies show that the level of L1 usage depends on the learners’ proficiency in the L2.

Storch and Wigglesworth (2003: 766-767) claim that usage of the L1 could make the completion of tasks more efficient. However, they report that learners were unwilling to use this strategy; once learners achieved a proficient level in the TL, they themselves became reluctant to use their L1 when completing tasks. Atkinson (1987: 243) and Liebscher and Dailey-O’Cain (2005: 239) all focus on how learners on advanced level use their L1 in the foreign-language classroom. According to their research learners use the L1 to avoid communication breakdowns and help each other, seeing it as a valuable resource.

Whereas all of the studies discussed in this literature review highlight the usefulness of the learners’ L1 in the L2 classroom, the results of the studies covering the subject of foreign language teaching in Hong Kong (Wannagat 2007, Carless 2008, Lo 2015) differ

\(^2\) “professionell bedömning”

\(^3\) “situationer där användning av ett annat språk […] kan bidra till att stärka elevens förståelse”

\(^4\) “Eleverna stimuleras att själva använda engelska i klassrummet och får på ett naturligt sätt möjligheten att utveckla olika kommunikationsstrategier”
somewhat from the rest, which might be because of their choice of setting. The reason why this discrepancy is worth discussing is because of the different proficiency levels of the Hong Kong learners compared to the rest of the studies. A possible explanation is the amount of exposure to the TL outside the classroom. Another reason is how the low proficiency level influences the potential of teaching with the TL as the MOI. Wannagat (2007: 679) concludes that teachers feel that the learners’ L1 is “much more appropriate” when trying to focus the learners’ attention and to get them “emotionally involved”, rather than doing so in the TL. He further conveys how the teachers feel the need to make use of the learners’ L1 due to their low proficiency in the TL (Wannagat 2007: 676-677). Lo (2015) notes that this opinion about the L1 is still the same, eight years after Wannagat’s (2007) study. However, Lo (2015: 284) presents the suggestion that the teachers should try the TL on more occasions before returning to using the learners’ L1 as the medium of instruction. In contrast to the two previous studies, the teachers interviewed by Carless (2008: 337) prefer to use the TL as the MOI. Nevertheless, much of the task-based learning is conducted using the learners’ L1, and one reason behind this, which he discusses, is the insecurity teachers feel in forcing the learners to use the TL instead of their own L1 (Carless 2008: 336). A majority of the teachers who participated in the study feel that they do not have enough guidance on how to use the L1 in the classroom, and how it could be beneficial for learners to use their L1 (Carless 2008: 336).

In conclusion, both the teachers and the learners feel that the L1 in the L2 classroom is necessary, but they are reluctant to use it as they feel unsure of the threshold where it becomes a problem rather than a resource.

5.2 A Historical and a Contemporary Perspective on TL usage

The grammar-translation method, where the overall idea was to translate a text to and from the TL, was a bilingual teaching method used in monolingual education that sparked a backlash. The three main ideas introduced as a response were the Berlitz method, the audiolingual method and the creation of the immersion programme in Canada. The concept behind the Berlitz method was to only use the TL for the FL lessons, which was similar to the audiolingual method where the learners’ L1 was discouraged. The immersion programme, however, uses the TL as the MOI for different classes, not only in the language classroom. The idea behind immersion programmes in Canada was also to create bilingual speakers, and eventually a bilingual society.
The parents of Canadian school learners noted that bilingual French education was inadequate in creating proficient French speakers. The idea was that exposure to the TL was the best way to learn the TL. This idea is still present in bilingual education today, but has also been adopted to cover the TL classrooms in monolingual education. The shift to monolingual TL instruction led to the creation of the communicative approach, where the learners received maximum exposure to the TL.

On the other hand, teacher perspectives and most of the recent research indicate a shift from monolingual TL teaching towards a classroom where teachers and learners feel secure in using the L1 as a supplement to the TL (Cummins 2007: 238). As Swain and Lapkin (2000: 267), Lo (2015: 284) and Wannagat (2007: 677), amongst many others, point out, the proficiency of learners defines the threshold of how much the TL can be used in the classroom, and to what extent the teachers must incorporate the learners’ L1.

To summarise, the historical perspective emphasised that a monolingual use of the TL was the most beneficial education method for language learning. Today, however, there is a movement towards more bilingual education, where the learners’ L1 is seen as a useful tool, and where the aim is to foster bilingual individuals.

5.3 The L1’s Effect on Learners’ Language Learning

The theorists within SLA research and sociocultural theory all argue that learners benefit the most from monolingual TL teaching. Krashen’s (1985) ideas eliminate the possibility for teachers to use the L1 as an aid since it would reduce the amount of comprehensible input. Swain (2013) similarly states that learners have to produce the TL, leaving little room for the L1. Her output hypothesis builds on the learners being presented with the opportunity to produce comprehensible output, whereas the L1 would create interference. Similar to both Krashen and Swain, DeKeyser (cited in Gass & Selinker 2008: 247) suggests that the main feature in L2 learning is practice. Given enough practice, the learners will eventually pay less attention to particular behaviours such as producing and/or understanding the TL (Gass & Selinker 2008: 247). Ellis (cited in Gass & Selinker 2008: 246-247) shares this conception, and further explains that language should become implicit knowledge that the learners rarely have to think about when producing.

The argument made about the usage of the learners’ L1 in the classroom in all of the articles we have reviewed is that it could benefit the learners. However, for the L1 to have a positive effect on learning, the authors all agree that the amount used cannot be too high. As we have mentioned multiple times before, the amount of L1 that should be used in the
classroom depends on the proficiency level of the learners. In the Swedish school system, we primarily have a monolingual language policy which declares that English should be used “as far as possible”. This policy serves to prevent the creation of distractions that can become extremely time-consuming, as described by Amir and Musk (2014: 98).

To sum up, although the theorists propose that monolingual TL teaching might benefit the learners, the studies reviewed here have shown that it is not possible in reality due to the different proficiency levels of learners. In order to help the learners meet the requirements, their L1 can be a cognitive tool for language learning.

5.4 Conclusions
In this final part we will present the conclusions we have drawn from the literature included in the study. Through our research questions we have investigated whether the L1 has a place in the language classroom. What we have found is that when learners are allowed to make use of their L1, it can create a relaxing classroom environment where they feel safe to express themselves in the TL. Furthermore, teachers discuss that it is unnecessary to avoid the L1 in the classroom in favor of a truly monolingual education in the TL. The L1 can move the tasks along instead of the lessons coming to a halt when learners do not fully understand their aim. Moreover, the usage of the learners’ L1 can increase their understanding of and help to develop their L2/FL. However, there is a danger of overusing the L1. While we have shown that it is beneficial to use the L1, it only works to a certain degree since learners and teachers should not rely on it too much. It should only be a mere supplement to make the classroom environment non-threatening and to help learners to relax. We further found that, when making use of the learners’ L1, the teachers can increase the learners’ motivation to learn the TL. Through our literature review we have found support for the TL to be used as far as possible but that the L1 can be a tool when individualising learners’ language learning, something that is important as learners have different proficiency levels.

5.5 Follow-Up / Future Research
The age group of the subjects in the studies we have chosen has a very wide span, from 7-8 year olds and up to adult learners at university. However, we have not used any studies conducted at upper secondary school level, the level which we will teach, something that we would have wanted to look further into but, unfortunately, were unable to find. Whether the results from the studies are directly transferrable to upper secondary school
we cannot be certain of, even though all of the studies we investigated showed similar results. For future research we suggest looking into how the L1 affects teaching in Swedish upper secondary schools. By analysing classroom discourse, it would be interesting to investigate the extent to which the Swedish language is used, and if the complexity of the tasks influences the need for L1 usage.

As we mentioned before, three of the studies included were situated in Hong Kong. These studies have shown that language teaching here is, to some extent, reverting back to using the L1 as the MOI instead of working with immersion programmes or CLIL (Wannagat 2007: 680), a change that is not supported anywhere else in our literature. This leads us to ask ourselves the question: what is the reason for their reverting back to the L1 as their MOI? It is an interesting question for further research, which can be conducted using interviews with teachers and learners, together with leading politicians in Hong Kong education, about TL use in the classroom. The interviews should further be complemented with classroom observations to analyse interactions in the TL.
List of References


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Appendix

This was the first thesis we had to write of this amplitude. We initially chose a broad area, the medium of instruction for language teaching. We then decided to conduct our literature search separately before we met to present our articles and narrow our study to a more specific topic, first language use in the second and foreign language classroom. Once we had decided on a topic, we conducted further searches for literature of relevance as well as receiving a couple of articles from our supervisor, Nigel Musk. After recommendations from our supervisor we then sorted our literature, reading through half of them each. Following the sorting we read each other’s articles to gain an overview and be able to discard those of no relevance. We decided on writing the entire thesis together, using Google Docs and Skype for when we were at separate places. We did not divide the workload of writing, but instead worked on the same parts at all times. The reason for this was to be able to discuss and make sure that both of our opinions were heard. During the writing of this thesis we had a weekly check-in with our supervisor, which was extremely helpful as it set shorter deadlines and reduced the anxiety of not finishing on time. Furthermore, we received continual feedback on what to improve in our text, mostly regarding the language and structure.

I, Andreas Berlin, feel that the partnership with Kajsa has been good. Since we both could agree that the field of medium of instruction was the most interesting topic from a list of options, it was easy to establish the foundation for the partnership. We could both agree on all the changes we made, which literature to include and which to discard, and in which direction the thesis was heading. The search for literature was done separately, and both came with research we felt that we could use, and some that we decided not to use. Using Google Docs for writing our thesis was the best option since I was traveling quite a lot, and could not be in Linköping for many of our writing occasions. Furthermore, the Skype conversations, whilst a bit annoying sometimes (mainly due to lag or internet failure), was a great help for when we had to discuss our thoughts and ideas. Since we never wrote any extended text without discussions, there is no part of the text either of us can feel that we did not write. Co-operating with Kajsa was a great experience since we both could argue our thoughts, and thus help write this thesis to the best of our ability. Since two people cannot always share the same opinion, we had to make some small compromises, but for the majority of the work we shared the same ideas and could work well together.
I, Kajsa Hammarström, feel that the process of writing this thesis has been good. We spent a lot of time not being in the same place but we made this work by using Google Docs and Skype. The literature search was the only part that we did separately, although the final decision about what literature to use or discard was decided upon together. I feel that by not dividing the parts of the thesis and instead writing all parts together gave us the opportunity to discuss the content and the structure to make sure that both of us agreed on this. There have been some disagreements and frustrations during the writing process but we solved all of these through discussion and the overall result is that it has been interesting and rewarding to write this thesis.