

Annual report  
for  
English Education  
Scholars Sweden

2025/2026

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**Contributors: Elin Nylander, Katherina Dodou, Denise Bergström, Amanda Hoskins**

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## Letter from the executive group

The executive group of the network *English Education Scholars Sweden (EESS)* has organized several activities during the 2025/2026 academic year. These have focused on sharing and discussing research relevant to English language teaching in Sweden.

### Webinars on English education in Sweden

In November 2025, the executive group held an online panel discussion on the topic “The future of research in English education” organized and chaired by Katherina Dodou. The event hosted three established researchers in the field: Joseph Siegel (Professor of English with a specialization in Applied Linguistics and Education at Stockholm University), Pia Sundqvist (Professor of English Education at the University of Oslo), and Anette Svensson (Professor of Comparative Literature with a specialization in Literature Education at Lund University). The panel discussion took stock of recent developments in the field of English education in Sweden and discussed the current state and future of research on English education across the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

One key takeaway from the discussion was the continued importance of classroom-based studies and the exploration of existing teacher and pupil practices, desirable conditions for learning, and efficient teaching methods. Practice-based studies relying on collaborations with teachers and studies focusing on learning processes, informal learning, and less easily measurable competences, such as literary reading and interculturality, were highlighted as crucial areas of future research, as were studies focusing on young learners. Another key takeaway regarded the importance of competence provision at institutions of higher education, for example via research schools and the employment of postdocs in English education, as well as the continued importance of dissemination to key stakeholders of English education research.

A second webinar in June 2026 featured Dr. Parvin Gheitasi (see photo), Senior Lecturer in English, Dalarna University and focused on her work on *Developing the subject-specific instructions for English: Reflections on the process and didactic considerations*. Dr. Gheitasi shared important insights from working on the instructions and the webinar was very well attended.

### Feature in *Lingua*

Another activity was a publication in the journal *Lingua* (2025), issued by the Language Teachers' Association of Sweden, which presents the members of the executive group and outlines the aims and activities of the network.

# E E S S

English Education Scholars Sweden

EESS cordially invite you to an online panel discussion on  
Friday, 21 November, 10:15-11:45

The panel discussion will be held on Zoom: <https://du-se.zoom.us/j/63686405138>

### The future of research on English education

English education is a rapidly expanding field in Sweden, with national research and educational policies bolstering research in the field. Over the past three decades, the number of researchers examining different aspects of English education across the primary, secondary and tertiary levels has grown, leading to knowledge development and a strengthening of the research-base for English teaching across educational settings. In its first webinar, EESS wants to take stock of the developments in the field and has invited three established researchers to a discussion on the current state and the future of research on English education.

All welcome!



Joe Siegel, Professor of English with specialization in Applied Linguistics and Education, Stockholm University

Pia Sundqvist, Professor of English Education, University of Oslo

Anette Svensson, Professor of Comparative Literature with specialization in Literature Education, Lund University



## Special journal issue on English education

Furthermore, three members from the EESS executive group were together with Alastair Henry editors for a special issue of the *Nordic Journal of English Studies*. The issue features contributions from scholars who presented at the ASLA conference in 2024 on the theme “Changing English in a Changing World.” More information about the special issue can be found on page 5.

## Extended panel at the ASLA conference

In May 2026, Denise Bergström and Per Wennlund organized and chaired an extended panel discussion under the theme *The English Subject in Challenging and Changing Times: Ways Ahead* at the ASLA conference in Umeå. The event included a plenary by Professor Eva Lindgren (Umeå University) and a panel discussion with three researchers and an active English teacher and teacher educator on the topic. The participants were Alastair Henry (Lund University), BethAnne Paulsrud (Stockholm University), Pia Sundqvist (University of Oslo) and Carolina Clarin (Språklärarnas riksförbund). More information about the panel can be found on page 22.



From the left: Denise Bergström, Per Wennlund, Eva Lindgren, BethAnne Paulsrud, Alastair Henry, Pia Sundqvist, and Carolina Clarin at ASLA 2026.

## The EESS Executive Group

Finally, during the academic year, the executive group has discussed principles for the composition, term of office and appointment procedures for the EESS executive group going ahead. The members of the EESS executive group rotate gradually, and in 2027 it is time to rotate two seats. If you are interested in being part of the executive group, you may nominate yourself in writing. You may also nominate someone else who has accepted the nomination. The nomination must be sent to the executive group no later than 1<sup>st</sup> January. Please send your nomination to the current Chair and Co-Chair of EESS, Marie Källkvist and Pia Sundqvist: [marie.kallkvist@lnu.se](mailto:marie.kallkvist@lnu.se) and [pia.sundqvist@ils.uio.no](mailto:pia.sundqvist@ils.uio.no).

The executive group EESS would like to thank all participants for your contributions during our activities and wish everybody a pleasant summer.

Kind regards,

Marie Källkvist, Pia Sundqvist, Denise Bergström, Jenny Bergström, Katherina Dodou, Elin Nylander och Per Wennlund

## Special issue for the NJES – Changing English in a Changing World

At the ASLA 2024 Conference in Falun, EESS members gathered for a symposium entitled *Changing English in a Changing World*. Presenters all highlighted different aspects of change in English language education, including the need for conceptual and evidence-based understandings of the teaching and learning of English in the increasingly diverse classrooms and extramural contexts in which the language is encountered. The conference symposium later resulted in a special issue in *The Nordic Journal of English Studies* edited by Jenny Bergström, Alastair Henry, Marie Källkvist and Elin Nylander. The articles in the special issue consider the effects that changing circumstances are having for the subject of English. Please read the full issue here: <https://publicera.kb.se/njes>



### Contributors listed in publication order:

**Marie Källkvist, Alastair Henry, Jenny Bergström and Elin Nylander**

Changing English in a Changing World: The Case of English as a School Subject in Sweden

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63670>

**Erika Sandlund and Pia Sundqvist**

Agreeing, Accounting, and Affiliating: L2 Interactional Competence in High-Scoring L2 English Learners' Agreement Sequences

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63737>

**Elin Nylander**

An Intentional Word Learning Task: Theoretical Foundation and Evidence-Based Suggestions

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63672>

**Parvin Gheitasi and BethAnne Yoxsimer Paulsrud**

Preparing Pre-Service English Teachers for Differentiation in the Swedish Primary School

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63739>

**Katherina Dodou**

Leveraging Research for Literature Instruction: Insights for Developing Readers in L2 English

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63880>

**Justyna Legutko**

Affordances of the English Language Subject in Systematizing Cross-Curricular Teaching Practices

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63679>

**Joyce Kling and Slobodanka Dimova**

Intercultural Competences and Language Assessment – Reflections from Foreign Language Teachers

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63690>

**Jenny Bergström**

The Others' English: Othering Through Stereotyping in a Language Introduction Program in Sweden

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63669>

**Josep Soler**

Linguistic justice in the classroom: Teaching English in diversity

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63680>

**Sophia Juul**

Revisiting Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope's (1986) Conceptualization of Foreign Language Anxiety: Contemporary Perspectives.

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63900>

**Alastair Henry and Meng Liu**

What Makes a Theory Good? Model Construction in L2 Motivation Research

<https://doi.org/10.35360/njes.v25i1.63683>

## Members of the EESS

### Mette Hildeman Sjölin

I am a senior lecturer in English at the School of Education, Humanities and Social Sciences at Halmstad University. My teaching includes language proficiency, subject didactics, literature, academic and creative writing, grammar and phonetics, often all of them integrated within the same course. I teach mainly on the primary teacher education programme, where I am the course coordinator and main teacher in the English courses for both F–3 and 4–6 pre-service teachers. I also teach and supervise within the secondary teacher education programme.



My PhD is in English literature, specifically appropriations of Shakespeare's tragedies in drama from around the turn of the millennium. My main research interest is the reception of older literature in a wide sense, including in educational settings, often from a gender perspective. I am currently interested in metrical verse and its integration into language teaching.

#### **What do you think the contribution of EESS may be to the field of education?**

Since my research expertise is in literary studies and the majority of my teaching is in the field of English education, it is invaluable to have other forums for learning and keeping up to date when it comes to research in language education as well as best practice in teacher training. Even though English-language teaching in Sweden has common dominators with TESOL globally, it is also to an extent specific to Sweden and Scandinavia. For this reason, I find it particularly useful to be able to exchange ideas in a Swedish context.

#### **Selected recent publications**

Hildeman Sjölin, M. (2023). "[Y]oung Hamlet": Shakespeare for Swedish children. *Critical Survey*, 35(4), 94–112. <https://doi.org/10.3167/cs.2023.350407>

Hildeman Sjölin, M. (2023). "I'm a slave now, for all my fine clothes": Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* and the Dido myth. *SHAW: The Journal of Bernard Shaw Studies*, 42(1), 50–64. <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/900138>.

Hildeman Sjölin, M. (2022). [Adapting the queer language of Anne Lister's diaries](https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2022.2109647). *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, 26(4), 382–399. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2022.2109647>

Hildeman Sjölin, M. (2022). Shakespeares viktorska flickbokshjältinnor: Mary Cowden Clarke och *The Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines*. In H. Ehriander & C. Löwe (Eds.), *Flickboken och flickors läsning: Flickskapande nu och då* (pp. 181–198). Makadam.

## Nigel Musk

I am a senior associate professor in English in the Department of Culture and Society at Linköping University. Since 2020 I have also been head of the research environment Language and Culture, which hosts a PhD programme in language and culture and serves as a hub for both language and literary scholars. I mainly teach courses in classroom interaction, interaction analysis as well as linguistic theory and method. I also supervise three PhD students with topics in task-based language teaching, ecolinguistics and lavender linguistics, respectively.



My main research interests concern language teaching and learning as well as multilingualism more generally. What these research areas share is a multimodal conversation analytic perspective, but also an educational setting. In order to understand and interpret our language practices and language learning practices, I pay attention to how language is entwined and co-ordinated with other interactional and physical resources we have at our disposal, e.g., how we move our bodies, where we look and what objects we make use of. More concretely, my research over the last few years has focussed on digital collaborative writing in the EFL classroom. This has entailed looking in detail at how pupils jointly solve spelling, vocabulary and grammatical trouble in the writing process often assisted by inbuilt language tools in word processors (e.g. Word) and web-based apps (e.g. Google Docs) or by recourse to online translation tools.

More recently, my research focus has moved to investigating English teachers' classroom interactional competence (CIC). This shift has come about through an Erasmus + project, entitled DigiLTE (Digital Transformation of Language Teacher Education with Data-Informed Evidence), a collaboration between five different universities in four different countries (see <https://digilte.org>). The main objective of this project has been to produce a MOOC (massive open online course) using video clips from EFL classrooms at different levels to illustrate and raise awareness of different aspects of CIC for both pre-service and in-service EFL teachers (link to the MOOC: <https://learn.tedu.edu.tr>). These include a comprehensive range of aspects, from how the teacher elicits students' contributions, repairs or otherwise shapes their responses to how the teacher gains students' attention and gives instructions. The course is interactive with integrated tasks providing immediate feedback. It is free for anyone to use and it can be used in its entirety or parts of it can be flexibly integrated into other courses for EFL teachers. More specifically in terms of research, we are now able to use the video recordings to further investigate different aspects of CIC. Furthermore, as part of the DigiLTE project, we have collected video data from a transnational virtual exchange, where students were following our MOOC within a larger course in classroom interaction. This data will enable us to track our pre-service EFL teachers' progress in understanding and learning about CIC.

### **What do you think the contribution of EESS may be to the field of education?**

It is important that there is a forum to gather researchers focusing on the teaching and learning of English at national level, not least since PhD students and researchers within this field are typically geographically spread often with relatively few persons at each university. The fact that EESS is organisationally flexible by enabling collaboration to take a range of different forms is a plus.

## Selected recent publications

- Musk, N., & van der Meij, S. (2024). Critical interactional strategies for selecting candidate translations in online translation tools in collaborative EFL writing tasks. *Linguistics and Education* 80, Article 101290. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.linged.2024.101290>
- Musk, N. (2024). Students' interactional strategies for resolving lexical issues in computer-assisted collaborative EFL writing. *ASLA:s skriftserie/ASLA Studies in Applied Linguistics*, 31, 56–82. <https://doi.org/10.15626/asla20>
- Musk, N., & Kunitz, S. (2024). Analyzing language as actions-in-interaction. In A. Ruth, A. Wutich, & H. R. Bernard (Eds.), *The Handbook of teaching qualitative and mixed research methods: A step-by-step guide for instructors* (pp. 279–283). Routledge.

## Anette Svensson

I am a Professor of Comparative Literature with a specialization in literature education at the Centre for Languages and Literature, Lund University. I received my PhD in English Literature in 2010 and was appointed Associate Professor in literature education in 2018. I work primarily within teacher education programmes and have extensive experience teaching pre-service English teachers. I am currently teaching courses in literature and literature education for pre-service Swedish teachers, with a primary focus on the upper secondary level. My research addresses literature education across primary, secondary, and tertiary levels of education.



Photographer: Kennet Ruona

My practice-oriented research primarily addresses literature education in the two school subjects English and Swedish. My research is grounded in a broad conception of fictional texts, with a particular emphasis on narratives across various aesthetic and media forms. I examine how transmedia storytelling functions as a resource, which fosters engagement with narratives, promotes understanding of the experiences of others, supports development of self-knowledge and awareness of society at large, contributes to *Bildung*, develops language proficiency, and strengthens reading and writing skills. I also draw on my research when teaching courses in literary studies and literature education within the teacher programmes, as well as courses in children's and young adult literature. I supervise students at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels. Literature education in research and practice constitutes my main field, and I serve as coordinator of the Literature Education Network (LDN), a network that aims to make literature education more visible and to strengthen its role in schools, academia, and society.

## What do you think the contribution of EESS may be to the field of education?

EESS has considerable potential to serve as a bridge between research and practice in relation to the subject of English, as well as to connect its various subfields, including literary studies, cultural

studies, and the development of linguistic competence. In addition, the network provides a platform for enhanced collaboration across universities, both nationally and internationally.

### **Selected recent publications**

- Svensson, A., & Skillermark, S. (2025). Litteraturredaktik i samtiden för framtiden: Svenskämnets komplexa uppdrag. *HumaNetten*, 52, 140–168. <https://doi.org/10.15626/hn.20255407>
- Svensson, A., & Rosenbaum, C. (2025). Att synliggöra elevers litterära repertoarer och möjliggöra text-till-berättelsekopplingar. *Forskning om undervisning och lärande*, 13(2), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.61998/forskul.v13i2.32323>
- Svensson, A. (2024). Re-creating (hi)stories: Social and cultural empowerment. *Educare* (1), 163–191. <https://doi.org/10.24834/educare.2024.1.863>
- Svensson, A., & Malmqvist J. (2024). Att berätta utanför ramarna: Känslor och transmedialt berättande som litteraturredaktisk resurs. In L. Ahlin, J. Askund, C. Dahl, M. Freij, P. Magnusson, & A. Smedberg Bondesson (Eds.), *Litteraturredaktik och känslor – LDN2021* (pp. 241–266).
- Skillermark, S.-K., & Svensson, A. (2024). Gränsöverskridande litteraturundervisning i en global tid. In A. Ohlson, A. Sigrell, P. Strand, & M. Sundby. (Eds.), *Språk och litteratur – en omöjlig eller skön förening* (pp. 345–360). SMDI.
- Svensson, A. & Öhling, K. (2023). Hjältar och drakar i konsten och historien. In J. Öberg, Y. Lindberg, & L. Baccsti. (Eds.), *Undervisningens konst* (pp. 157–184). Studentlitteratur.
- Svensson, A. (2022). "Lager på lager" – Att möjliggöra och synliggöra kommunikativa, kreativa och narrativa kompetenser. *Forskning om undervisning och lärande*, 10(1), 55–77. <https://doi.org/10.61998/forskul.v10i1.19051>
- Rosenbaum, C., Svensson, A., & Söderberg, E. (2022). En väv av förståelse: Mellanstadieelevers utsagor om sin fiktionsläsning. *Forskning om undervisning och lärande*, 10(1), 119–139. <https://doi.org/10.61998/forskul.v10i1.19060>

## Henrik Kaatari

I am senior lecturer in English linguistics at the University of Gävle where I also serve as the head of the English section. I primarily teach courses in linguistics at various levels in our English teacher education programs and in our independent courses. I also supervise and examine theses in linguistics and in English language learning and teaching.

My main research interests include learner corpus research and linguistic complexity. For the last two years, I have served as the PI of a project funded by Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation where we examine the impact of extramural English (EE) activities on L2 writing development. In the project, we specifically investigate how different types of linguistic complexity (lexical, phraseological and grammatical) are affected by different EE activities in students' written production.

<https://sites.google.com/view/complexity/>



### **What do you think the contribution of EESS may be to the field of education?**

The launch of EESS at ASLA in Falun was a very welcome initiative. Not only does EESS bring together researchers and educators, but I also hope that EESS can play an important part in the upcoming revisions of teacher education programs. There are plenty of opportunities for collaborations and exchanges of ideas and my hope is that EESS will be an important platform moving forward.

### **Recent publications:**

Kim, T., Larsson, T., Kaatari, H., Wang, Y., & Sundqvist, P. (2026). The effects of extramural English reading on phraseology in L2 writing: A key phrase frames approach. *System*, 136, Article 103880. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2025.103880>

Wang, Y., Kaatari, H., Larsson, T., Xiong, H., & Liu, F. (2025). Introducing the Chinese Learner English Corpus (CLEC): A new resource for exploring the impact of extramural activities on L2 writing. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, 47, 1469–1487. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263125101332>

Kaatari, H., Wang, Y., & Larsson, T. (2024). Introducing the Swedish Learner English Corpus: A corpus that enables investigations of the impact of extramural activities on L2 writing. *Corpora*, 19(1), 17–30. <https://doi.org/10.3366/cor.2024.0296>

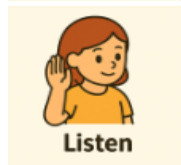
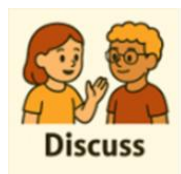
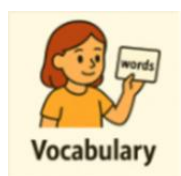
Kaatari, H., Larsson, T., Wang Y., Eickhoff, S. A., & Sundqvist, P. (2023). Exploring the effects of target-language extramural activities on students' written production. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 62, Article 101062. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2023.101062>

## A collaborative project – English-language education in heterogenous classrooms in years 4-6

Swedish students' proficiency in English is considered rather high. However, the heterogenous knowledge levels in English is described by many active English teachers as a challenge. Research also shows that many newly arrived adolescents struggle with English as a school subject in various ways (Bergström, 2024; Cunningham, 2023). These knowledge-heterogeneous classroom compositions in English constitute both an opportunity and a challenge for English teachers. On one hand, there are strong possibilities for providing rich and nuanced instruction that is closely connected to students' lives and future goals. On the other hand, the challenge often lies in simultaneously supporting lower-achieving students while challenging high-achieving students.



### The project



In the light of these challenges Carina Tångring and Jenny Bergström from Uppsala University are involved in a project that aims to develop a support material for English teachers. In their contact with teachers and students, both Jenny and Carina found that teachers struggle with finding ways to adapt their teaching in order to not only support but also develop students' English skills at all levels. The idea to develop a teaching material in close collaboration with in-service teachers was initiated by the The Centre for Professional Development and Internationalization in Schools (FBA) in January 2026. The project adopts a collaborative research approach where researchers and teachers explore and develop English-language teaching and learning with a focus on differentiated learning at middle school level. Through the reading of children's books, the different skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking) are practiced in different ways.

The material is currently being tested and evaluated by teachers at different schools in Sweden and the goal is to publish the support material in 2027. All material will be fully available to English teachers in Sweden to download and use in their teaching. The study will hopefully contribute to a deeper understanding of how to further develop English-language education in heterogenous classrooms and, thereby support the development of teachers' professional practice.

### Presentation of one of the project members: Carina Tångring

Carina Tångring is a university lecturer at The Centre for Professional Development and Internationalization in Schools (FBA) at Uppsala University, where her responsibilities include continuing education for teachers of English in Years 4–6. Carina has over twenty years of experience as an upper secondary school teacher of English and Religious Studies. She has consistently demonstrated a particular commitment to students who face challenges in their learning and in the school environment overall. Through her work with school dogs, she engages with and supports compulsory school students experiencing a range of difficulties, encompassing areas such as writing, reading comprehension, oral presentations, and motivational development.



This dedication to students who find schooling demanding for various reasons has equally characterized her work at the upper secondary level. That commitment is reflected in the research project she is currently involved in, which investigates how a support resource might facilitate teaching in the heterogeneous English language classroom. Drawing on her own professional experience, Carina is well acquainted with the considerable variation in student proficiency that characterizes many classrooms where some students engage with English daily across multiple domains and contexts, while others face substantially greater challenges. Navigating this diversity represents a considerable pedagogical and subject-didactic challenge for English language teachers all over Sweden. It is for this reason that Carina regards the research project as both relevant and significant, and she hopes that its outcomes will serve to support teachers in their daily interactions with students across the full spectrum of proficiency levels.



Jenny Bergström and Carina Tångring. Photographer: Erik Åstrand

## References:

- Bergström, J. (2024). 'English is a Subject that You Should Teach Yourself': Power and Learner Identity in the Language Introduction Programme in Sweden. *CEPS Journal*, 14(3), 67–88. <https://doi.org/10.26529/cepsj.1821>
- Cunningham, U. (2023). Språk och lärande i engelska. In Å. Wedin (Ed.), *Språk, lärande och undervisning: om nyanlända ungdomar på Språkintröduktion* (pp. 175-194). [Studentlitteratur.

## Publications:

- Tångring, C. & Öhman, S. (2023). Teachers' leadership in the classroom: Bridging theory and practice in classroom management, *International Journal for Professional Educators*, 6–15. <https://publication.dkg.org/Journal/90-1/index.html>

**Media:** <https://www.vilarare.se/amneslararen-svenska-sprak/forskning/nytt-stod-ska-mota-nivaskillnaderna-i-engelska/>

## A PhD project – Multiple paths to proficiency: Exploring adult learners' engagement with extramural English

*Linnéa Wagner (Karlstad University)*

My PhD project will explore Extramural English use and language proficiency among adult L2 learners in public adult education in Sweden (Komvux). As my empirical case, I will focus on adult learners enrolled in the course English 6 (GY11) or English level 2 (GY25). The project employs a mixed research method, including a questionnaire about adult L2 students' EE habits (both now and in the past), language background, educational background and motivation for learning English. In addition, samples of students' written and spoken production will be collected and analyzed, with focus on vocabulary use and idiomatic expressions. Also, to gain more nuanced insights, interviews will be conducted to explore the motivation for learning English and the underlying reasons for engaging in EE. The data collection is planned to be carried out during fall 2026 and early spring 2027.



The term Extramural English (EE), which will be used in this project, was coined by Sundqvist (2009) and refers to the English that language learners read, hear and engage in outside of the classroom walls. The benefits of engaging in English activities outside of the classroom have been widely emphasized in the second-language (L2) learning literature over the last 15 years (e.g., Sundqvist, 2009). This English engagement involves both meaningful input and output as well as interaction, which are essential components needed for L2 learning (Sundqvist & Sylvén, 2016). A growing body of research has indicated a strong correlation between EE and students' English proficiency in general, and vocabulary knowledge in particular (see eg. Sundqvist, 2009, 2019; Peters et al, 2019; Sundqvist & Wikström, 2015). To investigate whether this is evident among adult L2 learners is one of the aims for my thesis.

I have been fascinated by the effects of EE (although at the time unaware of the specific term) since early upper secondary school, but then on a personal level. I sensed that my use of English outside of school accelerated not only my English proficiency in general, but also my motivation for learning. When I years later started teaching adults at Komvux, I noted that students' English habits outside of the language classroom seemed to play a role in how effectively the learners' absorbed the course content and ultimately how well they were able to develop and succeed in line with the course criteria (which were assessed after merely ten weeks). Many students struggled with vocabulary, and despite persistent efforts from me and my students, language development remained humble. My observations are in line with De Wilde (2025) who points out that the results in Peter et al's (2019) study on the impact of instruction and out-of-school exposure shows that language development will remain modest if L2 input outside of school is limited. Opportunities for learning English now reach far beyond the language classroom. However, this has not always been the case for many of the adult learners I met at Komvux, many of whom come from contexts where access to education and/or English input has been lacking. It has been stressed by Schurz and Sundqvist (2022) that EE use among students should not be overlooked, as it brings implications for both learning and

teaching as well as student motivation. Knowledge about what types of EE activities adult learners engage in (and not) is therefore paramount.

Previous research in the field has explored extramural English and its effects among younger learners, most commonly ages 10 to 16, but recently even younger learners through the STAGE project (Rindal & Sundqvist, 2025). By contrast, this project seeks to shed light on the EE habits of adult L2 learners and its potential connection to learners' developing language proficiency. Today's adult language classrooms are most often heterogenous in terms of learners' ages, prior education, and language backgrounds (Skolverket, 2025). Understanding what forms of English students encounter outside the classroom, why they engage in English activities, and how these experiences affect their vocabulary knowledge can offer important insights for practitioners. This knowledge is especially important for teachers, as it helps them support learners in succeeding in higher-level English courses in public adult education – courses that often serve as gateways to further education, employment, and ultimately the goals these adults hope to achieve. Given the limited research on adult second-language learners and the gatekeeping role of English for access to higher education (Rodrick Beiler, 2023; Bergström, 2024), there is a need for more knowledge about this group's Extramural English habits and their implications for language proficiency.

I am now in the process of constructing a solid questionnaire, while also reading up on the research field of extramural English. I am really looking forward to visit schools in the fall for my data collection and hope to shed light on an important learner group since I believe their opportunities for and interest in L2 activities outside of their classrooms may differ from, for example, teenagers. The study aims to collect 150 questionnaires, 100 student essays, 50 audio recordings of student pairs from the national oral examinations (N=100), and to conduct 20 individual student interviews. With my research, I hope to gain more knowledge on adult L2 learners' engagement in Extramural English, how this engagement connects to their language proficiency and learners' own perspectives on what influences EE participation.

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## ASLA and the EESS panel in Umeå 2026

During ASLA, the network hosted what we called an extended panel which comprised three main components, namely a plenary by Professor Eva Lindgren, Umeå University, a panel discussion and group discussions for all attendees. The topic for the session was *"The English Subject in Challenging and Changing Times: Ways Ahead"*. Our intention was that this session would start a scholarly discussion about the English subject in school and how we might have to rethink what English teaching entails due to changing conditions.

In her plenary, Eva Lindgren first described what factors she sees impacting the English subject today, such as multilingualism, technology and Global English. She then presented her ideas on how the English subject and what it means to teach English can be reevaluated. She suggested that English teaching should focus more on critical understanding, reflection, awareness, meaning-making and integrity. She further argued that the role of the English teacher has changed and that teachers are no longer the main source of input and that their role rather is to bridge between Extramural English and school, situate English within a multilingual society and teach the students *about* English.



The panel consisted of Professor Alastair Henry (Lund University), Dr BethAnne Paulsrud (Stockholm University), Carolina Clarin (teacher, teacher educator and representative from The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden) and Professor Pia Sundqvist (Oslo University). The panel discussed similar issues as was raised in the plenary, such as the issue of diversity in the classroom, the role of Extramural English and the role of AI. The discussion focused on how teacher education can prepare new teachers for the new English subject. Aspects raised were, for example, the provision of in-depth linguistic knowledge to be able to teach the language in context, more direct teaching and support as concerns differentiation, strategies for creating a safe classroom environment, modelling tasks and bridging Extramural English and the classroom to make classroom English more interesting.

The group discussions following the plenary and the panel was lively and engaged many active scholars in the field. EESS gathered some notes from the discussions and the foci differed, from the use of English in higher education and the need to prepare students for this, to issues concerning the

teaching of English in primary school, where many teachers are hesitant and unsure of their role. The organizing group is very happy with the extended panel and we feel that this session illuminated many interesting issues which can be explored further in both research and theory. We want to thank all participants, both in the plenary, panel and the group discussions and we hope that many left the session as inspired as we did.

#### One of the panel participants - Carolina Clarin

My name is Carolina Clarin. I work as an English teacher in upper secondary school (in Umeå) and have been doing so for 28 years. I teach parts of courses at the Teacher Education at Umeå universitet, and I am also one of the members of Ämneslärarprogramrådet at Umu. Outside of work, I am the representative for English in The Language Teachers' Association of Sweden.



#### **What perspective do you bring to the panel?**

Working with teaching of English and teacher students is the common denominator in my professional life. I meet teacher students at university when I teach them, and then I meet many of them as a coordinator for VFU-students, when they are placed at my school, or with me, and I also teach English myself. I hope that my combined experience from the "real world", the Teacher Education and the work with the VFU students can give a nuanced picture of reality.

#### **What are your major reflections from participating in the panel?**

I found it reassuring that we all could recognize the challenges we are facing, many opinions and thoughts that were expressed mirrored my own feelings perfectly. We were all in agreement about what is important to focus on in the reformed teacher education and that was positive too.

#### **What aspects do you find extra important for the future of English as a school subject?**

There are many aspects that feel important, but if I choose just a few, not ranked, I'd say that we need to continue working with differentiated instruction to reach everybody in the classroom, we must also focus on academic literacy since instruction at universities is to a large extent in English these days no matter what is studied, so the students are prepared for the university level discourse. Last but not least, something that was brought up in the extended panel seminar: building integrity in our students.

## A new thesis

### Affordances and Limitations of Translanguaging and Writing Tools: A Study of Emergent Multilingual Students' Writing in EFL

*Tina Gunnarsson, Lund University*



English as a subject has a special standing in our schools and in our society. In year 9 it is a core subject that gives students access to media, social networks and education now and in the future (Cabau, 2009). Historically, teachers of English have had a tendency to rely on Swedish in the English classroom, which is unfavorable for the students who speak a language other than Swedish in the home (Tholin, 2012). This growing minority of students with a migrant background (28.9 % in 2023) do not fare as well in our schools (OECD, 2015; Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2010) and have a lower grade average after year 9 (Skolverket, 2023). Studies suggest that this difference may be due to schools overlooking the linguistic resources of these students (Pacheco et al., 2015; Swedish Schools Inspectorate, 2010), or viewing the languages they speak as a problem (Gitlin et al., 2003). However, the inclusion of heritage languages as a tool to enhance learning has been shown to change their status in the classroom (Pacheco, 2016) and has the potential to benefit all students, regardless of language background (Carbonara et al., 2023; García & Wei, 2014).

Inviting languages other than the school language into the English classroom has often met with resistance. The reasons given by teachers include the fear that students will use off-task talk, that the teacher will not be able to understand or see student progress, that the invited languages may be used derogatively or disrupt students' working environment (Duarte, 2019; Haglund, 2004; Macaro, 2005; Tichenloven et al., 2021). Counter arguments can be found in several research studies that have adopted a translanguaging approach in the classroom. These studies show positive outcomes as a result of translanguaging, including an increase in student motivation, comprehension and participation (Arthur & Martin, 2006; Baker, 2011; Creese & Blackledge, 2010; Cheng, 2013; García et al., 2012; Källkvist et al., 2022; Lin & Martin, 2005).

The problem of not including students' complete language repertoires in English language learning becomes salient when they are asked to sit the written part of the national exam in year 9. For this exam, students are asked to write without the use of tools, such as dictionaries, to support their writing. Moreover, the topic of the exam is kept secret and presented to students as they sit down to write the exam, leaving no time to ponder the topic in advance. Students need to pass the exam to gain entry into upper secondary school, which makes it a gate-keeping and high-stakes test. Both national and international studies suggest that high-stakes exams tend to cause some students anxiety (Hirsh, 2016; Küçük, 2023). During the last decade there has been a decrease in compulsory students' self-reported psychological well-being in Sweden, connecting school factors such as tests and grading with feelings of stress and anxiety (Klapp et al., 2023). However, previous research has shown that allowing students the use of tools for assessment purposes, especially for writing exams, can boost students' confidence (Oh, 2020).

Using a sociocultural approach to learning, my thesis focuses on the affordances and limitations of allowing students the use of tools, including their complete language repertoires, for the purpose of

writing an essay in English. The study describes an intervention consisting of six lessons preparing students for the written part of the English national exam using both physical tools, such as mind maps and online dictionaries, and psychological tools, such as translanguaging using students' complete language repertoires. These tools are included on the basis of positive outcomes on students' results in prior research. In the first five intervention lessons, students are introduced to the tools and allowed to practice using them in smaller tasks, leading to the writing of a national exam used in the past in the sixth lesson.

One important finding from intervention lesson two shows the school language Swedish to be used extensively when students are encouraged to translanguage in smaller groups (58.5%). This finding is concurrent with previous research in mathematics and social science classrooms in Hamburg (Duarte, 2019). The target language English is the second most used (27.9%), while heritage languages, such as Albanian and Bosnian are used to the same extent as second foreign languages (French, German or Spanish) (5.5%). Results show that the use of heritage languages is directly related to the number of interlocutors understanding said language. Interestingly, students who are the only speakers of a language will use the language even if no one else understands, although to a lesser degree.

Another important finding from intervention lesson two is the amount of off-task talk students use. The amount is small (0.4 to 7.6%) compared to previous research (25% in Duarte, 2019) and the school language Swedish is used exclusively, a language that all students understand. The off-task talk is neither derogatory nor disruptive and involves everyday matters, such as an upcoming mathematics test. Lesson two further shows students use of *exploratory talk* (24.3 to 69%), a type of talk shown in previous research to be conducive to learning (Mercer, 2004).

An analysis of two student focus group interviews after lesson six reveals the mediation of the 12 tools (six physical, five psychological and one hybrid) that are introduced during the first five lessons. The mediation of the tools result in six impact factors in students' writing. An example are the tools that mediate idea generation, such as the mind map, which in turn impact the content of students' writing. Several of the tools mediate students' memory, such as the *word wall* (see Gibbons, 2009) or the hybrid tool *APE* (alone, pairs, everyone), either through the experience in the intervention lessons, or by acting as an *external memory system* (see Säljö, 2013), alleviating students' working memory. The mediation of memory in turn impacts the time distribution while writing, saving time to think about other parts of the writing process. Likewise, lexical access is mediated by a number of the tools, such as Google Translate and the built-in spelling and grammar checker, which impacts the lexical variation and accuracy in students' writing. Metalinguistic awareness is mostly generated through psychological tools, such as *backtranslating* and *rehearsing* (see Velasco & García, 2014; Wolfersberger, 2003), and impacts students' problem solving while writing, for instance by solving lexical gaps. An essay outline is mediated through an online search by one student, impacting the structure of said student's writing. Last, but not least, multiple tools mediate affirmation, such as APE and Google Translate. The affirmation of tools is what is talked about the most in the focus group interviews, impacting students' self-efficacy, the belief that they are capable of completing this specific performance task.

An overall finding on the use of physical tools, is that they generally present affordances to the majority of students. For a few students, however, the tools present limitations instead, either by adding to the cognitive demand of the task or by making students feel stressed or confused. This finding is particularly important as it shows that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to using writing tools and that the same tool can be appropriated or resisted by the same student at different times.

The same overall finding goes for the psychological tools. Whereas the majority of students found, for instance, using their complete language repertoires to engage in *silent translanguageing* while writing was beneficial to their writing process, a few students saw a limitation. These students were adamant that writing in English requires thinking in English, and the use of other languages for thinking would result in negative transfer.

When students sit the national exam, they are expected to do so in silence. Hence, the translanguageing students describe in focus group interviews and questionnaires occurs in students' minds and is therefore silent. The thesis contributes to the field of research by adding the concept of *silent translanguageing*, defined as a mental process in which students use their complete language repertoires flexibly to silently think while engaging in a complex task on their own.

When students are encouraged to translanguage in lesson two the classroom atmosphere dramatically changes. The students notice the language capability of their peers and take pride in their own ability to use, compare and contrast languages in their repertoire to complete the task of creating a word wall. The first pedagogical implication of the study therefore adds to the existing body of research, which shows positive outcomes as a result of translanguageing being used. The finding confirms previous results suggesting translanguageing and exploratory talk are dynamically linked to create learning opportunities (Duarte, 2019; Rajendram, 2019; Uddling & Reath Warren, 2023).

Tools, both physical and psychological, can be appropriated or resisted to different degrees by the same student for different tasks. While tools provide affordances for the majority of students, they present limitations for others by adding to the cognitive demand of the task. Another pedagogical implication is therefore to be open to students' needing a variety of tools, to let students decide which tools offer them affordances, while also demonstrating the limitations of tools.

Finally, the study shows implications for students' self-efficacy beliefs as the majority of students felt empowered by the use of tools while writing, concurring with previous research (Oh, 2020). Student discourse in focus groups interviews points to the authenticity of the task and how the use of tools and knowing the topic in advance resembles the daily writing practices engaged in outside of school. By implementing the use of tools in writing assessment in year 9, the construct of writing can be broadened to better reflect the skill students need in their academic and professional future, in which tools are used in abundance.

#### [Affordances and Limitations of Translanguageing and Writing Tools: A Study of Emergent Multilingual Students' Writing in EFL](#)

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## Upcoming events

### EESS Webinars

The EESS webinars have been highly appreciated and well attended. We plan to continue with the webinars and more information about upcoming webinars will follow.



# EESS

English Education Scholars Sweden

EESS cordially invite you to an online panel discussion on  
Friday, 21 November, 10:15-11:45

The panel discussion will be held on Zoom: <https://du.se/zoom.us/j/63385400138>

The future of research on English education

English education is a rapidly expanding field in Sweden, with national research and educational policies bolstering research in the field. Over the past three decades, the number of researchers examining different aspects of English education across the primary, secondary and tertiary levels has grown, leading to knowledge development and a strengthening of the research-base for English teaching across educational settings. In its first webinar, EESS wants to take stock of the developments in the field and has invited three established researchers to a discussion on the current state and the future of research on English education.

All welcome!



Joe Siegel, Professor of English with specialization in Applied Linguistics and Education, Stockholm University

Pia Sundqvist, Professor of English Education, University of Oslo

Anette Svensson, Professor of Comparative Literature with specialization in Literatures in English, Lund University

### Save the date - National Forum 2027

The National Forum for English Studies 2027 is hosted by the University of Gothenburg 21-23 April 2027. This event marks 30 years since the first forum was held there and will likely feature meetings and research presentations related to English literature, language, and culture.

EESS are planning for a symposium at the conference and we hope to see many of you there. More information will be presented closer to the time.

*See you in Gothenburg in 2027!*

