Young people's language practices and social positioning. Chaining in "bilingual" educational settings in Sweden

Annaliina Gynne a,*, Sangeeta Bagga-Gupta b

a School of Education, Culture and Communication, Mälardalen University, Box 883, SE-72123 Västerås, Sweden
b School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, Örebro University, SE-70182 Örebro, Sweden

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A B S T R A C T

The study presented in this paper examines languaging in a “bilingual” school setting. The overall aim here is to explore young people's doing of multilingualism as well as social positioning in and through the everyday social practices where literacy is salient. Anchored in perspectives that highlight the social construction of reality, and located in the geopolitical space of Sweden, this study investigates an educational setting where Swedish and Finnish are used as the primary languages of instruction but where other linguistic varieties are present. In the paper, the analytically relevant concept of chaining is empirically illustrated through the analysis of ethnographically created data. These data include video recordings of classroom interaction and materials framed within the school diary literacy practice. The chained flow of various oral, written and multimodal varieties in human meaning-making is presented as an analytical finding.

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1. Introduction

In Northern late modern societies, school arenas offer children and young people a range of opportunities for both conventional and creative usage of communicative resources related to languaging (including literacy) and learning. Participation in diverse activities and practices within formal education, which is in itself an arena for negotiating and displaying social positions (in other words identity positioning) is an important albeit sometimes implicit by-product of the institutionally framed goal of learning. For minority students attending programs that aim to promote both majority and minority language varieties in linguistically diverse contexts, this is even more the case (see e.g. Bagga-Gupta, 2013; Leung, 2005). Focusing on (i) social interactions inside and outside school environments and (ii) practices and discourses in so called multilingual educational settings both allows for a study of dimensions of language use in everyday life in schools, but furthermore for researchers interested in multilingualism and literacies to examine languaging including literacy usage in what is sometimes called identity work.

Broadly, the study presented here takes the following perspectives on learning and communication, including literacy, as points of departure. First, a socio-constructional/sociocultural perspective, based on Vygotskian thinking, that focuses human beings’ communication and learning in terms of agency and active participation in social practices and activities (Säljö, 2000, 2005; Wertsch, 1985), and second, approaches to literacy, represented in the field of multilingual literacies (Bagga-Gupta, 1995, 2002, 2012a; Martin-Jones, 2009; Martin-Jones & Jones, 2000). The latter can be exemplified through the orientations

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* Corresponding author. Tel.: +46 21 10 16 93.
E-mail addresses: annaliina.gynne@mdh.se, annaliinag@gmail.com (A. Gynne), sangeeta.bagga-gupta@oru.se (S. Bagga-Gupta).
labeled Literacy Studies or New Literacy Studies (NLS, e.g. Barton, 1994; Heath, 1983; Street, 1984). In later works within NLS, Gee (2008) discusses the relationships between discourses and literacies, claiming that both of these comprise of group-specific representations (social languages), which in turn shape individuals’ identification processes. Moreover, in terms of social positioning, a central assumption within the socio-constructional perspective is that identification processes are seen in terms of a joint social accomplishment (Antaki & Widdicombe, 1998; Bagga-Gupta, 2012a, 2013) rather than inside the head development and people’s individual characteristics.

A small but growing number of studies have illustrated the role of schools as mediators and reproducers of the common underlying ideas and values of a society (such as monolingualism), but also the discrepancy between school norms and multilingual students’ social practices (cf. Bagga-Gupta, 2002, 2004b, 2012a, b; Čekaitė & Evaldsson, 2008; Cromdal, 2000; Evaldsson, 2003). However, despite the growing body of research that highlights the positive effects of bilingual education in terms of developing bilingual skills and keeping language varieties alive both at the individual and societal levels (see e.g. Cummins, 2001; Gafaranga, 2007; Garcia, 2009; Grosjean, 2008; Hornberger, 2003, 2004; Thomas & Collier, 1997; Tuomela, 2001), there continues to exist a paucity of knowledge that is empirically grounded as far as issues related to language and literacy development or learning among bi- and multilingual young people in global, European and, in particular, Swedish settings. This was one of the central concerns for us when the research project DIMuL.\footnote{DIMuL is a part of the Swedish National Research School LIMCUL, Young Peoples’ Literacies, Multilingualism and Cultural Practices in Everyday Society. For more information about the research school, see \url{http://www.oru.se/English/Education/Research-education/Research-schools/Research-schools/LIMCUL—Literacies-Multilingualism-and-Cultural-Practices-in-Present-Day-Society/}.} Doing Identity in and through Multilingual Literacy practices, was initiated in 2010. Project DIMuL is interested in mapping the kinds of languaging, including literacy practices, young people are engaged in both in and outside what is labeled as bilingual school settings, as well as identifying what kinds of social positions they highlight and orient toward in the course of their everyday lives inside and outside of school settings. Furthermore, the project contributes to the (in the Swedish context) rather limited body of research that deals with the so-called “forgotten” middle school years (ages 9–12) as well as provides insights concerning a large, yet sparsely documented minority group in Sweden (i.e. the Sweden Finns). The local framework with regard to the project consists of a group of preadolescents attending a school, situated in Sweden, that has an official bilingual/bicultural profile.

1.1. Aims, research questions and focus of present study

The overall aim of the present study can be formulated in terms of exploring how the participants use communicative, including literacy, resources in everyday social practices and the ways in which these interconnected practices invoke linguistic and (cultural) social positions. The specific interrelated issues attended to in the study that is reported here include:

- What types of communicative resources do young people employ in different school practices in a setting that is formally labeled bilingual education?
- How, and in what ways, are aspects of communicative repertoires (such as oracy, literacy and other semiotic resources) interrelated in these practices?
- And subsequently: In what patterned ways do social positionings become salient in everyday oral and written interactions in educational settings where more than one language variety is used?

The present study contributes to a small but growing body of research that highlights and illustrates the 	extit{doing of multilingualism} inside and outside school arenas, and furthermore connects this with multilingual literacy practices and social positioning. Thus, languaging or language use broadly, including the use of oral, written and other semiotic resources related to work done in school settings are critically discussed based upon analysis of two types of empirical data in our study. These include the micro-interactional level (based upon videotaped interactional materials of naturally occurring activities from classroom settings) and the meso level of institutionalized literacy practices (based upon school diaries that students and teachers create over the course of a longer time unit, here, during a school week; ideally, these diaries are sent home to the parents on a weekly basis).\footnote{While Author 1 (in preparation) attends to communication issues, including literacies, at three levels or scales: micro-interactional, meso activity levels (for instance practices in schools and homes) and macro societal discourse levels within project DIMuL, both authors work at all three scales in different ethnographically oriented projects within the ongoing work at the CCD research environment, see \url{http://www.oru.se/English/Research-Environments/Research-environment/HS/Culture-Communication-and-Diversity-CCDKKOM/}.} Bringing together aspects of young peoples’ multilingualism, including multiliteracies, our follow-up aim is to contribute from an empirical analytical position to challenging the monolingual bias that currently dominates understandings of public as well as academic discourses.\footnote{At least in Northern settings.}

In the present study 	extit{languaging} – the dynamic and social use of different linguistic features for creating and negotiating meanings (for further elaborations of languaging, see e.g. Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; García, 2009; Jørgensen, 2008; Linell, 2009) – is seen as a core concept for understanding how human beings co-construct their social realities and participate in meaning-making. As a consequence, expressions of social positionings and identities are also seen as one of the major
functions of languaging. Identities and social positionings then, are understood as interactionally and discursively constructed, ever-changing plurals, rather than singular “possessions” that individuals own (e.g. Gee, 2000; Hall, 1996; see also Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Furthermore, the reproduction and transformation of these is considered a dynamic process occurring through the interconnectedness of interaction and communicative practices. In concert with this and in conjuncture with framings within Literacy Studies or NLS, our focus is, in addition to languaging and social positioning, on literacy practices and literacy events, or the social experiences surrounding events and activities where the written modality is oriented toward or plays a role (see e.g. Gee, 2008; Hornberger, 2003).

1.2. Organization of the paper

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents some background information concerning the linguistic and cultural landscape of the field that is focused and a brief overview of previous literature relevant for the present study. In the section that follows (Section 3), methodological perspectives and the research design of the study are spelled out. The central section of the article, Section 4, presents analytical explorations of the interactional and textual data sources that have been drawn upon. Central findings and concluding reflections are presented in Section 5.

2. Framing the study

Against the backdrop of the contemporary linguistic and educational landscape in Sweden, the research presented here focuses on the everyday lives of young people who are members of what is described as a bilingual/bicultural Swedish-Finnish minority school in central Sweden. Sweden Finns comprise the largest linguistic minority in Sweden, consisting of approximately 200–250,000 speakers (Lainio, 2001), as well as one of the five officially recognized national minorities (Language Council of Sweden, 2011). Historically and especially since the 1950s, the Sweden Finns have seen a significant process of language shift from Finnish to Swedish due to societal, attitudinal and practical reasons (Kangassalo, 2003, 2007; Lainio, 2001; Language Council of Sweden, 2011). It has also been argued that the educational system has played a significant role in this process. Furthermore, due to much-debated changes in national educational policy since the early 1990s when the compulsory school system was decentralized, the responsibility for offering bilingual programs in Sweden (for language pairs like English-Swedish and Finnish-Swedish) has at a practical level become the responsibility of so called independent schools (Huss & Lindgren, 2005; Kangassalo, 2003, 2007; Lainio, 2005). The number of independent schools in Sweden has more than doubled during the last 15 years and was 741 during the academic year 2010/11, when the data creation adhering to the present study was conducted. In all, 13% of children attending schools in Sweden were students in independent schools, as opposed to 87% in municipal schools (The Swedish National Agency of Education, 2011). Of these, approximately 1000 students attend what is formally labeled as the bilingual Swedish-Finnish programs offered by seven independent Swedish-Finnish schools. The DIMuL project school is one of these.

As indicated earlier, the research we present here focuses mundane aspects of both micro-interactional dimensions of school practices and zooms in on the meso-realms of naturally occurring languaging including literacy practices in schools, such as the DIMuL project school. Previous research findings that build upon these types of empirical material from bilingual settings are uncommon and when available are primarily based upon interactional data that is either subjected to micro-level CA, conversational analysis or a descriptive presentation. Some central findings from the few studies that have been identified and are relevant for the present study are summarized below. For a more systematic review of previous research with relevance for the ongoing work in DIMuL project, see Author 1 (in preparation).

In both Nordic and international contexts, scholars interested in young people’s language usage and identities in multilingual classrooms have provided the field with a substantial body of research on interactional data. Two recent studies from so called multilingual school settings dealing with adolescents’ social interaction and identification processes as well as language, interaction and learning in contemporary suburban Sweden have been presented by Gröning (2006) and Haglund (2005). Their research illustrates multilingual young people’s participation in creating institutional order as well as socio-cultural change. For instance, Gröning’s central finding is that students participating in small group activities engage in language problems and support each other in accomplishing adequate solutions to the tasks at hand. Several other studies have also highlighted the constitutive power of peer groups for gradual mastery of both explicit linguistic capabilities and general (pragmatic) interactional routines (see for instance Corsaro, 1985; Corsaro & Eder, 1990; Cromdal, 2000; Heath, 1983). Among early studies of language socialization and language learning Schieffelin and Ochs’s (1986) and Watson-Gegeo and Bogg’s (1977) contributions can be mentioned. In more recent studies, peer interaction inside and outside school arenas are both empirically and theoretically investigated by e.g. Bagga-Gupta (1999, 2002), Evaldsson (2005), Knobel (1999) and Kyritzis (2004). Kyritzis (2004), for instance, focuses on a number of previous studies within sociology, sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology and examines peer interaction and how peer groups and cultures are both co-constructed, as

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1 Of Sweden’s population of 9.4 million, the number of people of Finnish descent over three generations is roughly 675,000 (SCB 2009).
2 While the large majority of schools are governed by local municipalities, so called independent schools in Sweden are run by other principal organizers and owners. They are, however, publicly financed through a voucher system. These schools offer a broad range of educational choices in terms of profiles, aims, and pedagogic methods.
well as the role they play for language learning and the process of talking identities into being (Bagga-Gupta, 2012a). In a similar line of research, Cēkaitė (2006) portrays the multilingual classroom in terms of a “social site for language learning” (2006, p. 11) and highlights learners’ communicative practices through the analysis of video recordings that constitutes her main method of data creation. Such collaborative communicative practices that create comprehension and facilitate communication in peer groups are investigated also by Olmedo (2003) in a Spanish–English school setting. Olmedo suggests that providing scaffolding through, for instance, paraphrasing or spontaneously taking the role of a translator can together with paralinguistic cues be understood in terms of signs of metacommunicative awareness among children. The discursive construction of locally emerging learner identities in classroom interaction is illustrated by a number of more recent studies (e.g. Bagga-Gupta, 2003, 2010, 2012a; Cēkaitė, 2006; Cēkaitė & Evaldsson, 2008). Here a common point of departure is the intrinsic interest in social interaction in multilingual classroom settings and a focus upon language usage and identity issues. Barring Bagga-Gupta’s research, none of them, however, explicitly attends to literacy as an element of multilingual interaction and social positioning. Nor do these studies explicitly discuss “languageing” as doing, though many of them effectively illustrate the use of language from a perspective that highlights the dynamic and social aspects of language, as well as social positioning accomplished through linguistic means.

Focusing a specific form of literacy from the linguistics point of view, systematic analysis of school diaries (or log books) are uncommon and furthermore such literature rarely focuses on issues of language varieties and social positionings. Collecting participant diaries within the framework for data creation has been employed within qualitative research, especially in studies that take hermeneutical and phenomenological points of departure. However, within these perspectives diary data is often elicited by the researcher, implying that data is constructed to serve specific purposes related to the aims of that research. Working with “authentic” diary data (i.e. diaries or log books created within practices upon which the researcher has little or no influence) is therefore a less common research design perspective. Some recent exceptions in the Nordic contexts include Granath’s (2008) work on developmental talks and log books from three Swedish schools; Bergqvist and Säljö’s (2004) sociohistorical discussions on educational practices; and, Dysthe’s (1996) and Halse’s (1993) work on log book writing. Log book writing is reported to be a common school practice in Sweden and Norway that has become popular during the last few decades. The research that exists suggests that ideas of “process-oriented writing”, from for instance The Bay Area Writing Project at Berkeley University, are accounted for as inspirational sources for the spread of this school practice in Scandinavian contexts (Granath, 2008). According to Granath’s taxonomy, there are two common forms of log book writing in Swedish schools. While the first of these focuses on reflections on the content of different subjects and lessons, the other is concerned with planning and evaluating the week that has passed. Furthermore, Bergqvist and Säljö (2004) highlight that while the main purposes of “planning books” in their study have to do with organizing the coming week and documentation of past events, these comprise also a work task in their own right. The authors thereby discuss “planning” in terms of a discursive practice. Taking a somewhat different angle, “recurring” three-fold functions of log books are reported in a Norwegian school study (Dysthe, 1996) in terms of: “asking questions, writing personal reflections, but also for identification, linking and generalizing” (1996, p. 102). One of the main analytical findings in these studies is also prominent in Halse’s (1993) research and relates to the dialogical nature of log books. Based on a Bakhtinian analysis, Halse suggests that their central function is the affordances they create in terms of “double dialogic” (1993, p. 10). As a tool for self-exploration, reflection and confession, the log book intertwines the “voices” from inside and outside the student. A common theme in this literature thus includes the dialogical and multi-faceted nature of log book or diary writing. For present purposes it is important to highlight that the previous literature that explicitly focuses on log books in school settings does not, however, deal with activities in which the log book writing is embedded explicitly from literacy practices points of departure.

Two commonly recognized concepts that highlight the interconnected relationships in and between discourses and texts – or languaging including literacies – are intertextuality (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986; Kristeva, 1986) and interdiscursivity (Fairclough, 1992). According to this line of thought, there are multiple voices present in the production and transformation of discourses and texts. Furthermore, sense and meaning are seen as dialogically linked to prior and forthcoming stretches of communication, quite similar to our earlier discussion on the work of Dysthe (1996) and Halse (1993). Intertextuality thus refers to the relationship between practices and texts (in a broad sense). From an empirical point of view, these theoretical ideas are related to a specific theme that has been identified in the recent research on so called bilingual multimodal communication in the multidisciplinary field of Deaf Studies where ethnographers have studied social interaction in diverse settings where deaf and hearing students, teachers and parents are members (see Bagga-Gupta, 2000, 2003, 2004a; Erting, 1999; Hansen, 2005; Padden, 1996). For present purposes we will call attention to an interactional pattern from this body of literature that is interchangeably termed “linking” and “chaining”. Chaining, according to Humphries and MacDougall (2000, p. 90), is a “technique for connecting texts such as a sign, a printed or a written word, or a fingerspelled word. . . this technique seems to be a process for emphasizing, highlighting, objectifying and generally calling attention to equivalences between languages”.6 More recently, chaining is emerging in terms of a robust empirically grounded concept in the analysis of monolingual and multilingual hearing oral and written language use as well (see e.g. Bagga-Gupta, 2009, 2011, 2012a; Hansen, Bagga-Gupta, & Vonen, 2011; however see also Bagga-Gupta, 1995). An analytically grounded concept of chaining

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6 “Chaining” as an analytical term is thus applicable for mapping complex discursive-technological practices in different so called multilingual settings. See also Bagga-Gupta (2004a).
(in contrast to “switching between separate codes”), throws light on the meaning-making potentials in various settings where human beings use a range of communicative resources in both “oral” and “literacy” contexts.

In the Nordic as well as North American literature, chaining in multilingual-multimodal settings has been observed occurring in at least three different levels considered as local chaining, event or activity chaining, and simultaneous/synchronized chaining (see e.g. Bagga-Gupta, 2000, 2002, 2004a; Hansen, 2005). What this previous literature on the micro-interactional languaging in multilingual contexts highlights is the inter-linked nature of language-varieties-in-use in everyday life where the written-oral or written-oral-signed modalities are intricately connected to one another. For the purposes of the present study, chaining is conceptualized in terms of emic ways in which human beings connect oral, written and other semiotic resources including different modalities in the course of naturally occurring daily life. It is chaining in and between such resources that creates a communicative flow.

3. The tradition of ethnographic enquiry and methods

The DIMuL project and the study being reported here build upon the theoretical-methodological perspective of ethnography (Aspers, 2007; Heath, Street, & Mills, 2008; Wolcott, 2008). In line with the work of other critical ethnographers (for instance Whyte, 1999), we contend that ethnographic fieldwork is a shorthand term for the creation (rather than the “collection” of pre-existing data) of data through a variety of methods. In other words our data is mutually crafted, produced and constructed in the field and with the community studied, i.e. the members of what we call “Class 6C” in a Swedish-Finnish school program during the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century.

3.1. Data creation

The project school where ethnographic fieldwork was conducted by Author 1, 7 characterizes itself as “offering education from primary to secondary levels with high educational standards and learning objectives with the aim of developing the students’ bilingual as well as bicultural Swedish-Finnish skills” (original in Swedish, available in the school’s publicity materials (2010)). The bilingual program in the school can be characterized as partly corresponding to the so-called Two-Way or Dual Language Immersion programs (see e.g. Thomas & Collier, 1997) and partly to what is more generally called as Maintenance programs (see e.g. Baker & Jones, 1998). Similar to all independent schools in Sweden, the project school follows the Swedish national curriculum and syllabi, which means, among other things, that English as a subject is included in the curriculum. Specific for the project school is, however, that it caters to the educational needs of one of Sweden’s largest linguistic minorities, Sweden Finns, as it provides bilingual instruction across the curriculum in both Swedish and Finnish. Apart from serving the historical Sweden Finnish linguistic minority, the school also provides education for children of e.g. Finnish expatriates employed on one or two year working contracts in Sweden. The number of students in the school is approximately 370 with approximately 50 staff.

The present study focuses data generated in Class 6C where a handful of adults (subject teachers, class teachers, substitutes, etc.) and 18 students between 12 and 13 years of age, ten girls and eight boys are members. As is common for the large majority of students attending the school, all the preadolescents in Class 6C have at least one parent of Finnish origin and thus come from predominantly multilingual (Swedish-Finnish, but also other language variety combinations such as German-Swedish-Finnish, Spanish-Swedish-Finnish) home settings. Furthermore, all students had a range of experiences in using what can be characterized as information and communications technologies (ICT) such as computers and mobile phones. The sampling of this group of participants was based on our interest in multilingual educational settings in general and the Swedish Finnish minority group in particular, as well as the aim of investigating identifications, language including literacy practices of preadolescents in a certain age cohort (“the forgotten middle school years”). The project school, being one of only seven formally designated bilingual Swedish-Finnish schools in Sweden, together with Class 6C in which all members agreed to participate therefore provided an excellent site of investigation for project DIMuL and the present study.

The data in the DIMuL project emerged during a period of 20 months of tactically and systematically planned dimensions of fieldwork. As in much ethnographic research, the relationship between the researcher and the researched evolved and fluctuated, while gradually deepening over the course of this time. Among other things, the data created during the fieldwork included videotaping practices inside classrooms over entire days and collecting texts used and created in the classroom practices. Also, as in any ethnographic enterprise, the project included data creation that occurred in a less deliberate manner where getting involved, overhearing conversations, casual chatting and participating in activities are acknowledged. In all these processes, the so called multilingual (Finnish-Swedish-English) resources of Author 1 were significant from an analytical point of departure. In other words, the project data is wide-ranging and as such, other elements of the project data will be accounted for in forthcoming studies. The two main methodological points of departure addressed in this paper

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7 Fieldwork in project DIMuL has been conducted by Author 1. Author 2, together with another member of project DIMuL has conducted fieldwork in a parallel Sweden Finnish school within the framings of another Swedish Research Council project recently.

8 More detailed aspects of the fieldwork, conducted by Author 1, in both school and virtual environments related to studying the everyday lives of members of Class 6C as well as issues of social positioning and learning will be accounted for in forthcoming studies. An overview and description of data available in DIMuL project is available in Author 1 (in preparation) and Gynne and Bagga-Gupta (2011).
are videotaping by using a Sony Handycam HDR-SR11 video camera and participant observations in the school setting, as well as documentation of particular kinds of texts used and created by members of Class 6C. Thus, two core data sets are focused in the present study: approximately 25 h of video recordings and 98 log books or school diaries (see Table 1). In videotaping, the focus was on learning practices where the interplay of different forms of so called multilingual literacies including oracies in school work was discernible, while focusing upon school diaries gave us an opportunity for unveiling a literacy practice that frames the weekly routines of Class 6C.

3.2. Data analysis

The first set of data includes video recordings of social interactions among the students and adults in Class 6C at the Swedish-Finnish school. Data sampling and coding from the vast material of 25 h of recordings focused upon sequences that display the participants’ use of multilingual resources as well as what was identified as literacy practices in a range of situations. The entire video corpus has been subjected to preliminary analysis by using an adapted version of Conversational Analysis (CA, see e.g. Sacks, 1992a,b; Jefferson, 2004) that is inspired by (i) Čekaitė and Evaldsdóttir (2008) in conjunction with (ii) two specific extensions from our ongoing work in Bagga-Gupta and St-John (2010, forthcoming) and Holmström and Bagga-Gupta (submitted for publication). In both of the above, as well as in the present work, in addition to working with detailed analyses of the interaction, the analysts have drawn upon resources such as the ethnographic knowledge in making sense of the orientations and social positioning of the participants. The micro-interactional analysis has paid specific attention to the situated and distributed nature of multilingual (different language varieties) and multimodal (written—oral—etc.) daily classroom communication, including the interaction that focuses upon the themes, categories and social positioning brought to life by participants in the everyday life that constitutes Class 6C. For the present study, two sequences, illustrating salient features that have emerged in the analysis of multilingual literacy practices, have been selected for presentation and discussion. These sequences represent a commonly occurring phenomenon in the classroom interactional data that entails the usage of different linguistic including textual resources. They, in addition, point toward dimensions of social positioning. While the particular sequences analyzed here show features specifically relating to the activity at hand, corresponding phenomena where different kinds of oral and written linguistic elements interconnect were observed while conducting a screening of our entire video corpus.

The second set of data consists of materials pertaining to the school diary literacy practice, a local literacy practice occurring in Class 6C. A school diary in the study is a report that each student authors at the end of a school week. At least three diaries from each of the 18 students in Class 6C were added to the project data during the fall term of 2010, resulting in a total of 98 diaries in the data (see Table 1). In terms of data analysis processes, this data set has been coded as follows: By adapting a discourse analytical (DA) approach where the focus has been on what e.g. Fairclough (1992) describes as the conditions of the discourse practice or the social practices of the production and consumption associated with the texts and discourses, we have zoomed into the (i) purposes and the nature of the diary practice as well as diaries in terms of formal texts in school settings, (ii) language usage in the diaries by young people and adults, and (iii) the content of the diary entries as well as other materials pertaining to the school diary practice. The latter two are related to Fairclough’s formulation on interdiscursivity and intertextual chains: “the objective (…) is to specify the distribution of a type of discourse sample by describing the intertextual chains it enters into, that is, the series of text types it is transformed into or out of” (Fairclough, 1992:232). Prior to applying the discourse analysis on specific data sets, the diary texts were also subjected to a quantitative analysis that revealed that the students’ contributions in the vast majority (81%) of nearly a hundred diary entries were written in mostly Finnish, whereas 15% of the entries were written primarily in Swedish. Language varieties other than Swedish and Finnish or to use a common concept from the literature, “code-switching”6 in individual diaries appeared more uncommonly. It appeared in 15% of the texts and primarily as single words. The teacher’s contribution of texts pertaining to the diary practice was however always in both Finnish and Swedish. Multimodality in terms of the co-presence of alphabetical text, numbers and other semiotic resources like drawings, use of different colors and symbols, on the other hand, was a more common phenomenon, visible in 26% of the students’ texts (see Section 4.1 below). Two specific diaries that represent and reflect both unique and commonly reoccurring elements of the school diary practice have been chosen from the corpus in order to illustrate the discourse analysis and findings.

The combined analysis of these data provides insights on how young people’s written and oral language resources that include a range of linguistic varieties, and other semiotic devices, connect and intertwine within educational settings. In our analysis, the names of all participants are pseudonyms.

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6 This commonly used term in linguistics can in this context also be considered as “local chaining of different linguistic resources” (see Section 4.1 below).
4. **Languageing across time and space – chaining and other links**

In Section 4.1, two micro-interactional examples from a lesson in the language-focused subject “Swedish” are provided. These examples illustrate the intricate ways in which members’ languageing involves a number of chained linguistic and multimodal resources in heteroglossic classroom interaction. Section 4.2, then, illustrates the *layered chaining* (explained in that section) that occurs in the school diary literacy practice. This is exemplified by an analysis of the practice as well as two diary cases that highlight common routine ways in which the form, content and context of this chained communicative practice has emerged in the data.

4.1. **Multilingual chained classroom practices at the micro-interactional level**

In this section, we analytically discuss examples of classroom interaction to illustrate some commonly occurring events in the students’ lives in the data. Two empirical examples from a lesson in the language-focused subject “Swedish” are discussed. The examples represent interactions that explicate a range of phenomena that emerge in multilingual classroom interaction. The excerpts illustrate the phenomena of both initiation-response-evaluation/follow-up (IRE/IRF, cf. Cazden, 2001; Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) and peer scaffolding (cf. Cazden, 2001). In addition, and significantly, our micro-level analysis illustrates how two or more linguistic varieties, as well as different literacy resources are closely interconnected or chained in the meaning-making processes. Excerpts10 1 and 2 illustrate complex hybridity where members of Class 6C use multilingual literacies in order to co-construct meaning in the course of the flow of everyday life in the classroom.

Six students and a teacher participate in discussions that are focused upon in the two empirical examples below. The focal person in the first sequence (see Excerpt 1) is Hugo, a 12-year-old boy who is a new-comer both in the class and in Sweden from Finland and one can thus assume that he has limited experiences of using languages other than Finnish. His situation differs somewhat from Jonas’s, another 12-year-old boy born in Finland, who, despite of having limited experiences of using Swedish, seemed to have a higher command of English than many of his classmates, possibly due to the fact that he spent several years in another European country (see Excerpt 2). The focal person of Excerpt 2, Janne, was also born in Finland and had been living in Sweden and attending the Swedish-Finnish school for less than two years at the time of the study. These three students differed from the other student participants in the Excerpts (as well as other students in Class 6C): Felicia (Excerpt 1), Hans (Excerpt 1 and 2) and Filippa (Excerpt 2), in terms of their linguistic heritage, given that the majority of students in Class 6C were born and had grown up in Sweden. It can therefore be assumed that the latter have rich experiences of using both Swedish and Finnish (in addition to other linguistic varieties).

Our overarching ethnographic analyses highlight that newly arrived students who are members of Swedish language classes are usually provided separate instructions for learning Swedish and are seldom engaged in full-class activities such as the ones represented by Excerpts 1 and 2. The Excerpts show, however, a common interactional pattern wherein both oral Swedish, Finnish and/or English are locally chained or linked with written graphic resources, such as words that are displayed on the whiteboard or texts in students’ books. Such chaining occurs when the (male) teacher during the introduction phase of a Swedish language lesson integrates English written words that are displayed visually on the whiteboard from previous English language lesson in his instructional work. In an act that might seem arbitrary, he dynamically makes use of a literacy resource created by a teacher in a previous lesson to establish a linkage between different subject contents as well as temporal phases of the school day.

By using the whiteboard literacy tool the teacher (see Excerpt 1) attempts to engage two boys, Hugo (see Excerpt 1) and Janne (see Excerpt 2) in the shared classroom discourse. Hugo and Janne primarily make use of Finnish in their oral communication. Prior to the beginning of the interaction represented in Excerpt 1, the teacher has looked up at the whiteboard and by orienting toward the list of written words displayed there, now comments on what was served for lunch earlier the same day (turn 35). The teacher then poses a question concerning another word on the whiteboard (“flavor”, turn 38) and subsequently turns to Hugo (turn 42). Local chaining (i) between different language varieties and (ii) between the oral talk and the written words displayed on the whiteboard, emerges in the interaction prior to the teacher’s contribution in turn 42.

When orienting toward Hugo, the teacher’s turn indicates an explicit way to engage Hugo in the discussion as compared to what has been obvious hitherto when he addressed the entire class. This marks the beginning of an initiation-response-evaluation/follow-up sequence. Using Swedish and English as language varieties deployed in oral instruction, he employs some meta-language when he poses the question “and then I’m going to ask (,) then I’m going to ask Hugo what sausage is both in Finnish and in Swedish if you remember that” [original utterance in Swedish] (turns 42–43). The audio recording dimension of the data suggests that the teacher’s articulation of the words “In Finnish and in Swedish” [original utterance in Swedish] is slower and more emphasized than the surrounding oral talk. Aspects of linking of language varieties becomes visible as several students engage in the discourse by using Finnish to assist Hugo (“what is that sausage in Finnish” [original in Finnish and English], turn 44). Thus, the participants make use of three different linguistic registers, across two turns. This display of language hybridity and chaining continues in the following turns as another student (Janne) attempts to help Hugo by offering a response (“sausage” [original in Swedish], turn 45) to the teacher’s second question. Janne’s turn

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10 For transcription notes, see Appendix A.
is followed by Filippa’s protest (turn 46). At this point the teacher goes on to repeat the first half of his question, this time using both Swedish and English varieties (turn 47). Hugo now delivers the correct answer in the Finnish variety in a jovial voice (turn 48). In the first part of Excerpt 1, the teacher invests considerable effort in formulating his initiative aimed at Hugo. He does not explicitly employ the literacy resource written on the whiteboard, but as can be noted in this stretch of social interaction, chaining occurs not only between visually available written words and verbally articulated oral language resources, but also between different oral varieties (Swedish-English-Finnish).

By this time, Hugo has delivered half a response, and the teacher’s re-initiation leads the interaction to the next phase in this excerpt. The teacher’s repetition of Hugo’s answer (turn 49) differs somewhat from a standard Finnish pronunciation.

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11 The majority of teachers at the project school are considered multilingual, i.e. having a command of both Finnish and Swedish (in addition to English and/or other language varieties). The linguistic resources of the teacher participating in the classroom interaction represented in Excerpts 1 and 2 are, however, limited to Swedish and English. He self-reports to having little or no command of Finnish. Our empirical data also corroborates the teacher’s limited experiences with Finnish.
and becomes a source of imitation and laughter for the students (turns 50–51, 57, also later in 59–60). Using English he continues to finish the task at hand by asking Hugo (“and in Swedish” [original utterance in English], turn 49, “we had it in at lunch today” [original utterance in English], turn 52), whereby Hugo finally delivers the correct answer in Swedish (turn 53). This is rewarded by one student through an encouraging “yay” (turn 54) and by another through applause (turn 56). In addition to showing how three different oral language varieties and a list of written words in English and Arabic numerals on the whiteboard (see Fig. 6) are chained to each other, the excerpt shows how newcomers in the classroom (Hugo and Janne) are socialized into the multilingual social order through both explicit and implicit means. In other words, the analysis illustrates how the participants orient toward a multilingual interactional order in a setting that is formally perceived as a “Swedish lesson” in a school that is formally labeled bilingual. Furthermore, in the process, the participants also position both each other and themselves in different kinds of social positions such as “learners of Swedish”, “competent in Swedish (and English)”, or “helpful peers” as well as other socially constructed positions. These issues are also illustrated in the analysis of another mundane stretch of everyday interaction (see Excerpt 2 below).

The analysis of Excerpt 1 above highlights the routine ways in which meaning-making and social positioning occur through the chaining of different linguistic and multimodal elements parallel to the support of peers in mundane local-level interactions in classroom settings. This can also be seen in the next excerpt, a continuation of Excerpt 1, where the teacher responsible for teaching in the Swedish lesson continues using the English words on the whiteboard in order to engage students in the common classroom interaction.

The initial interaction represented in Excerpt 2 illustrates a typical IRE/IRF-sequence with the teacher addressing Janne with a question about the meaning of the word “bowl” in Swedish (turn 61–62). While Janne does not acknowledge the teacher’s initiation verbally he attends to the query non-verbally by shifting his gaze up toward the whiteboard and/or the teacher. Filippa’s ensuing verbal contributions in turns 64 and 66 include two chainings to a visual written resource (an Arabic numeral) relevant to the interaction when she points out twice in quick succession the number next to the word on the whiteboard that the teacher is eliciting (“seven” [original in Finnish], 64, “it’s number seven” [original in Finnish], 66). Another student supplies another hint by reading aloud the word on the whiteboard (“bowl” [original in English], turn 67), thus making yet another link to the written resource that is available visually. Janne’s ensuing turn (68) can be seen as directed to either Filippa or all the previous participants when he announces that he does not know what the oral and written word “bowl” means in Finnish, English or Swedish.

At this point, Hans, in turn 69, attempts to help by repeating/clarifying the teacher’s original query (and by this stage the entire group’s question) in Finnish: “what is it in Swedish”. (turn 69). Janne reiterates that he does not know the answer. During this stretch of talk we see that repeating/clarifying also constitutes an important aspect of local chaining (turns 64

| Teacher: | men de där å ett annat **bowl** kommer du ihåg janneva de å för nånting but that is another **bowl** do you remember Janne what it is |
| Janne: | ((looks up to the teacher/whiteboard)) |
| Filippa: | **seitsemän** seven |
| Janne: | **häh** what |
| Filippa: | **se on seiska** it’s number seven |
| Student1: | **bowl** bowl |
| Janne: | **nimut en mätiiämitä se on** yea but I don’t know what it is |
| Hans: | **mitä se on ruotsiks** what is it in Swedish |
| Janne: | **en mätiiä** I don’t know |
| Jonas: | **kulho** bowl |
| Janne: | **skål** (laughs, lays his head on his arms, on the desk) bowl |
| Teacher: | **bra () du kan ju** good () you do know |

Fig. 2. Bowl-kulho-skål (19 sec. See transcription note in Appendix A).
4.2. A multilingual-multimodal chained literacy practice

School diaries frame the weekly planning and accomplishments of each young member of Class 6C. They constitute a central artifact that frames school work in this setting as well as provide a space for portraying different identifications and positionings. The school diary also constitutes an institutional practice in which planning and reporting across a predefined period of time and activities takes place at schools. As such, it is also an example of a practice where layered chaining occurs: First, a cyclic chaining of activities within the practice across time, such as administering a weekly plan, instructing diary writing, writing diary entries and giving and receiving feedback. This cyclic activity chaining is represented by the “global” outer circle in Fig. 3. Second, the locally occurring chaining of different linguistic and multimodal elements such as written text and drawings within individual diary entries authored by the students as well as the instructions provided by the adults and 66, as well as 68 and 70). In turn 71, Jonas repeats the key word of this interaction, but now in Finnish: “bowl”, after which Janne provides the teacher with the requested response in turn 72.

Considering the micro-level locally chained interaction represented in turns 64–72, we can see that Filippa, Hans, Janne’s and a fourth student’s turns together constitute both effective peer support and a multiparty negotiation of meaning where four different participants, three kinds of oral linguistic varieties (Finnish, Swedish, English) and two written linguistic resources (Arabic numerals & English words in the Latin script) on the whiteboard are locally chained to one another. The metacommunicative awareness of the students participating in the above interaction, (as well as the interaction represented in Excerpt 1), is illustrated through both spontaneous translations and paraphrasing of the teacher’s cues. Interestingly, this collaborative and distributed work in producing the response is evaluated by the teacher as Janne’s singular accomplishment (“good, (.) you do know” [original utterance in Swedish], turn 73). However, as Excerpt 2 illustrates, communication gets accomplished in concert through the work of many members in Class 6C and the use of multiple linguistic and modality resources. One can thus see that the chaining of multilingual literacies and language is performed or played out in this community through members’ behaviors that are both situated and distributed.

Besides illustrating a common feature of multilingual human behavior, i.e. how the chaining of different kinds of oral and written linguistic elements occurs in the classroom, the excerpts reveal some other interesting phenomena. They illustrate, for instance, how students with limited experience of Swedish can be socialized into multilingualism and multilingual ways of being and exemplify how language and chaining become relevant for meaning-making and social positioning (see also Bagga-Gupta, 2012a,b). Furthermore, scaffolding and peer support are illustrated here. In Excerpt 2, for instance, Janne’s failure to deliver a response to the teacher’s initial query appears to be a result of a lack of experience with both English and Swedish, but in the end, with the (multilingual) help of his peers he does indeed succeed in delivering the correct answer. Similar kinds of scaffolding, both vertical or instructional (the teacher extending a student’s learning by asking further questions) and horizontally organized group scaffolding (occurring among peers) are extensively illustrated by Cazden (2001:60–68). Additionally, a multilingual-multimodal order and peer scaffolding are established in everyday mundane classroom life, mainly through the differentiated division of roles/positionings among the participants.

In addition to the multilingual and multimodal repertoires that are employed in everyday interactional spaces by the teachers and young members of Class 6C, linguistic and multimodal variations as well as chaining of these elements are also visible in the school diary practice. The analysis presented in the next section highlights this through two examples of diary entries as well as the school diary practice as such.

**Fig. 3.** Layered chaining in the school diary literacy practice.
in the practice. This local chaining is represented by the “core” in Fig. 3. Furthermore, there exists and interconnectedness and a flow between the local and cyclic activity chaining.\footnote{From a socio-constructional point of view it is conceptually rather reductionist to manifest phenomena such as layered chaining in a figure. This is done, however, in an attempt to visually grasp the interplay of different elements of chaining.}

The interlinked and chained flow of activities across time that occurs within the framework of the school diary brings together the participation of different people – teachers, the individual student, the students as a group, and the guardians/parents. The chaining of this string of activities where different people participate across time and space is represented schematically by the outer circle in Fig. 3 (compare with “activity-chaining” discussed in Bagga-Gupta, 2000, 2003, 2004a, and “cyclic chaining” in Bagga-Gupta, 1995). From an institutionalized perspective, a central purpose of the diary is to allow for reflections upon the week that has passed, in a similar manner to what has been described in the literature (see Section 2 above). In our data this is expected to be done with the help of two literacy resources located at the outer circle of Fig. 3. First, a (bilingual) weekly plan (see Fig. 4) that the teacher creates and hands out to the students usually at the beginning of each school week, and second, a set of questions/instruction that frames the work done in filling in the school diary (see Fig. 5), written mostly in Finnish and displayed on an overhead projector (OH) during the time allotted in the timetable at the end of each week for “writing” in the school diary. The students are expected to use these two resources (see Figs. 4 and 5) as points of departure for accomplishing the activity pertaining to their school diaries; on the right-hand side of the two-paged school diary they are required to fill in their reflections regarding the week that has passed (see Figs. 6 and 7) keeping in mind both the teacher-authored planning that is pasted on the left-hand page of each student’s school diary and the set of questions/instructions that are made available publicly via the OH during class time at the end of each week.

Fig. 4. Weekly plan authored by teacher and pasted on left-hand side of diary in Finnish/Swedish (original text on left above) with English translation (on right above). The condensed translation maps the concentrated format of the original document (see transcription note in Appendix A).
In addition to reflecting on the week that has passed, an aspect of the task within this semi-sanctioned activity for each student is to write a minimum of 50 words in their individual school diary. The analysis presented below highlights that the school diary is used for a multitude of purposes, including non predetermined official ones. Ideally, the diaries are also supposed to function as a means of communication between the school, child and parent, but in practice, this seldom seems to be the case. Together, the weekly plan, OH instructions, the composite school diary and feedback form a cyclic chained practice (cf. Bagga-Gupta, 1995), where different sets of activities and the work of different human beings are linked (see Fig. 3). This type of collaborative work with distributed responsibilities among participants is commonly accomplished by members in many kinds of institutions. The cyclic chaining of different texts and activities as well as actors’ contributions to them also comprises the first of two spheres of layered chaining. In this sphere, the interconnectedness of activities needs to
be understood more globally in terms of distributed responsibilities among participants, relations between the texts within the activity and finally, different temporal phases of the school week.

Apart from the globally comprised chained cyclic flow between the different texts and activities pertaining to the diary practice, there exists another type of locally emergent interconnectedness within this literacy practice, namely that of different linguistic and multimodal elements in individual diary entries as well as in instructive texts (see Fig. 3). The two diaries presented in Figs. 6 and 7 illustrate the chaining of different linguistic and multimodal resources within a “text”. The authors of these diary entries, two Class 6C students, Hannes and Iris are 12 years of age. Both of them are typical representative students from Class 6C in terms of their “mixed” cultural heritage as well as their access to multiple linguistic resources in their home environments. In Hannes’s case this means that his father is Finnish-born and mother is Chinese-born. He thus has a home environment where Finnish, Chinese and Swedish linguistic varieties are used. Iris, on the other hand, has a mother who is Finnish-born and a father who is Moroccan-born. Iris’s parents are separated. She self-reports that her everyday linguistic environment at home consists primarily of Finnish and Swedish.

Hannes’s entries in his diaries are overwhelmingly in Finnish. Fig. 6 illustrates a common manner in which Hannes’s contributions are made. This includes a summary of the week (see line i) as well as a commentary on the school activities in general (lines vi–ix) and diary writing more specifically (line ii). Hannes’s entries reflect a critical perspective toward this school literacy practice as well as what he infers in terms of the teacher’s engagement in the practice (lines iii–v, Fig. 6). This message gets accented both by the contents of his entries, especially the listing of “boring subjects”, and the drawing of a tongue-sticking facial caricature for the reader of his entry. This is also where we observe local chaining in the written modality: the chained connectedness of a (Swedish language based) diary template, hand-written text and a hand-drawn picture within a diary entry. Together, these create an effect and a meaning that can be interpreted as an act of resistance toward an institutional literacy practice – a meaning that would be less palpable without the chained visual and textual elements. The social position highlighted by this diary is the one of “a critical student”.

Despite the acts of resistance, the globally framed chaining of the different texts (teacher’s contributions and Hannes’s individual entry) in this literacy practice is visible in the locally constituted act; Hannes’s conforming to writing an entry – irrespective of whether he desires to do so or not. With this in mind, the lack of subsequent reaction from the adult participants in the practice (for instance in the “teacher’s and parents’ space” on the right-hand page of the diary, see Fig. 6) is noticeable. The adult feedback can be interpreted as unsatisfactory at its best as only the initials of the teacher can be noted in the square, perhaps signaling, “I have seen this”. The adult feedback can also be understood in terms of the “weakest link” in this more globally framed chained communication. Therefore it is reasonable to say that despite the founding idea of dialogism between the constellations teacher–student and school–home, the literacy practices surrounding the school diary do not appear to live up to the institutionally desired functions ascribed to it. As a practice, however, the school diary is not just cyclic and chained in nature but is also collaboratively and institutionally accomplished, which reinforces its global characteristics in the layered chaining.

To further illustrate the chaining of different linguistic and multimodal elements within diary entries, we now zoom into another student, Iris’s, school diary (see Fig. 7).

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13 Seven diary entries written by Hannes and five entries authored by Iris constitute part of this data type in project DIMuL. Their names, as well as all other names used in this paper have been coded for ethical reasons.

14 One of Hannes’s diary entries in particular, consists of the Finnish words “50 sanaa” (English: 50 words) written 25 times to fulfill the formal criteria of 50 words in the entry (SIC).
Iris's entries are usually written in Swedish, as can be seen in the example presented above in Fig. 5. Her diary entry starts with a summary of the week (line i), with a reference to an event that has little to do with school activities (line ii). Commenting these text messages, she uses smileys (inspired by digital conventions in free-hand writing) as well as slang, resources from different linguistic varieties and convention-mixing (lines iii–iv). Iris builds her focus on issues outside formal instruction and school business by reporting that she is being bullied by another girl (line v) and claims future counteraction (lines vi–viii). Thus, in terms of content, Iris's diary entry differs considerably from Hannes's, which, despite displaying resistance, primarily focuses upon (institutional) school activities. Iris seems to bring her life outside formal school into school in the interactional space provided by the school diary.

Nevertheless, both these example diaries illustrate the second essential aspect of layered chaining when elucidating locally framed (see the core in Fig. 3) chaining of linguistic and multimodal elements within the diary entries as texts. In addition to combining hand-written text with smiley images in a similar fashion as in Hannes's entry, Iris's diary entry displays words written in capitals (“UNKNOWN”, “NOO”, “NOT!” “AAJA”, “PUNC”) to express emphasis. This is a common convention in both children's and adults' writing in both digital (cf. Hård af Segerstad & Sofkova Hashemi, 2004; Messina Dahlberg and Bagga-Gupta, 2012, submitted for publication) and non-digital (see Bagga-Gupta, 1995, 2012a) environments. In Iris's diary, they accentuate the feeling of privacy in the text, as well as serve to animate the drama of the events that are being reported. This applies also to the presence of English in the diary. The words "scary", "NOT", "the Bit[ch]" intensify Iris's message, and accentuate the feeling of “writing as one speaks”, as well as exemplify the interconnectedness of two linguistic varieties: Swedish and English.

Both Hannes's and Iris's entries illustrate a common theme that has emerged in the analysis of the material: this relates to the making of features of spoken vernacular available in the written modality. Thus, even though most of the students generally seem to orient toward the standard written norms of primarily Finnish, they frequently employ features of spoken Finnish, Swedish and English in their diary entries. Furthermore, and yet again connected to a more globally framed level of chaining, despite appearing in the “weekly plan” as a part of the “writing agenda” of the subject Finnish (see Fig. 4 agenda 3: “3. FINNISH, Writing”), it is apparent that participants do not accord the diaries the same stature as other formal literacy practices in the school context. This is emphasized also by the fact that the school diary is not mentioned under the headline “Assessment” in the weekly plan (see Fig. 4 agenda 3: “3. FINNISH, Assessment”).

To summarize, Iris’s diary entry represents a common feature in the data wherein there is a transfer of norms and elements from one media to another. The smileys or emoticons in Iris’s text as well as other symbol combinations commonly seen in e.g. technology-mediated communication illustrate how the conventions of writing in digitalized milieus (social media via computers, mobiles, etc.) are now surfacing in hand-written literacy practices. In addition to illustrating how young people's expertise in communication in digital milieus spills over into animated and new hybrid forms of communicating in non-digital milieus, the analysis also demonstrates how conventional writing and visual hand-drawn images coexist multimodally in young people's literacy practices. Chaining of different elements more locally in a text becomes visible as an important technique for meaning-making in these processes. Moreover, bringing linguistic, including literacy, resources more commonly used in e.g. social media worlds into classroom settings in this type of literacy practice allows us to get a glimpse of how young people stage social positionings in and through their everyday writing work. It is normally not easy to gain insight on such processes through written records within the institutional framework of the school.

5. Chaining in and between language varieties and modalities. Concluding reflections

The study presented here highlights the complexity and hybrid nature of young people's language including literacy practices in a multilingual educational setting where Swedish and Finnish are formally understood as framing learning and instruction. Through the analysis of ethnographically created data sets and activity types, specifically mundane daily social interaction during language-focused instruction and school diaries, this study has illustrated the ways in which young people and adults in institutional settings employ a range of language varieties and modalities when participating in meaning-making. More importantly, the analysis presented here illuminates the chained nature of language, i.e. the usage of oral, written and other semiotic resources, including at least two, sometimes three, language varieties that are available to the participants in learning environments.

The analytical findings of our study have a number of important implications for the understanding of human beings' language use and social positioning in educational settings. First, the analysis of the data sets focused upon in this article has shown that the concept of chaining allows for the (re)examination and (re)interpretation of human beings' participation in various kinds of communicative activities where literacy plays a role. Drawing attention to the interconnectedness of oral, written and other semiotic resources in human communication rather than emphasizing the separate natures of e.g. different linguistic codes or written and oral texts entails a novel way of understanding language and meaning-making practices. To exemplify, we contend that the large body of literature that has focused multilingualism from a micro–interactional perspective primarily highlights oral use of language and etic perspectives on language use, wherein the analysts highlight boundaries between codes in play, rather than the fluidity inherent in the meaning-making enterprise that participants orient

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15 See Bagga-Gupta (2012a) for a critique of this in terms of the “oral language bias”.
toward in everyday life situations. The present study emphasizes the importance of highlighting the interplay of oral, written and other modalities from a range of data sets, both micro-interactional and meso scale analysis of literacy practices.

Second, chaining as a phenomenon seems to emerge in spaces that are rich in what may be called multilingual–multimodal interactions and discourses. Whether these spaces are constructed locally at the micro-interactional scale – as seen in the analyses of “Swedish lesson” zoomed into in the present study – or at the meso level as seen through the flow of activities related to the school diary literacy practice, chaining has been illustrated as playing an intrinsic role for interaction where different linguistic varieties, modalities and semiotic resources come together. Our analyses illustrate the complexity of links between different resources, varieties and modalities. This constitutes an overriding theme in the data. The observed phenomena in the micro-interactional level in the present study resemble findings from the Deaf Studies field, where studies since the 1990s have shown that chaining is accomplished in interesting ways in communities where two or more language varieties (for instance English & American Sign Language, Swedish & Swedish Sign Language) are used in school and/or home settings. This has been shown to be especially relevant when new vocabulary knowledge is introduced or discussed in different social practices both inside and outside institutional settings. For instance, Humphries and MacDougall (2000) suggest that the analytically framed languaging, i.e. chaining, where American Sign Language–English language varieties are used occurs when adults introduce new content or English vocabulary. This, they suggest, can be interpreted both as a method for signaling distance between two linguistic–cum-modal resources and for bridging the gap between them. The examples that represent the analysis in the present study reinforce this issue, especially in terms of opening up meaning potentials of concepts that students/adults or peers might have limited experiences in, in Swedish or Finnish or English. The micro-interactional examples discussed here include also IRE/IRF-sequencing (cf. Mehan, 1979; Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975). Through careful examination of these examples, it can be concluded that the construction of the three phases (initiation–response–evaluation/feedback) occurs in several different ways. In Excerpt 1, both teacher and students participate in the construction of initiation, but also in the shaping of the response, where collective and chained (re)production is especially salient in the interactional sequence represented in Excerpt 2. Moreover, different members’ participation in the meaning-making enterprise also reinforces the chained nature of the social practice. This chaining of diverse linguistic and multimodal resources constitutes an important element of languaging (see also Jewitt, 2009).

Third, chaining can be seen as emerging in circumstances where interconnectedness across different scales of analysis becomes an important issue. In the literacy practice framed by the school diaries the chaining of linguistic and multimodal resources becomes visible in an equally significant, albeit somewhat unique manner.16 An important finding here is what we call layered chaining, illustrated in the emergence of the overarching school diary practice through the flow of cyclical and repetitive acts and activities of different participants (what has been called “activity chaining” in the literature) – including the chaining of different linguistic and multimodal elements within individual diary entries and instructive texts and the interplay between these (what has been called “local chaining/linking” in the literature). When Dysthe (1996, p. 103) describes one of the functions of log book writing as linking, she emphasizes the affordance of the log books in terms of providing students with the possibility of dialoguing with themselves and thus creating links between one’s personal self and the outside world, between historical and current events and between bits of knowledge summoned from different areas of life. Chaining in our analysis is, however, examined from a slightly different point of view. The analytical focus is on the interlinked flow of activities, linguistic and other semiotic resources and members’ participation, rather than focusing on individual internal processes within the person. Moreover, features of log books presented by Dysthe (1996) as well as Bergqvist and Säljö (2004) and Halse (1993) can also be identified in the literacy practices that frame school diaries in the present study. In concert with Bergqvist and Säljö’s (2004:111) observations regarding child-centered pedagogy, the present study also highlights the relevance of students’ participation in planning activities – as well as possibilities and limitations within practices of this kind.

In summary of the above, the concept of chaining has analytical relevance for the examination of practices where relationships between various forms of multilingual–multimodal communicative resources are focused. Fourth, highlighting chaining as an analytical concept allows us to examine social positioning and identity work from a new angle. The findings of the present study illustrate that participation in daily interaction and literacy practices in what can be termed multilingual–multimodal educational settings offers young people specific opportunities for staging, making visible and (co)constructing both their own and their co-participants’ social and identity positionings at the micro-interactional level. As such, the usage of different kinds of communicative resources also appears to highlight the fluid and linked nature of identities-in-action at the micro level, while constructing local and temporary social positionings such as: “being a helpful student” or “being a learner of Swedish or English”. In terms of literacy practices such as the one that frames school diaries, they often stem from an institutional enterprise, but also relate to literacy habits and functions in the students’ semi-private sphere. As has been illustrated in this study, the affordances of the school diary practice go beyond the institutional framework. Thus, apart from fulfilling the institutionally projected goals within the practice, the school diary can be considered both a space where life agendas more broadly can be focused and a tool for portraying social positioning. For instance, the diaries force but also offer participants a chance for locating themselves in relation to the activity at hand – conforming to writing can also include an act of resistance as seen in the analysis. Furthermore, reflections in individual diary entries may

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16 Unique in that this type of chaining has not been described in the existing literature.
also position a student in relation to the surrounding world both within and beyond school activities. Thus situated identities that are oriented toward in diary writing in terms of “being a good student” (by fulfilling the task of writing) can also become shaped in terms of “being a dissatisfied student” or “being a bullied student/social outcast”, etc. The connectedness of diverse linguistic and multimodal resources plays a central role in staging these social positionings and aspects of identity. One can say that language or the ways-with-words in itself enables the identification processes or the ways-of-being here.

The overarching framework for the research presented here deals with the issues of fluidity of languaging and social positioning. As we summarize in this concluding section, this can be contrasted with the strict code-perspectives on language varieties in policies, the focus on language competencies as aspects of “stuff” that human beings own, and the focus upon traditional. The findings presented here indicate that being a part of a multilingual community such as the one that constitutes the Swedish-Finnish school as well as Class 6C also means using a wide range of oral, written and other semiotic resources in learning and instruction and performing socially. Thus “being bilingual” can be understood as having access to and being able to participate in (institutional) multilingual contexts in a fruitful manner. Finally, from a didactic point of departure, the research presented here has relevance for issues that deal with the construction of and the flow of educational practices that take place in all classrooms – irrespective of whether these are formally identified as being multilingual or not. Creating learning environments that are not only rich in terms of diverse linguistic (including literacy) resources, but that also creatively and effectively employ different tools and affordances the members themselves bring into classrooms is a challenge for institutional education both in Sweden and elsewhere.

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Appendix A. Transcription note

Transcription key for school diaries (Figs. 4–7).

- **bold** original text in English
- *italics* original text in Finnish
- **regular** original text in Swedish
- #you# vernacular
- {name} author commentary

Transcription key for interaction material (Excerpts 1 and 2).

- **bold** original utterance in English
- *italics* original utterance in Finnish
- **regular** original utterance in Swedish
- **Hello** stress
- **(xxx)** denotes smiley voice
- **(here)** unsure transcription
- **((looks up))** non-verbal action
- **[look]** overlapping utterances
- **(.)** pause less than 1 s
- **(1,0)** pause longer than 1 s

References


