Can teachers translanguage? Separate language ideologies and translanguageing practices across time and space in a bilingual Sweden Finnish school

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I will explore teachers’ translanguageing practices in a bilingual Sweden Finnish school in a multilingual/multicultural suburb in Stockholm. The focus is to demonstrate how teachers’ language practices and ideologies, and professional trajectories have changed over time and space and are still changing; the changes are observable in different educational spaces, e.g., documents, teaching and learning activities and the linguistic landscape of the school. This study draws upon data collected during a long-term ethnographic and sociolinguistic project on ‘Investigating discourses of inheritance and identity in four multilingual European settings’. The data consist of fieldnotes, vignettes, audio and video recordings, interviews and photos of the linguistic landscape in school settings.

Translanguageing is an act performed by bilinguals of accessing different linguistic features that belong to what are described as autonomous languages (García 2009). Whilst a common leisure time practice among multilingual pupils, translanguageing or flexible bilingualism (Creese and Blackledge 2011) is neither traditionally nor officially encouraged in the Swedish educational system; nor is it officially accepted in school policy and practice. Ideologically and officially, teachers do not translanguage. Yet, teachers have become multilingual over time. In superdiverse learning spaces, teachers use their multilingual resources to support learning in ways that mirrors the life worlds of their pupils. I will contrast the unofficial translanguageing practices documented in the classroom with and the official language policy and ideology of bilingual education and discuss how practices, policies and ideologies have been shaped by different constrains across educational time(s) and space(s).


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