PARALLELINGUALISM, TRANSLANGUAGING, AND ENGLISH-MEDIUM INSTRUCTION IN NORDIC HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

English today is used as a medium of instruction globally, from primary school through tertiary level. English-medium instruction, henceforth EMI, can be defined as the “use of the English language to teach academic subjects (other than English itself) in countries or jurisdictions where the first language of the majority of the population is not English” (Macaro 2018, 1). The focus in EMI is primarily on the disciplinary content in courses rather than on the English language as a subject. Still, according to the “four characteristics of EMI settings” (Pecorari and Malmström 2018, 499), the role of the English language is central:

1. English is the language used for instructional purposes
2. English is not itself the subject being taught
3. Language development is not a primary intended outcome
4. For most participants in the setting, English is a second language (L2)

Despite the prominent role of English, there is usually an absence of language goals in most EMI courses and programs in higher education (HE) (Lasagabaster and Doiz 2021, 1–2) as the “overarching teacher focus is on content” (Macaro 2018, 8). So why is EMI provided if not mainly for English language proficiency? Three types of motives that universities may have for introducing EMI include strategic motives, pedagogical motives, and substantial motives (Dalton-Puffer 2012, 101–102).
Strategically, universities may use EMI as a means to attract top students and staff, especially internationally. This academic marketing is aimed at increasing the prestige of an institution, promoting the competitiveness of universities, and utilizing the marketable commodity leading to revenues for universities (Richards and Pun 2022). The “exponential increase in the number of universities worldwide offering English-medium instruction” has been argued to be a result of both the neoliberalisation of HE and the global spread of English by Block (2022, 82), who further argues that “the marketisation of all academic activity” (83) means that “internationalization” is more about universities competing (often domestically) for the financing that incoming students and research grants entail. Block states that “internationalisation usually means Englishisation” (86), resulting in what he calls the “internationalisation-Englishisation-EMI chain” (87). That is, the focus on internationalization leads to the greater use of English which in turn leads to the development of EMI programs. EMI programs afford a means of attracting students in a competitive global education market, which in turn can affect university ratings positively (Gabriëls and Wilkinson 2021), granting them an “elite” status (Dalton-Puffer 2012, 101).

Pedagogically, the provision of EMI may afford students the “global literacy skills” needed in a competitive future workplace where English proficiency is highly valued (Richards and Pun 2022, 22). By studying EMI programs at undergraduate level, students may also feel they are well prepared to continue their studies on the master or doctoral level (Högskoleverket 2008, 27). With increased opportunities for an “international academic life,” students may both benefit from wider “lingua-cultural horizons” (Dalton-Puffer 2012, 101) and boost their linguistic capital. Substantially, referring to what is essential or necessary, EMI may provide L2 students with the opportunity to develop adequate proficiency in English as an academic lingua franca (Richards and Pun 2022, 22), allowing them access to scientific literature in their fields of study (Dalton-Puffer 2012, 102).

The use of English as a medium of instruction at Nordic universities is increasingly common (Airey et al. 2017), with the reasoning behind the choice to offer EMI in line with the motives described above. One ambition is to attract more students from abroad. In part, this is to get fees from non-EU students, but also for “internationalisation at home” (Nilsson 2003): that is, to offer students contact with the world beyond (Dimova, Hultgren, and Kling 2021). Thus, EMI is attractive both for incoming international students, as well as for local students who may believe that EMI will help them to use and improve their English (see also Morell and Volchenkova 2021) and who may benefit from the opportunity to study at an EMI university without ever leaving their home context (Richards and Pun 2022, 22). As such, beyond the “perceived socio-economic value associated with the improved proficiency in English that stakeholders may attribute to the increased exposure to
EMI also responds to “linguistic aspirations for proficiency in English and to imagined futures that require knowing English in a globalised world” (Paulsrud and Cunningham forthcoming).

Further, EMI has been identified as both due to internationalization and the cause of internationalization (Malmström and Pecorari 2022, 12). The Bologna Declaration (Bologna Process Committee 1999) is frequently assumed to have promoted EMI with the focus on internationalization (Richards and Pun 2022, 24; Salö 2010). Its goal, however, was rather to promote student mobility through a standardized system of education across European countries, including comparable degrees and similar systems of degree cycles and credits. The word English is not even mentioned in the declaration. Nonetheless, with the Bologna Declaration, the goal of internationalization across HE in Europe resulted in more universities offering EMI as a means of facilitating student mobility (Saarinen and Ennser-Kananen 2020). This was true of the Nordic countries as well, although both Norway and Sweden had already started their own processes of internationalization and EMI before the Bologna Declaration, while there has been more resistance to similar processes in the Finnish context (Airey et al. 2017). This chapter considers EMI in the Nordics, highlighting the case of Sweden.

Main concepts

Despite the label, EMI is rarely conducted completely monolingually, with the reality “a plethora of de facto policies and classroom materials and methods” in more than one language (Paulsrud, Tian, and Toth 2021b, xix). There are two concepts key to understanding the juxtaposition of a monolingual habitus of “English only” in EMI classrooms contra a specified explicit or de facto policy of multiple languages in use: parallelingualism and translanguaging.

Parallelingualism is central to all aspects of language policy and use in the Nordic HE context (Holmen 2012). It is often deemed the best option in Nordic EMI contexts (Salö 2010), although Hultgren (2014, 69) maintains that it “does not need to entail an exact reduplication of all activities.” In the Nordic context, the Nordic Council of Ministers (2018, 14) open up for parallel use of more than two languages:

Parallel language use […] means that two or more languages are used for the same purpose in a particular context or within a particular sector of society, in this case at universities in the Nordic Region. For most people, the use of English plus another language will probably spring to mind, but the concept is equally applicable to the use of Swedish and Finnish in Finland, or Danish and Greenlandic/Inuit in Greenland.
mix as part of the process of internationalisation of the universities, there are not two languages in play, but three.

As the Nordic Council of Ministers (2007, 93) specify, with parallelingualism, “none of the languages abolishes or replaces the other; they are used in parallel.” It may be difficult, though, to promote EMI while at the same time maintaining the local language as one of equal academic status (Holmen 2012). As such, parallel language use has been critiqued as a policy as it is more politically driven than practically oriented (see e.g., Kuteeva 2020). More pointedly, Airey et al. (2017, 568) maintain that the development of parallel language use as a policy was “mainly a pragmatic solution constructed in order to deal with the rapid expansion of English in Nordic higher education.”

Translanguaging is both a theoretical and a pedagogical concept (Paulsrud, Tian, and Toth 2021a). Translanguaging theory “counters ideologies that position particular languages as superior to others” (Vogel and García 2017, 6). Applying the theory to pedagogy affords legitimatization of all languages for learning. Pedagogical translanguaging (Cenoz and Gorter 2022) actively taps into students’ linguistic competences to build on previous knowledge and let them together synthesize their co-constructed learning using various strategies. Functions of pedagogical translanguaging in the HE classroom may include using linguistic resources for “appealing for assistance; ensuring comprehension; verbalising content knowledge; task management; signalling cultural identity; and strengthening cooperation,” according to interviews, questionnaires, and observations conducted by Dalziel and Guarda (2021, 132; see also Yoxsimer Paulsrud 2014 for similar functions identified in upper secondary EMI classrooms in Sweden).

Regardless of the language of instruction, non-mandated or covert student-student interaction during instruction (e.g., whispering in class) is often in students’ language(s) of choice, which Antia (2016) terms translanguaged siding. He describes this as “student-to-student communication occurring in parallel to teacher talk, but using language and other semiotic resources that differ from the teacher’s in order to shape understanding of the teacher’s meanings or to make other meanings” (184). Lecture sidings facilitate epistemological access to linguistic and content support available to students. Translanguaged siding occurs regularly, for both academic (e.g., clarification) and non-academic (i.e., social interaction) purposes, as also described above.

An overview of selected EMI research

In recent years, many overviews of EMI in HE have been published (e.g., Henriksen, Holmen, and Kling 2018; Hultgren, Gregersen, and Thøgersen 2014;
Kuteeva, Kaufhold and Hynninen 2020; Lasagabaster and Doiz 2021; Richards and Pun 2022; Wilkinson and Gabriëls 2021) in addition to an anthology on EMI in relation to translanguaging in diverse contexts (Paulsrud, Tian, and Toth 2021a). In this section, we will briefly focus on several themes present in international as well as Nordic research: policy and ideology in EMI, stakeholders and language use in EMI, and multilingualism and EMI. Each focus is interrelated.

Policy and ideology in EMI

The Nordic Council of Ministers (2018, 14) state, “English is unquestionably the largest and most widely used international language in the Nordic Region.” The special status of English is reflected in both national and local policy. On a micro level, there is an “assumed relationship between the [implicit or explicit] policy of English-medium education and language practices in local classroom settings” (Söderlundh 2014, 112), with research often focusing on practices in relation to local policies. However, macro-level structures are “political discourse as action in a particular context” as well as intertwined with micro-level actors (Halonen, Ihalainen and Saarinen 2015, 15). Ignoring the interaction between the two levels may mean that one sees only how the local actors enact official or de facto language policies; ideologies expressed in national and university policies may or may not align with the individual actor in the classroom. Thus, it is key to understand how the interaction between levels takes place, as “ideologies are at the root of what educators do in school” (Garcia and Kleyn 2016, 20). Ideologies – beliefs about language that often position the individual’s feelings and attitudes about the language – are expressed through implicit and explicit policies in the classroom.

Focusing on ideology as key to educational contexts, Söderlundh (2014) presents a minor metastudy of five works on language practices in Swedish HE, differentiating between studies of the normative approach and the dynamic approach of how stakeholders choose languages in the classroom context. In the “normative” approach, the “declared medium of instruction” is assumed to be reflected in practice (Söderlundh 2014, 115), while the “dynamic” approach “embodies a less normative view of the relationship between policy and practice, in that the policy-prescribed medium of instruction does not necessarily correspond to the medium of classroom interaction” (116), which may include multiple languages. Söderlundh argues that policies can be negotiated in micro spaces, a move away from a static approach in which English is assumed as the norm as the “the policy-prescribed medium of instruction” – and the intrusion of other languages is seen as deviant. Indeed, Creese and Blackledge (2010, 113) describe “the burden of guilt associated with translanguaging in educational contexts” as students and teachers may
feel they are breaking a contract of planned medium of instruction when they use languages other than English.

Stakeholders and language use in EMI

As Pecorari and Malmström state, “EMI presupposes and is enabled by the ability of all participants (e.g., teachers, students, administrative staff) to use English as a lingua franca” (2018, 497). This reflects an assumption that the use of English for teaching and learning in EMI is unproblematic in the Nordic countries. However, Airey et al. (2017) argue that the Nordic countries have tended to jump on the EMI bandwagon with little “reflection about how English should be introduced or where it may (or may not) be appropriate – the simple premise seems to be ‘more English is better’” (567). Thus, while EMI may allow for an influx of international students, the form of teaching may also present Nordic students with both the opportunity and the challenge of studying higher level education through English, usually as a second or third language.

Björkman (2008, 36) considers the users of English in the EMI classroom as “speakers” – students who “simply need a tool [the English language] to get the work done,” rather than English language learners. Undergraduate students in a study based in Catalonia (Machin, Ament and Pérez-Vidal 2023, 87), however, viewed their choice for EMI according to the following themes: “(1) The right fit for me; (2) To practise my English; and (3) English comes with benefits.” The “aligners” who felt EMI was a good fit were “confident shoppers in the international university market, able to shape their own educational destinies” (89). While those wishing to practice their English, identified as “learners,” chose EMI for L2 improvement, they still did not explicitly consider their lecturers to be English-language teachers (91). The “valuers” who viewed English as beneficial focused more on linguistic capital and global literacy skills, reflecting motives concerning imagined futures presented above.

Notwithstanding these fairly positive student intentions with EMI, EMI students are “expected to have a high level of English language proficiency and, given the increase in international mobility, tend to find themselves in linguistically and culturally heterogeneous groups” (Smit and Dafouz 2012, 3). The dominance of English in these HE contexts places a demand on the students’ (and teachers’) abilities to effectively communicate. Some students may even feel “guilty” about speaking other languages in an EMI context (see Creese and Blackledge 2010 above), as seen in Dalziel’s (2021) small-scale study of multilingual students in an Italian EMI program. Local students using Italian feared excluding the international students, but some international students actually saw the use of Italian as a means to expand their linguistic repertoires.

Addressing the issue of potential cognitive overload when students study disciplinary content through a foreign or additional language, some have called
for language teachers to actively participate in EMI (Rauto 2008), although this is not the expressed intention nor observed practice of EMI in Swedish universities. Concerns have arisen about how well EMI programs may be able to meet the needs of learners when there is little (if any) focus on language goals. Potential learning issues emerge when courses are taught through a language that is not the students’ strongest, such as questions of equity in learning conditions, assessment bias when English is a second language, and the uneasy juxtaposition of content-learning goals versus language-development goals (e.g., Brock-Utne 2022). Furthermore, in EMI, content teachers do not see themselves as language teachers (Airey 2012). For example, in the Finnish HE context, many university lecturers consider English simply as their daily working and teaching language; they see a “limited need to consider it in teaching” (Tuomainen 2022, 103). Airey et al. (2017), however, call for university language policies to more directly address the choice of language across different disciplines, with discussions about the choices to be held at the course level, in line with Airey’s argument that “all teachers are language teachers” (2012, 64). Brocke-Utne (2022) and Tuomainen (2022) have found, though, that university lecturers in Norway and Finland, respectively, vary in how confident they feel about their English as a language for teaching in EMI. Still, Björkman (2008, 40) has previously noted that while exchanges between L2 English speakers in a high-context academic setting in Sweden revealed many instances of non-standard usage, few of the interlocutors experienced disturbances in communication. Furthermore, in the 2008 report on EMI in Swedish universities, teachers were rated highly by incoming foreign students for their English language competence (Högskoleverket 2008). This can be compared to Block’s (2022) case study of an EMI lecturer questioning their own competence and status as instructor with an L2, as well as Tuomainen’s (2022) study of participants who did not question their competence, even after a professional development course which problematized EMI, thus indicating variation in lecturers’ experiences with teaching disciplinary content in English.

**Multilingualism and EMI**

The research looking into actual language use in university teaching or stakeholder perceptions of desired or de facto language policies in seminars and lectures tends to focus only on the parallel use of the local majority language and English. What is often lacking in the research is an opening for how international (or local multilingual) students and lecturers may use or be encouraged to use other parts of their linguistic repertoires for their studies in EMI courses or programs. The linguistic hierarchy does not generally admit other languages to EMI. Kuteeva (2020), asking “If not English, then what?” points out that Sweden is one of the most multilingual countries in the EU, and this is reflected
in the variety of first languages spoken by students and lecturers. Languages other than English – both local majority and minority languages (Salö 2010; Söderlundh 2014) as well as the languages of international students – may be more present in the EMI classroom than the desired policies provide explicit space for (see more below on space).

The Nordic Council of Ministers (2018) call for more parallel language use, but Kuteeva (2020, 30) argues that parallelingualism “promotes two parallel monolingual systems based on standard language use” with “relatively little consideration for the multilingual resources of students and international staff” (51). However, local staff are probably at least as likely to control multilingual resources as “international” staff from the anglophone world, as they may master Swedish and English as well as other possible learned or acquired languages. In her study of open response survey data from staff and students at Stockholm University collected in 2012, Kuteeva (2020) identifies three dominant discourses in Swedish HE. Firstly, what she calls “epistemic monolingualism,” where staff and students express concern about missing knowledge produced in languages other than English (and Swedish) (see also Brock-Utne 2022). Students do not, however, want more course literature in other languages, rather that more literature should be translated into Swedish. Secondly, she describes what she calls “(wishful) academic multilingualism,” where respondents focus particularly on German and French as desirable languages of scholarship in specific disciplines, while not actually having access to those languages. Thirdly, she reports expressions of “deficient multilingualism,” a perceived lack of linguistic resources in Swedish and/or English among specific groups of L2 users. This refers particularly to students who do not have Swedish as their first language (L1), questioning the value of EMI with local students who do not have Swedish as L1 and raising the question if Swedish or English would better serve the needs of these students.

Theoretical framework

HE settings offer possibilities for the navigation and implementation of both explicit and implicit language policies and ideologies, which may be contested. Hornberger (2002) originally coined the concept of “ideological and implementational spaces” in response to one nation–one language ideologies present in language ecologies. She noted that, on the one hand, English was rapidly becoming a global language, thus disrupting the single national language ideology and, on the other hand, language revitalization efforts of minority and indigenous languages were increasing, also upsetting the hegemony of the majority language. Ideological spaces in policy (e.g., curriculum) allow for
implementational spaces in practice (e.g., classroom level). In the EMI context, ideological and implementational spaces may be related to the possibilities to promote linguistic diversity in the nominally monolingual classroom – policies (e.g., government, university, or local) that promote and value the use of multiple languages for learning open ideological spaces. With a lack of clear directives in policy, inconsistent interpretation and implementation of policies in the EMI classroom may be likely.

In Sweden, English closely follows the top-positioned national language Swedish, highly valued and visible in all levels of education as well as throughout society (Hult 2017) – “higher” in status than other minority languages in the country (Källkvist and Hult 2020). Despite Swedish remaining key in policies such as the Swedish Language Act (SFS 2009), hierarchization is evident. As Risager (2012, 115) argues: “When one chooses a language in practice, one simultaneously excludes all other languages, specifically the language(s) that compete with it in the context in question. When one explicitly includes, or just mentions, a language or a category of languages in representation, one simultaneously excludes all other languages.” For example, Swedish is often used in undergraduate programs, while English is often used in graduate programs, where mobility is more inherent (Malmström and Pecorari 2022). This may suggest a linguistic hierarchy of legitimate languages for advanced learning where English is considered more appropriate than Swedish. When a language is chosen for writing, speaking, and interaction in a certain context, hierarchization is clear (Risager 2012, 114).

**EMI in Swedish higher education**

We now consider Sweden as a case study, beginning with a brief overview of Swedish language policy in relation to English and then providing a targeted snapshot of the current situation in EMI course offerings and policy in two higher education institutions (HEIs) in Autumn 2022. We consider various layers of policy, exploring how EMI is related to Swedish national language policy, how EMI is presented in two local HEIs, and which ideological and implementational spaces may exist for multilingual translanguaging and/or parallelilingualism in the Swedish HE context.

In the Swedish context, national policies elevate the status of English in Sweden, as noted previously. For example, English is the only obligatory language other than Swedish in the national curriculum for compulsory school. Advanced proficiency in English is common in Sweden, and English is seen as a valuable commodity (Kuteeva 2020), widespread, for example, in media, advertising, and business (Bolton and Meierkord 2013) as well as the
linguistic landscape (Cocq et al. 2022). Sweden’s first legislation regarding a principal language, the Swedish Language Act (SFS 2009:600), safeguards the status of Swedish while also promoting multilingualism, stipulating that all residents of Sweden must have opportunities to acquire the Swedish language, develop their mother tongue and obtain an adequate knowledge of English and other foreign languages. The action plan leading to the act focused on the role as well as perceived threat of English (SOU 2002, 1): “What can we do to ensure that Swedish continues to develop as an all-round language, while not hindering the employment of English in all the connections in which its use is required, and making sure that everyone acquires the knowledge of English they need?”

Still, the Swedish Language Act “makes no attempts to regulate EMI,” leaving this to “local language policies of individual universities” (Airey et al. 2017, 567). Even so, in an analysis of eleven university language policies, Gustafsson and Valcke (2021, 223) found that all refer to the Swedish Language Act (SFS 2009), especially in these two regards: “(i) that Swedish is the language of agencies and authorities; and (ii) that agencies and authorities have a responsibility to promote the development of Swedish as a language also of science with a focus on building disciplinary terminology,” either explicitly or generally. Parallelilingualism was also present in all the studied policies. However, Malmström and Pecorari (2022) suggest that the Language Act is not truly followed in the current situation of English and EMI in Swedish universities today, as English continues to threaten certain domains and Swedish is not always developed in HE contexts (see Chapter 6).

We can compare the policy situation to other Nordic countries. For example, in Finland, English was only recently seen as a threat to Finnish, especially in HE, turning the debate to English vs Finnish rather than the historically contested role of Swedish in Finland (Saarinen and Ennser-Kananen 2020). In the Norwegian context, Brock-Utne (2022) identified several threats to Norwegian as an academic language, including researchers receiving higher monetary bonuses for publications in English, and debates and petitions from academics wishing to preserve Norwegian as the primary language of HE. Brock-Utne (2022) comments that a consequence of the removal of a paragraph in the 2005 version of the language policy which stipulated that “The language of instruction in Norwegian universities and colleges is normally Norwegian” (218) is that non-Norwegian speaking staff can no longer be required to learn Norwegian and that internal staff meetings may therefore need to be conducted in English. Still, as with Sweden, English holds a central place in language policy issues in all the Nordic countries (Halonen, Ihalainen, and Saarinen 2015, 10), not least in the trajectory of EMI in HE.
**EMI in Swedish HE**

The action plan for the Swedish language (SOU 2002, 89, translation from the English summary) included the following goals:

- Universities and other institutes of higher education should augment elements in their students’ programs that promote better oral and written skills in both Swedish and English, and should also, in certain cases, require a more advanced previous knowledge of Swedish.
- Measures shall be taken to promote parallel employment of English and Swedish in research and scholarship.

When English is chosen over Swedish as the language of HE, there may be a lack of development of Swedish as an academic language (Salö 2010, 10). Gustafsson and Valcke (2021, 224) note that “universities seem to consider Swedish their first and main language for administration purposes,” but this is not necessarily the case for academics (researchers and teachers). Already in 2008, the Swedish Higher Education Authority reported on an increase in English-medium one-year and two-year master’s programs (Högskoleverket 2008). Then – as now – the focus was on internationalization, due both to incoming students from abroad and to Swedish students creating international contacts and networks. The possibility to study in English was identified by foreign students as the main reason to study in Sweden (Högskoleverket 2008, 21). Karlsson (2017, 41) summarized her overview of language policy documentation in Swedish HE with these words: “Swedish is the language of higher education, but English symbolizes internationalization” (our translation).

In the Autumn semester of 2022 (www.antagning.se), 5,511 courses and programs were planned in English in HEIs in Sweden. This can be compared to 10,230 courses and programs offered in Swedish as well as 361 courses and programs in languages other than Swedish and English. The latter comprise mainly foreign language courses, including proficiency courses for beginners as well as advanced courses in linguistics and literature taught in other languages (e.g., French, Italian, German) and for mother tongue teachers (e.g., Finnish and Arabic). A closer look at the planned EMI courses and programs reveals the following:

- 1,665 undergraduate courses
- 102 undergraduate programs (e.g., bachelor programs in Forest and Landscape, International Relations, Game Design, and Peace and Conflict Studies)
- 2,508 graduate courses
- 1,239 graduate programs
(e.g., master’s programs in Agroecology, Criminology, Landscape Architecture, and Mechanical Engineering)

These can be compared to just 530 EMI programs available in 2008. This is in line with Salö’s 2010 report that some universities explicitly stated then that they intended to increase their course and program offerings in English.

**A closer look at EMI at two universities**

We have chosen to present our own quite different institutions: Stockholm University (SU) and Dalarna University (DU), with figures from Autumn 2022. SU (www.su.se) is a capital city university, one of the 200 highest-ranked universities in the world with over 30,000 full-time equivalent (FTE) students, 1,400 doctoral students, and 5,700 members of staff. DU (www.du.se) is based across two campuses in the small cities of Falun and Borlänge. DU has almost 6,500 FTE students, 89 doctoral students and 847 employees. DU is a högskola “university college” rather than a universitet “university,” the distinction being that only universities have a general authority to offer doctoral education, although DU does have this right in a limited number of specific disciplines. Despite the differences, the two institutions report similar numbers of international students: 1,136 in SU and 1,147 in DU (although it is unclear how these are defined in each case).

Until recently, DU had its own language policy, but now defers to the Language Act, in line with Gustafsson and Valcke (2021). The Language Policy at SU (Stockholms universitet 2021) has statements about expectations of multilingualism and parallel language use as well as the role of Swedish. The policy specifies that while “Academic staff and students at the university should have the English skills needed to participate in an international research setting” (p. 2), “Swedish-speaking academic staff and students also have a responsibility to use and develop Swedish as a scientific language” (p. 2), in line with the Swedish Language Act. This is further interpreted as a need for parallel language use by academics and the university administration and for all staff to be given the opportunity to master Swedish, “for collegial work.” This means that the SU policy not only affirms Swedish as the principal language at SU, but also charges staff and students with the task of developing Swedish terminology (both consistent with the Language Act). The SU language policy stipulates that while important documents like syllabi and regulations should be available in English where needed, the Swedish-language documents take precedence over their English translations. Regarding EMI, the SU language policy permits the choice of language for education and research (including the working language) to vary depending on factors such as research traditions and target audiences. The use of languages other than Swedish and English is encouraged where
relevant, “for instance in certain third-stream activities, recruitments, and for the dissemination of research” (p. 2), in contrast to Salö’s (2010) observation that language policies in Swedish universities – if they exist at all – tend only to address the parallel language use of Swedish and English, while multilingualism is seldom given explicit space. Kuteeva (2020) reports that 68 percent of the staff at SU had Swedish as L1 but does not mention the possibility of multiple L1s.

Salö’s (2010) report that EMI is more common on the postgraduate (PG) than the undergraduate (UG) level is still generally true. The use of English has increased in the last decade or so in five large and five small Swedish HEIs examined by Malmström and Pecorari (2022). However, SU and DU were also different from the other institutions they reviewed, as the percentage of English-taught programs decreased from 2010 to 2020 from 73 percent to 67 percent (SU) and from 71 percent to 60 percent (DU). They report further that EMI is more common in courses than in programs, with an average of 66 percent EMI in master’s programs across Sweden. SU exceeds this figure while DU has fewer than 60 percent EMI master’s programs (Autumn 2022). This is in line with Malmström and Pecorari’s (2022) observation that, except in the case of undergraduate courses, EMI is more common at larger research-intensive universities that award doctorates in many disciplines, such as SU.

Of the five large and five small institutions included in the study (Malmström and Pecorari 2022), SU had the largest share of course literature in English (66 percent) while DU had the smallest share (33 percent). In earlier research, Swedish students were more negative than “multilingual” students to textbooks in English, although they believed that they could increase proficiency by reading in English (Pecorari et al. 2012). Worth noting is that across all universities in Sweden, languages other than Swedish or English (mostly Norwegian or Danish) represented less than 0.5 percent of required reading (Malmström and Pecorari 2022, 31) despite an earlier policy recommendation to include course literature in “neighboring” Nordic languages (SOU 2002, 183; see also Nordic Council of Ministers 2018).

**EMI: spaces and hierarchies**

While EMI may have originally been intended as one of several means to meet the goals of internationalization, offering courses in English has increasingly been discussed as “an effective tool for the transformation of institutions of higher education into multilingual contexts” (Morell and Volchenkova 2021, 7, our emphasis; see also the recent anthologies listed previously in this chapter). HEIs in European (Dalziel and Guard 2021) and African contexts (Reilly 2021) have opened ideological and implementational spaces for translanguaging. Dafouz and Smit (2020) have even coined the term *EMEMUS* for “English-medium
education in multilingual university settings.” In the Swedish context, however, English itself still maintains the highest rung on the ladder of linguistic hierarchy (Hult 2005). Thus, while supposedly opening up for international students or for “internationalization at home,” multilingualism is not explicitly the goal nor the outcome, despite language policies (e.g., the Language Act and the SU language policy). Consequently, while EMI in theory allows students to engage in new common spaces, melding their different linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the academic lingua franca remains English, reflecting a stable linguistic hierarchy. This is despite the fact that, as Risager (2012, 112) articulates, “English is the most widespread academic language, but it is clearly not the only one.”

According to Salö (2010, 54), “To work in Sweden, language proficiency in both Swedish and English is needed. Parallelingualism is thus the goal for instruction” (see also Hellekjær 2016). In their recent report for the Language Council of Sweden, Malmström and Pecorari (2022, 45) argue that parallelingualism in all arenas of the academic sphere, from administration to classroom teaching, is the only choice if HE is to allow space for Swedish. However, the term parallelingualism is contested as falsely indicating a kind of multilingualism, when it only refers to two languages, with the other “foreign” language always English (Brock-Utne 2007) – which reflects the current state of EMI in Sweden that has not allowed space for other languages (Malmström and Pecorari 2022). It is worth considering how this fits with the policy goal of the common language of Swedish to ensure that all may “embrace and benefit from the riches that a multilingual, multicultural society has to offer” (SOU 2002, 25–26, translation from the English summary).

In 2008, the National Agency for Higher Education (Högskoleverket 2008) stated that English was necessary to attract foreign students. However, it may be naïve to ignore the implications of EMI. The National Agency for Higher Education also stated in 2008 (27), “Vi vet i ärlighetens namn inte särskilt mycket om hur och i vilken utsträckning kvalitén på utbildningarna påverkas av att de ges på engelska.” [We honestly do not know all that much about how and to what extent the quality of the programs is affected by the fact that they are given in English.] Do we know more today? We do know that internationalization in HE as well as academic marketing influenced by neoliberal trends, together with the ever-increasing status of English in the linguistic hierarchy across the globe, have all resulted in EMI retaining both ideological and implementational spaces in Swedish universities. Thus, the question instead becomes one of a choice between internationalization with a promotion of EMI, on the one hand, and an adherence to language policy that protects Swedish as a legitimate language of teaching and scientific production, on the other hand (Malmström and Pecorari 2022, 45). While internationalization should also be about other skills and values, such as certain knowledge and attitudes, the linguistic space is limited to English as the dominant language.
It is increasingly difficult in many disciplines to find advanced level courses with Nordic languages as the language of instruction, resulting in students unable to choose to study through what may be their strongest (or preferred) languages (Brock-Utne 2022). One way to create implementational and ideological spaces for languages other than English is to consider how translanguaging as the medium of instruction may allow for Swedish, English, and other languages to take space in the HE classroom as legitimate languages for learning. The legitimatizing stance inherent to translanguaging, however, may sit uneasily in some HE institutions with EMI. Some may feel that the presence of pedagogical translanguaging practices indicates that teachers and students are not able to manage the EMI lesson, but it may instead reveal (or resist) institutional and de facto hierarchies (Paulsrud, Tian, and Toth 2021b; Pecorari and Malmström 2018). A translanguaging pedagogy can contrast a parallel language use policy that in practice often means only English as a “policy-prescribed medium of instruction” (Söderlundh 2014, 116). In the Swedish context, this would entail a move beyond the current linguistic hierarchy roles to an affordance of more status to Swedish and other languages in the EMI classroom. This is, after all, in line with the translanguaged siding often occurring in EMI courses (Antia 2016).

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have considered EMI in the Nordic countries, illustrated with the specific case of Sweden, questioning the ever-ubiquitous role of EMI in HE (Block 2022). Nordic countries are “often mischaracterized internationally as stereotypically monolingual and monocultural while being far from either,” Hult argues (2021, 247), when really, they have long been “touched by the many guises of bilingualism, multilingualism, code-switching and translanguaging.” Indeed, Nordic universities are “more multilingual than ever” (Nordic Council of Ministers 2018, 28). Still, as Saarinen and Ennser-Kananen put it, English is a “terrific magnet” (2020, 118).

The supposed goals of EMI are to attract more students from abroad and to easily increase local students’ exposure to English (Richards and Pun 2022), the latter reflecting a larger trend toward EMI at all levels of education (see, e.g., Paulsrud and Cunningham forthcoming). Nonetheless, in her review of the research concerns and professional implications of EMI in European HE ten years ago, Dalton-Puffer (2012, 102) stated that “subject-matter teaching in English transgresses well-established disciplinary and system-inherent borders creating considerable insecurities along the way.” While she was referring mainly to the content-language teaching dichotomy, we would like to extend her argument to include the danger of insecurities for the students (see also, e.g., Brocke-Utne 2022; Pecorari et al. 2012; Rauto 2008). Leaving language learning to an expected absorption through disciplinary content lessons may have many students struggling. Both the rapid development of EMI programs, with many
teachers unprepared, and the persistent beliefs that language can be learned merely through immersion, have hindered the inclusion of clear language goals in EMI (Lasagabaster and Doiz 2021, 1–2). The belief that exposure to English in EMI offers the best, or at least an efficient, way to develop desirable advanced English skills leads many to prefer courses taught in English. English is often expected to be learned simply through exposure during non-language content lessons, thus more incidental than intentional learning, although research (e.g., Brocke-Utne 2022; Pecorari et al. 2012) has suggested that hopes of learning English through the supposed EMI osmosis are likely not achievable. Thus, we ask: How do we move from why EMI is offered to how EMI is offered?

According to the Nordic Council of Ministers, all Nordic residents should know other Nordic languages well enough to communicate with one another in them (2007). In “other Nordic languages” they include majority languages, minority languages, and “migrant languages” (“den lokale flersprogethed” [local multilingualism]; Holmen 2012, 166). As well as this, residents should be able to manage parallel use of English in domains such as science, HE, and business. However, the use of parallel languages needs to be applied to the languages of the Nordic countries as well as to English (Nordic Council of Ministers 2007, 94). Holmen (2012) raises the issue of the binaries implicated by parallelingualism, meaning that the competence that international students bring to EMI settings may be ignored despite the value they bring to a global labor market. In a more recent document, the Nordic Council of Ministers (2018) call for international students to be required to know or learn more of the local languages. In turn, they recommend that all local students be academically proficient in both their local language(s) and English – as well as any other languages that may be required by their program of study. As a means to this, staff training in how to work with multiple languages of instruction and more specifically how to bring in languages other than only English and the majority language into the classroom is suggested (Nordic Council of Ministers 2018). We would like to emphasize that internationalization does not have to mean English-medium only, as, in the words of Wilkinson (2017, 41): “Internationalization does not mean that education has to be offered in a single language.” Using the twin lenses of parallelingualism and translanguaging, we have considered possible challenges to hierarchies and ideologies underlying EMI in HE, highlighting the case of Sweden. Giving implementational and ideological space to languages that are currently not visible – including multiple local languages – may be a move beyond the binaries implied by a call for parallelingualism in the Nordic EMI context.

Notes
1 In this chapter, “EMI” will be used as a modifier for courses, programs, teachers, and students for quick identification.
One exception to this EMI trend includes the language-in-education policy implemented by the Malawian government in 2014, with an explicit goal to improve students’ English proficiency (Reilly 2021).

See Yoxsimer Paulsrud (2014) for a consideration of Swedish school markets and EMI at the upper secondary level.

For a recent European overview of Englishization and language policy, see Wilkinson and Gabriëls (2021)

For an overview of terms related to EMI, see Paulsrud, Tian, and Toth (2021a) and Yoxsimer Paulsrud (2014).

For a critical overview of translanguaging theory, see Cummins (2021).

For a review of the policy proposal Mål i mun [Speech] (SOU 2002) that preceded the Language Act, see Hult (2005).

For overviews of the official documents regulating language policy in HE in Sweden, see Gustafsson and Väcke (2021) and Karlsson (2017).

For a detailed review of HE language policies in the Nordics, see Saarinen and Taalas (2017).

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