

# Classroom work with literature in basic literacy and second language education for adults

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## Abstract

*This article examines classroom work with literature in the Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) programme in which adult migrants study Swedish at a basic level. The participants were a teacher and a group of students with limited previous education. The study explores practices that the participants applied during classroom work with an easy-to-read novel. The theoretical and analytical framework includes the four resources model, transactional theory and the concepts of translanguaging and embodied literacy practices. Data for the study were collected in a large action research and linguistic ethnography project by means of classroom observations and focus group conversations with teachers. Findings show that decoding and meaning-making practices were most prominent, while text-using and text-analysing practices were scarcer. Aesthetic reading and efferent reading were in different ways integrated with the different families of practice. Aesthetic reading was connected to multimodal aspects and embodied literacy practices. Efferent reading was found at many levels in the reading and was interconnected with all families of practice. Translanguaging practices often intersected with meaning-making practices.*

**Keywords:** Swedish for immigrants, basic literacy, families of practice, aesthetic and efferent reading, literature

## 1 Introduction

In second language (L2) education for adults who lack or have limited previous experience of formal education, curricula often focus on functional literacy (Filimban et al., 2022, p. 136). In a Swedish context, the syllabus of Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) states that the language programme aims to give adult students 'the opportunity to learn and develop a functional knowledge of Swedish as a second language' (Swedish National Agency for Education, SNAE, 2022a, p. 1). Learners who are 'not functionally literate' (SNAE, 2022a, p. 1) should be supported in acquiring functional literacy. Research demonstrates that teaching material used in basic literacy education within SFI is often closely connected to learners' everyday lives both at the content level and in text type (Bergsten Provaznik & Wedin, 2023; Wedin, 2023). Classroom work on fictional texts is both less researched and less implemented in L2 and literacy learning at a basic level for adults (Filimban et al., 2022). Given this, the current study highlights the need to offer new perspectives

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on classroom work with literature in basic literacy education for adult migrants with limited previous education.

SFI is funded by the municipalities and offered without charge for adult L2 learners who reside in the country. A national curriculum and syllabus regulate SFI education (SNAE, 2022a) and it is organised in three study paths and four courses (see table 1).

Table 1 study paths and courses at SFI

Study path	Courses
1	A B C D
2	B C D
3	C D

Study path 1 is mainly for students with no more than four years of previous education (SNAE, 2023). Basic literacy education is integrated with all four courses A–D at study path 1. The current study focuses on course C in study path 1; it was performed as part of a research project based on action research (Zeichner, 2001) and linguistic ethnography (Copland & Creese, 2015). The project aimed at developing and researching basic literacy teaching in SFI and the participants were teachers and students at four SFI schools. The dataset comprises focus group interviews with teachers and classroom observations from one classroom.

Previous research has noted that reading literature supports L2 and literacy development in many different areas: reading comprehension, listening comprehension, spelling, grammar, vocabulary (Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Krashen, 2013; Mason, 2013), and transformation of adult learners' perspectives on the world (Janks, 2010; Jarvis, 2012; King, 2000; Mezirow, 1996; see also Hoggan, 2016; Taylor & Cranton, 2013). In contrast, little research treats fiction reading in L2 education for adult learners who have had limited access to formal schooling (Walldén, 2020). There is a need to develop teaching practices for this group of learners, since traditional practices are based on models developed for children's development of literacy in L1 (Filimban et al., 2022; Wedin & Norlund Shaswar, 2023). The current study addresses this gap by exploring whether and how classroom work with literature is a pedagogy that fits these learners well. The specific aim is to examine literacy practices used in classroom work with literature in basic L2 education for adult migrants with limited previous education.

In order to achieve this aim, focus is set on the practices that one SFI teacher and her students in course C, study path 1, engaged in during classroom work with an 'easy-to-read' novel. The theoretical and analytical framework of the study includes the *four resources model* developed by Freebody and Luke (1990; see also Luke & Freebody, 1999), as interpreted by Walldén (2020) with a focus on classroom work with literature, and by Häggström and Djurstedt (2020) and Häggström and Schmidt (2020) with a focus on embodied literacy practices. In addition, the concept of *translanguaging* (Lasagabaster & García, 2014) and Rosenblatt's (1995) *transactional theory on literature* are applied.

The following research questions have guided the study:

- What literacy practices do the teacher and students initiate and participate in during the classroom work?
- How are the families of practices of the four resources model interconnected with efferent and aesthetic reading?

The theoretical perspectives are presented below.

## 2 Theoretical and analytical framework

The four resources model (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1999) was employed because it is based on a critical and social practice perspective on literacy, in line with the view of literacy prescribed in the SFI syllabus (SNAE, 2022a) and found useful in research on basic literacy education for adult L2 learners (Franker, 2011; Wedin, 2023; Bergsten Provaznik & Wedin, 2023; Wedin & Norlund Shaswar, 2023). These previous studies emphasise that basic literacy education for adult L2 learners needs to be meaningful and start from the learners' everyday experiences of literacy.

The rationale for including Rosenblatt's (1995) transactional theory in the theoretical framework is its didactic potential (see section 2.3).

### 2.1 The four resources model

According to Luke and Freebody (1999), their four resources model of reading and writing conceptualises 'repertoires of capabilities' (p. 5). People must access these to read and write texts in different contexts in their everyday lives, such as work life, school, and sports activities. They argued that these repertoires, or reading and writing practices, are shaped by ongoing and competing social, cultural, and economic interests (Luke & Freebody, 1999, p. 4). The practices are constructed at the group and societal levels and are dynamic and constantly negotiated (Luke & Freebody, 1999, p. 3). They are grouped in families: *code-breaking*, *meaning-making*, *text-using*, and *text-analysing practices* (Luke & Freebody, 1999).

The four resources model has been interpreted in many ways in literacy research through the years. Two lines of interpretation are especially relevant to this study, namely, Walldén's (2020) interpretation in relation to research on literary conversations in adult L2 education, and Häggström and colleagues' (Häggström & Djurstedt, 2020; Häggström & Schmidt, 2020) elaboration on it in relation to embodied literacy practices.

- *Code-breaking practices*: These include recognizing and using basic features of literacy, such as the connection between a letter in the alphabet and a speech sound, reading direction, visual organization, style, structure, and other conventions regarding text (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Häggström & Djurstedt, 2020; Häggström & Schmidt, 2020; Luke & Freebody, 1999; Walldén, 2020).
- *Meaning-making practices: understanding the text*: In these practices readers engage in understanding words, phrases, and metaphors (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1999; Walldén, 2020). The practices also include reconstructing the plot and discerning themes, symbols, and other aspects connected to a more abstract understanding of the text. Furthermore, they entail relating to the characters by, for example, describing, comparing, and evaluating them. Finally, these practices involve seeing and describing connections between the text and one's own lived and embodied experiences (Häggström & Schmidt, 2020), for example, of using the body for dancing.
- *Text-using practices: using the text for different goals and purposes*: These practices are in the current study understood as ways of using the text to find information that is useful outside of it, for example information about language, culture or society relevant to the reader's everyday life (Walldén, 2020). Some text-using practices imply using the text in ways that are highly valued in a specific context. Examples of such practices from the school domain are using the text for learning about general narrative structures or for writing a character study (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Walldén, 2020).
- *Text-analysing practices: objectifying the text*: Engaging in these practices implies being aware that texts represent specific interests and ideologies that can be

critiqued and transformed in various ways. Objectification thus involves viewing the text from an external or outside perspective. Participating in these practices also involves expressing personal views on the text, objectifying it by considering it a literary piece of art, and evaluating its descriptions of people, cultures, and societies.

Like Luke and Freebody (1999, p. 4), I see the families of practices as non-sequential and interdependent.

## 2.2 Holistic perspectives on literacy – Embodied literacies and translanguaging

The theoretical framework of this study broadens for diverse semiotic resources, including the concepts of *embodied literacies* and *translanguaging*. In an embodied view of literacies (Häggström & Schmidt, 2020; Johnson & Kontovourki, 2016) attention is directed towards connections between bodily processes and literacy events. From a holistic pedagogy perspective, literacy practices are embodied (Enriques et al., 2016). This means that 'environment, objects, body, internal states, story world, and time are coexperienced' (Leander & Boldt, 2013, p. 29).

The concept of *translanguaging* is part of what is called a *multilingual turn* in L2 education and research (Conteh & Meier, 2014; García, 2009; May, 2014; Paulsrud et al., 2017). The concept applies to a theoretical perspective, an everyday unreflected practice, and a pedagogy, *pedagogical translanguaging*. Pedagogical translanguaging concerns matters such as the inclusion, recognition, and support of all students' linguistic resources in education and the organisation of learning environments where their linguistic repertoires are built upon and expanded.

## 2.3 Transactional theory – Efferent and aesthetic reading of fiction

The theoretical framework guiding this study also includes *transactional theory* and the concepts of *efferent* and *aesthetic reading* (Rosenblatt, 1995). According to Rosenblatt, reading is a transaction, i.e., a reciprocal process in which reader and text interact. She also argues that reading is an active event dependent not only on the characteristics of the text but also on the reader, for example, their experiences and feelings.

Every reading includes referential as well as private affective experiences, and readings can be ordered along a continuum from mainly efferent to mainly aesthetic. In efferent reading, the reader positions themselves outside the text, directing their awareness towards what they can 'effere' ('carry away' in Latin) – in other words, towards information and perspectives 'that will remain when the reading is over' (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 32). In aesthetic reading, in contrast, the reader focuses more on their own aesthetic experiences in encountering the text. Efferent and aesthetic readings can be described as simultaneously active, and which is more emphasised on a specific occasion depends on the purpose of the reading. Efferent reading can be illustrated by the performance of an analysis of the plot or narrative structure of a novel. Aesthetic reading implies that readers are concentrating on the feelings and affects that the reading initiates in them. Rosenblatt (1995) also argued that education in which students can engage in 'personally meaningful, self-critical literary experience' (p. 297) will effectively strengthen their ability to take part in building a democratic society.

Rosenblatt's (1995) understanding of the reader as a co-producer of meaning is of interest from a didactic perspective. To participate in aesthetic reading, the reader must be open to experiencing the affective aspects of a fictional text. This means that to help students develop aesthetic reading, teachers need knowledge of what things, phenomena, and situations usually stir up feelings in their students (Rosenblatt, 1995, p. 33). The didactic process implied by transactional theory can also work in the reverse, with teachers paying close attention to students' affective and emotional responses to the reading,



and to how these responses are expressed. Rosenblatt (1995) gave the teacher a central role, arguing that a teacher can help students address emotional reactions caused by the reading and gradually help them develop their experiences of fictional reading.

There are overlaps between the perspectives of transactional reading (Rosenblatt, 1995) and all the families of practices in the four resources model (Luke & Freebody, 1999). For example, some of the meaning-making practices are similar to *aesthetic* reading in that focus is set on constructing meaning from a text. There are also similarities between efferent reading and text-using practices (Luke & Freebody, 1999) in that readers use the text to find information outside of it (Walldén, 2020).

### 3 Reading fiction in basic literacy and L2 education

In a Swedish context, Lundgren and Rosén (2022) and Walldén (2019; 2020) have studied classroom work with literature in adult education while Asklund (2018) has performed a study situated in L2 education for adolescents. Lundgren and Rosén (2022) researched SFI teachers' perspectives on and practice of translanguaging pedagogy in classroom work with bilingual literature. They performed classroom observations and group conversations with teachers who taught students with varying educational backgrounds. The teachers and students read and discussed a novel about an immigrant who studies Swedish. The findings indicated that a translanguaging space was created where the students could use their voices and linguistic repertoires in telling their own stories about migration.

In two studies situated in intermediate adult L2 education, Walldén (2019; 2020) explored what literacy practices teachers and students engaged in and how those practices were interrelated in classroom work with novels. Applying the four resources model, Walldén (2020) found connections between different types of literacy practices, particularly the practices of meaning-making and text use. He argues that although the teachers did not prioritise the text-analysing practices, the students participated in reading 'with' as well as 'against' the grain of the text.

Asklund (2018) performed an intervention study in which newly arrived L2 learners who were 16–19 years old participated in literary conversations about easy-to-read literature. Asklund examined the collaboration between the students, their teacher (himself) and a school librarian. The data comprised qualitative semi-structured interviews with the participants. Asklund's analysis indicates that the teacher had an important role in supporting the students when they shifted between different cognitive and emotional perspectives on the text. The students expressed a critical reading of the text, criticising both the plot of the novel and their classmates' interpretation of it. These conversations offered the student group emotional, cognitive, and linguistic challenges, according to Asklund.

*Easy-to-read* or *easy-reader* texts have recently spread rapidly in Sweden (Nordenstam & Olin-Scheller, 2017; 2018). A democratic argument is used when advocating this text type, namely, that everybody should be able to read and understand books, news, and information (MTM, 2023). Easy-to-read books target diverse readers, including demotivated and poor readers, readers with intellectual disabilities, and L2 learners. However, some easy-to-read books written for L2 learners have been criticised. Reichenberg (2014) noted that in some cases, the aim of writing short texts has resulted in texts that lack structures that are important for reading comprehension, such as explicit connectors between clauses.

### 4 Reading in the SFI syllabus

As mentioned above, a functional perspective is prescribed for reading instruction in SFI education (SNAE, 2022a). However, narrative text is one of the text types mentioned in the knowledge requirements for reading comprehension for course C. For grade E (approved) it is demanded that '[t]he student reads and understands short narrative and

descriptive texts on familiar subjects' (SNAE, 2022a, p. 6). Understanding is emphasised in the knowledge criteria. From the perspective of Luke and Freebody's (1999) four resources model, the syllabus promotes meaning-making and text-using practices. Code-breaking practices are implicitly prescribed in that code-breaking is always involved in reading. However, text analysis is not foregrounded in the syllabus. In the curriculum, in contrast, it is implied in the prescription that students who have finished their education should have the prerequisites to participate in democratic processes in society and work life (SNAE, 2022b).

This lack of a text-analysing perspective or a critical perspective stands in contrast to research on L2 education that highlights the importance of such practices for language education, especially for adult learners (e.g., Franker, 2007; 2011; Freire, 1974; Freire & Macedo, 1987; Gee, 1990; Janks, 2010; Leland et al., 2012; Street, 1984).

## 5 Research context, methods, and data

This section presents the study context, the novel, the data collection, the data, and finally the analytical methods.

### 5.1 The research context

The students who participated in the current study had been studying Swedish for about two to three years. According to their teacher, Anna (pseudonym) the student group was heterogeneous in terms of L2 and literacy development, (focus group conversation with Anna and her colleagues, see table 2 in appendix 1). Most students were middle aged, and a majority were female. The data were collected during the Covid pandemic, and to prevent the spread of infection, Anna's class was divided into three smaller groups, meaning that she taught the same lesson on three separate occasions. In each lesson there were five to six students present. Anna's lessons were often dominated by whole-class interaction where she guided the students by asking questions and giving instructions, but where there was also space for students to initiate speech acts. Because of the pandemic, the individual students received fewer hours of teaching than normal and, according to Anna, needed to study more at home and take more responsibility for their studies.

Anna had teacher training for years 4 to 9, including 60 ECTS of education in the school subject of Swedish as a second language. She had many years' experience of teaching in lower secondary school and four and a half years' experience of teaching in all three study paths of SFI. When the data collection was initiated, she had been teaching in study path 1 for one year.

This was the first time the group read a novel in Swedish with Anna, who chose the easy-to-read novel *En vecka i juni* (*One week in June*) written in Swedish by Eva Cerú (1993). According to the paratext, this is 'a love story that is close to everyday life and that spreads warmth, joy, and excitement' (my translation). Anna's rationale for choosing this novel was that Cerú had written other learning materials for SFI. The novel, again according to the paratext, won the first prize in a competition for easy-to-read fiction. It consists of 96 pages divided into 15 chapters. In terms of graphic design, the lines of text are short. The story centres on two characters, Marie and Mårten, who meet, get to know each other and fall in love. The reader is presented with Marie's and Mårten's perspectives on the same events.

### 5.2 Ethical considerations, data collection, and data analysis

This study was conducted in accordance with All European Academies' (ALLEA, 2023) code of conduct, which includes the principles of the reliability, honesty, respect, and accountability of research. I gave all participants oral and written information in Swedish

as well as in a language they knew well. The oral information was given in the form of audio recordings. The participants were informed of the aim of the project, their right to withdraw consent, the data collection methods, and how the data would be stored to ensure their anonymity and confidentiality. All participants gave their written consent to participate.

The dataset analysed here was collected by me and comprises two focus group conversations (Kamberelis & Dimitriadis, 2013) and classroom observation of eight lessons. In the focus group conversations, Anna participated together with me, an additional researcher and five of her teacher colleagues at the school who also taught SFI, study path 1, and who all participated in the action research project. The purpose of these conversations was to reflect on and discuss activities that the teachers had conducted in their SFI teaching as part of actions in the project. Four focus group conversations occurred at the school in the project (see table 2, appendix 1; in two of these), part of the conversation was dedicated to reflecting on Anna's planned classroom work with fiction. These two conversations occurred before she initiated the classroom work with the novel. Audio recordings and field notes were used to document conversations and observations (for lengths of recordings, see Table 2, appendix 1).

Anna and her colleagues participated in two action research cycles in the action research project (Zeichner, 2001) where they planned, conducted, and reflected on individual actions. In the second cycle, Anna chose to work on reading fiction with her students. It was not possible for me to observe all the lessons in which the classroom work with the novel took place. I observed three lessons when Anna used a small part of the instructional time to introduce the classroom work with the novel to the students and five lessons where they worked with chapters three to six.

The first step of data analysis consisted of listening to audio-recorded focus group conversations and classroom observations and identifying and transcribing<sup>1</sup> sections relevant to the research questions. In the focus group conversations, I selected sections in which Anna and her colleagues discussed Anna's planned classroom work with the novel. In the classroom observations, I selected sections in which Anna introduced and presented the work with the novel or when it took place. In analysing the observational and focus group data, I interchangeably listened to the audio recordings and read and reread the transcripts.

The analytical process can be described as abductive (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2008). On the one hand, based on previous research, I had pre-selected the four resources model (Freebody & Luke, 1990; Luke & Freebody, 1999; Walldén, 2020) and transactional theory (Rosenblatt, 1995) as analytical frameworks to test in the analysis. On the other hand, during the analysis, I considered Häggström and colleagues' (Häggström & Djurstedt, 2020; Häggström & Schmidt, 2020) interpretation of the four resources model and Lasagabaster and García's (2014) definition of the concept of *translanguaging* for researching the use of students' whole linguistic repertoires in instruction, which were aspects that proved relevant based on the analysed material. All transcripts were originally written in Swedish; transcript excerpts to be included in the article were subsequently translated into English.

## 6 Findings

The presentation of findings is structured in accordance with the four families of practices in Luke and Freebody's (1999) model. The order of presentation is the following: code-breaking, meaning-making, text-using, and finally text-analysing practices. The discussion of how the families of practices are integrated with efferent and aesthetic reading is integrated into the presentation.

<sup>1</sup> For the excerpts from data presented in the article, a writing convention close to written text has been chosen in order to facilitate the readers' comprehension.

## 6.1 Code-breaking practices

The code-breaking practices identified in the data target different aspects of the form of texts, namely, morphemes, phonemes, syllables, spelling, paragraphs, and use of capital letters. These types of practices will be presented, illustrated, and analysed here.

Code-breaking was often in focus in the observed lessons. An example of a code-breaking practice targeting compound words was initiated by Anna when she and the students talked about tools that the character Mårten used in his job. Then she said: 'It is called a toolbox. Toolbox. And it is like two words. Tool is one word and box'. Here she helped the students understand that the word is made up of two semantic parts; simultaneously, she also supported their understanding of the meaning of the word in a meaning making practice.

Several instances of directing attention towards the relationship between letters and phonemes were identified in the data. An example is given in the excerpt below. To illustrate the phonological structure of the word, this example is presented both in the Swedish original and in English translation:

Excerpt 1 Classroom observation.

### Original

Lärare: Vill du säga?  
 Elev: Ja, verktygslåda.  
 Lärare: Verktygs [uttalar y tydligt].  
 Elev: Verktygslåda.  
 Anna: Kom ihåg när du gör y så att det inte blir  
 tig, tygs.  
 Elev: Ja, verktyg.

### Translation

Anna: Do you want to say?  
 Student: Yes, toolbox.  
 Anna: Tool [pronounces 'y' clearly].  
 Student: Toolbox.  
 Anna: Remember to say 'y' so that it doesn't  
 become tig, tygs.  
 Student: Yes, toolbox.

In excerpt 1, the focus is on the phoneme /y/ which corresponds to the letter <y>. Like other rounded front vowels, /y/ is a phoneme difficult to produce for many L2 speakers of Swedish. In this practice, embodiment is also in focus in that the speech apparatus is central to producing the vowel /y/ (Thorén, 2023).

Anna also initiated code-breaking practices when she emphasised the number of vowels in a word to help the students realise how many syllables it consists of, for example, below, when they talked about the compound 'stängingsdags' (closing time):

Excerpt 2 Classroom observation.

Anna: So when there is a new long word, look if you can see how many words there are, if you can, look for vowels and then think clos (.)<sup>2</sup> ing (.) time.  
 Student: Time.  
 Anna: That makes three.  
 Student: Difficult.  
 Anna: Not three words but three (.) [claps her hand once for each syllable] Clos (.) ing (.) time (.), because you have three vowels. That turned out a bit wrong here but there are two words, but we split it into three pieces when we are going to say it.

As in excerpt 1, the relationship between form and meaning is emphasised in excerpt 2, but in the latter excerpt, the students were also given the information that they can look for vowels in order to identify syllables.

Another code-breaking practice consists of focusing on differences between pronunciation and spelling caused by reductions or assimilations in speech, such as tone assimilation, which occurs when voiced and unvoiced speech sounds meet, for example in the

2 (.) denotes a pause.



pronunciation of 'dags' (time), when the voiced consonant /g/ in 'dags' meets the unvoiced /s/ and undergoes an assimilation into /k/ [dak:s].

Different aspects of grammar are also addressed, such as word class, the gender of a noun and the past tense of a verb used in the text. In addition, I have identified one example of a code-breaking practice when Anna and the students paid attention to a visual aspect, namely, the graphic form of a paragraph.

Lastly, there are code-breaking practices in which interaction centred on the conventions of written language, for example, what a paragraph is and that proper nouns begin with a capital letter. Thus, the teacher and students often focus on code-breaking and among the code-breaking practices in the data, some underline connections between form and meaning and some bring connections between two forms to the fore: phonemes and orthography.

During those parts of the reading when the focus is on these different aspects of the form of language and its connections to meaning, the reading seems mainly to be efferent; as expected aesthetic and emotional experiences of the text do not seem to be in focus here.

## 6.2 Meaning-making practices - Understanding the text

The analysis shows that together with code-breaking practices, meaning-making practices were dominant in the classroom work. I have identified several types of such practices which often target the meaning of individual words and phrases. Resources used for meaning-making in the practices include translanguaging, embodiment, and auditory and visual modalities.

In meaning-making practices, translanguaging was often initiated by the teacher or students. One such practice Anna initiated was to advise the students to use a separate paper for recording and translating words from the text that were new to them. She advised them to write the translation in 'their own language'. Excerpt 3 illustrates an occasion when a student initiated a meaning-making translanguaging practice.

Excerpt 3 Classroom observation.

Student: French?

Anna: Yes.

Student: [laughs]

Anna: Yes, it is perhaps we have borrowed the word from French. I don't know. *Repair*<sup>3</sup> in English. I don't know but it is the same (.) almost the same in many languages.

Excerpt 3 illustrates how Anna performed a translanguaging practice where she helped the student make connections between English and French, two resources in the student's linguistic repertoire. On another occasion, a student drew the teacher's attention to the fact that 'spik' (nail) is called 'mismar' in different languages.

Embodied literacy practices are also integrated with the meaning-making practices. For example, when the novel's characters Marie and Mårten are waltzing (see excerpt 4 below), Anna integrated bodily actions with making meaning from the text by dancing in front of the students, showing them what it means to 'dansa vals' (to waltz).

Auditory non-verbal modalities are sometimes used, such as when the teacher imitated the sound of a saw to illustrate what the word 'såg' (saw) means.

Excerpt 4 Classroom observation.

Anna: And what is it called when (.) sawing?

<sup>3</sup> Words in italics are said in English.

Student: Saw sawing.

Anna: Sawing chuuuu [makes a sound to imitate a saw].

Visual modalities were also integrated into the meaning-making practices. Anna used images of different kinds: photographs projected on the smartboard, and pictures posted in the class blog or drawn on the whiteboard to explain the meaning of words from the novel. Excerpt 5 gives an example of integrating photographs in a meaning-making practice. Here, Anna and the students looked at a photograph on the smartboard that showed a view from Mosebacke in Stockholm, where the book's character Marie stands.

Excerpt 5 Classroom observation.

Anna: Water. It is beautiful.

Student: Yes, beautiful. The view.

Anna: Beautiful view.

Student: Beautiful views, view.

Anna: What is this?

Student: Boat.

Anna: Boat. She probably sees many [laughs].

In this meaning-making practice, the photograph and the verbal interaction between Anna and the students helped the students understand the text. Her statement in excerpt 4, 'It is beautiful', brought an aesthetic reading/viewing to the fore, enhancing the experience of nature as a source of beauty.

In addition to focusing on individual words and phrases, on several occasions during the lessons, Anna underlined the importance of understanding the plot of the novel, noting connections between understanding the text and enjoying reading it. Excerpt 6 gives an example of how she foregrounded aesthetic reading as she explained to the students what she saw as the overarching aim of reading the novel. She made a close connection between the interior meaning system of the text ('understand') and a joyful reading experience ('fun'). As mentioned above, this was the first time that Anna and the students read a novel together. They already had experience of the close reading of shorter texts; now they needed to read in a different way, with a focus in affective aspects, as Anna explained:

Excerpt 6 Classroom observation.

Anna: Now I want you to understand [sighs] the book, and then you perhaps don't need to understand all the words and everything and stop and stop. If you receive a text from me, then we read carefully and read and practice many things. Now we are practicing reading more and putting the book here [points at her heart]. Do you understand how I mean?

By pointing at her heart when she said 'putting the book here', Anna conveyed that the reading experience, or an aesthetic reading (Rosenblatt, 1995) of the novel, where the students enjoyed reading it, was central to her overarching aim of the classroom work with the novel. Here aesthetic reading is connected to an embodied literacy practice: experiencing reading as affecting your heart. In my analysis, Anna uses this metaphor of 'putting the book in the heart' as a bridge between embodiment and a reading that affects the reader's private and personal sentiments and experiences. Embodiment was also central in one of the lessons, when they were starting to read the chapter 'En stilla vals' ('A slow waltz'). Then Anna started dancing in front of the students:

## Excerpt 7 Classroom observation.

Anna: And slow, that means like this.

Student: Slow.

Anna: Slow, yes exactly. And waltz, waltz that is when you dance like this [dances].

By moving her body in a slow waltz, Anna engaged in an embodied literacy practice that helped the students understand the phrase '*att dansa vals*' (to waltz). Her dancing also brought an aesthetic reading of the novel to the fore. Through her embodied literacy practice of dancing, she bridged the students' own joyful emotions and experiences of dancing and the dance performed by the characters Marie and Mårten in the text. This bridging process went both ways, so that the students could both use lived experiences to identify with the characters, and recognise some aspects of their own lives in the characters that can help them remember Swedish words and phrases. In this way, an aesthetic reading focusing on joyful embodied experiences overlapped with an efferent reading directed towards learning Swedish vocabulary.

A recurring teaching practice in the lessons was when Anna introduced a new chapter in the novel by interchangeably reading it aloud and 'telling' it to the students. At this point, the students lacked visual access to the current chapter's written text; instead, they had to rely on the auditory mode, listening to it. In this practice, Anna explained to them that the intention behind telling them the content of the chapter was to help them understand the story. In my analysis, the focus of this meaning-making practice was on the plot rather than on the meaning of individual words. Parts of Anna's retelling were identical to the formulations in the written text of the novel, but Anna also made connections to previously read chapters and added explanations. Anna told the students that they were welcome to ask questions while she was telling them the story of the chapter, and she asked them questions about whether they understood or not.

Another recurring meaning-making practice was helping the students link the plot of the novel to their own experiences. The students were active in this practice, as seen in excerpt 8, in which they talked about how the character Marie was sitting alone in a restaurant:

## Excerpt 8 Classroom observation.

Student 1: No friends either, friend?

Anna: Yes, she has no friends there.

Student 1: But dance with friend at

Anna: Yes.

Student 2: No dance friend

Student 1: Yes, with friend

Student 2: Go to disco.

Student 3: What?

Student 2: Be alone, everyone dancing, everyone dancing together.

Here, the students link the text to their own experiences and knowledge of going to a disco.

In sum, the analysis of observations shows that in the interactions around the novel, the attention of the teacher and students was often directed towards meaning-making. Anna's telling the students that it was most important to understand the plot, and not necessary to understand all the individual words, stands in contrast to the fact that many of the meaning-making practices she and the students engaged in focused on the meaning of individual words and phrases. However, the students were at a basic level in their L2 development of Swedish, meaning that they needed Anna's support in expanding

their basic vocabulary and finding strategies for vocabulary learning in order to understand the plot of the novel.

Embodied as well as multimodal practices were integrated with practices focusing more on the written text. Embodiment, visual and auditory modalities were used in an aesthetic reading to make connections to lived experiences, previous knowledge, and emotions. Anna as well as the students initiated various types of meaning-making practices and actively participated in the interactions in which meaning was created. This meant that Anna and the student group together supported the individual students' understanding of the text.

### 6.3 Text-using practices – Using the text for different goals and purposes

As can be expected, the students' development of the Swedish language is a prominent focus in Anna's teaching in the classroom work. However, text-using practices, where the text is used for learning about phenomena outside of the book, are rarely observed. When they do occur, they are often integrated with meaning-making practices in which words and expressions are discussed in close connection to the text. Excerpt 9 exemplifies interaction being partly directed towards the meaning of the text but also partly towards using the text for teaching and learning about phenomena in Swedish society. Here Anna talks about an event in the text when the character Mårten was considering where to sit in a restaurant:

Excerpt 9 Classroom observation.

Anna: And when you go to a restaurant and there is dancing, then you can actually sit. This is Sweden you know [laughs]. We don't usually go and sit here if we don't know each other, but when there is dancing then it can be okay. But you ask first, 'Can I sit here?'

In discussing this in excerpt 9, Anna started from the text but then focused on Swedish culture. In that sense, the interaction in this excerpt is in line with an efferent reading (Rosenblatt, 1995) of the text in which attention is primarily directed towards information that the readers can take with them when the reading is over. However, the knowledge and experience of behavioural norms in Swedish restaurants that Anna talked about here were also important for understanding the text. In that sense, a meaning-making practice and a text-using practice are overlapping, and so are an efferent reading focused on practical and public information about what is acceptable behaviour and an aesthetical reading focused on private aspects of meaning and private experiences of going to a restaurant.

A category of practices belonging to the family of text-using practices repeatedly occurring in Walldén's (2020) data is *learning about language*, with attention not being focused on words in the novel read, but on vocabulary learning in general. In my data, vocabulary learning was closely connected to the novel. However, these two aspects of vocabulary learning, i.e., *general learning about language* and *learning about the language of the novel*, are not totally separate. By learning the vocabulary of the book, the students in this study would also develop their general Swedish vocabulary.

In sum, text-using practices were scarce and when they did occur, they were overlapping with meaning-making practices.

### 6.4 Text-analysing practices –Objectifying the text

Few text-analysing practices appear in the data, and the examples I have identified overlap with meaning-making or text-using practices. I have found one example of a practice that is both a text-using and a text-analysing practice, occurring when the



students were discussing and examining the feelings of the character Mårten when he and Marie first met. In excerpt 10, Anna and the students talked about Mårten's fear that Marie would take offense if he asked whether he could sit at the same table as her in the restaurant. They also discussed fear in relation to gender. Students 1 and 2 were female and students 3 and 4 were male.

Excerpt 10 Classroom observation.

Anna: And then he thinks like this, what if she misunderstands, I mean gets the wrong idea and thinks that Mårten wants to intrude, I mean that he wants to flirt and come a bit too close. What if she thinks so. Mårten is very scared. He does not want, so he is a bit like that [laughs].

Students: [laugh]

Student 1: Man can afraid.

Anna: Yes, he is afraid.

Student 1: Not man [laughs].

Anna: I see [laughs]. A man can also be afraid.

Student 2: Yes.

Students: [laugh]

Anna: Can a man be afraid, [student's name]?

Student 2: Yes.

Anna: Can a man be afraid too?

Student 3: No.

Anna: No [laughs]?

Student 2: Why?

Student 3: Man, man not scared.

When student 3 said 'Man, man not scared', he was claiming that being afraid to ask a woman if he could sit next to her was not in line with the male gender. This could be interpreted as illustrating a student 'criticising representations of people and cultures' (Walldén, 2020 p. 47). The critique, however, also targeted what the teacher and other students said about the text. The learners in this group were at a basic level in their L2 learning of Swedish, and as excerpt 10 indicates, it was still difficult for student 3 to explicitly express such a critique in Swedish. This interaction with students expressing different opinions has potential to develop into a conflict (cf. Bergsten Provaznik & Wedin, 2023; Wedin, 2023).

In addition there are a few examples of objectifying the novel by concentrating on the style of the text. On one occasion Anna commented on Mårten's use of language: 'And he said some bad words: 'But you have a fucking nice shirt'. That means really nice shirt, he thinks'. In this metalinguistic comment, Anna touched on stylistic aspects of the character's language. However, she did not expand on what the style of the text implied or suggest an alternative wording. Instead, the focus was mainly on the meaning of Mårten's statement in this context. I interpret this as an example of an overlapping meaning-making and text-analysing practice.

Meaning-making and text-analysing practices also overlap in the example below in which the interaction underlines a connection between the structure of the text and aesthetic reading. The chapter ends with a cliffhanger, and in excerpt 11, Anna emphasised how this instils eagerness to go on reading:

Excerpt 11 Classroom observation.

Anna: And it finishes a bit like this [inhales], exciting. We want to go on reading, don't we?

Student: Yes.

Anna: Yes. And many when you write a book, an author, Eva Cerú, she has written the book (.) and then she thinks like this 'Now I finish (.) and a bit like this [inhales] I want to read more'. And you know when you watch TV series too, it ends 'Ah' [inhales strongly] 'I want to go on'.

By underlining how the structure of the text makes the reader want to go on reading, Anna brought to the fore a reading in which aesthetic aspects are emphasised in the form of interest in and expectations of what will happen in the next chapter. Simultaneously this can also be seen as a text-using practice, where the focus is set on general narrative structures of texts and TV series.

Another connection between meaning-making and structure was made by a student, and was based on the titles of the chapters 'Marie fredag 13 juni' (Marie, Friday, June 13) and 'Mårten fredag 13 juni' (Mårten, Friday, June 13). The student drew a conclusion about the plot, i.e., what would happen in the rest of the book: that Marie and Mårten would meet in a later chapter of the novel. Anna then directed attention towards meaning-making, with interest in whether Mårten and Marie would meet and become friends, as well as towards the student's strategy of drawing conclusions from the chapter titles. In this way, this practice could be described as directed towards both text analysis and meaning-making.

The intention to support the students' analysis of the text was also something that Anna raised in a focus group conversation. An aesthetic perspective was highlighted as she expressed her intention to invite the students to reflect on their emotions in relation to the characters, helping them have a personal literary experience of reading the novel.

In sum, the text-analysing practices were scarce, and, as can be expected, when they did take place they were overlapping with meaning-making practices. Both the teacher and the students initiated and participated in these overlapping practices.

## 7 Discussion

After a brief summary, the findings of the study will be discussed. As has been shown, instances of code-breaking and meaning-making practices are prominent in the data, while text-using and text-analysing practices are scarcer. The integration of written text with embodiment, visual and auditory modalities characterized all families of practices but was particularly prominent in meaning-making practices. In code-breaking and text-using practices, efferent reading is often a prominent focus in the interaction, while meaning-making sometimes is closely connected to aesthetic reading.

However, these kinds of distinctions between efferent and aesthetic reading need to be seen against Rosenblatt's (1995, p. 43f) holistic understanding of literature reading, where she argued that theoretical perspectives which separate different aspects of reading lead to misconceptions; rather, form and content or sensuous and formal aspects are integrated in the reading. In the data analysed here, efferent reading and text-using practices seem to be closely related in that they pay attention to general or public phenomena or situations outside the text. A similar close connection is found between aesthetic reading and those meaning-making practices in which the teacher's and students' personal experiences and opinions are touched on and connected to the text. In addition in some events, aesthetic reading overlaps with embodied literacy practices.

A holistic perspective is also applicable on the analysis of the families of practices. In line with Luke and Freebody's (1999) view and with other previous studies (Bergsten Provaznik & Wedin, 2023; Walldén, 2020; Wedin, 2023), the present findings indicate that the families of practices are interdependent, interacting, and interwoven with one another. In their interaction in the classroom work, the teacher and students moved between different families of practices. There seemed to be seamless transitions, for exam-

ple, between meaning-making practices based on the students' own experiences and text-using practices in which the aim was to learn about Swedish society or a new word. However, even though the practices were often simultaneously active, attention was often directed mainly towards one of them.

The scarcity of text-using and text-analysing practices in the data is expected based on similar findings in other studies in SFI settings (Bergsten Provaznik & Wedin, 2023; Wedin, 2023). Wedin (2023) found that including critical literacy in education involved difficulties such as conflicts arising when sensitive themes in texts were discussed. No such conflicts took place in the observed lessons in the current study. It is possible that if text-using practices had been more prominent in Anna's teaching, there would have been conflicts. Such conflicts are not necessarily negative because they may imply that 'space is created for the voices of the students' (Wedin, 2023 p.14). In other words, in interactions where students are given the possibility of expressing different views, they are also given the possibility of making their voices heard. In contrast to the mentioned studies that were performed in an SFI context, in Asklund's (2018) study, questioning the teacher and the teaching, was a recurrent theme in the investigated book discussions. It is possible that one reason for this contrast is that the students in Asklund's study were teenagers and the SFI students in the studies of Bergsten Provaznik and Wedin (2023; Wedin, 2023) were adults who had experienced the stigma of being positioned as 'illiterate' and who seldom question the teacher's authority in the classroom.

Like in Lundgren and Rosén's study (2022) space is given for students' use of varying resources from their linguistic repertoires. However, the overarching aim of the SFI education, i.e. development of Swedish, dominates the meaning-making practices. The students' linguistic repertoires are used as a means for understanding the novel and for their L2 development of Swedish. In contrast to the teachers in Lundgren and Rosén's (2022) study, who used translanguaging in a planned way in their teaching, Anna's use of translanguaging can be described as spontaneous.

Turning to decoding practices, it can first be stated generally that reading written text always involves decoding. However, the studied group of L2 readers, who had limited experience of reading and who were reading in a language still new to them, had to devote considerable effort to making connections between written symbols and speech sounds and to the meanings of words, phrases, and sentences. This meant that decoding and meaning-making practices focusing on individual signs, phonemes, graphemes, syllables, and words had a prominent position in the classroom work. However, meaning-making practices at a discourse level (cf. Freebody & Luke, 1990) were also prominent, in practices in which the teacher focused on the cultural context where the plot of the text took place and in which she helped the students make connections between their own lived experiences and the contents of the written text.

That meaning-making practices, often overlapping code-breaking practices, stand out as most prominent in this study is in line with the functional perspective on language expressed in the SFI syllabus (SNAE, 2022a). To integrate into Swedish society and culture, adult L2 learners with limited previous schooling need to develop functional L2 abilities and literacy. However, in accordance with the holistic perspectives on literacy (Luke & Freebody, 1999) and literature (Rosenblatt, 1995) employed here, learners also must develop critical and aesthetic perspectives on how literature is referred to and talked about in a specific cultural context. This is important for L2 development and SFI learner integration, for the possibility of participating in democratic processes (Rosenblatt, 1995), and for transformation of the students' view of the society they live in (Janks, 2010; Jarvis, 2012; King, 2000; Mezirow, 1996; see also Hoggan, 2016; Taylor & Cranton, 2013).

For learners who are at a basic level in their L2 and literacy development, it is a challenge to use their L2 to express themselves in a nuanced way about complex phenomena. The findings of this study indicate that reading and discussing literature was difficult for the participating students. Using a wide range of modalities to support these learners

in expressing their thoughts, experiences, and opinions is therefore crucial. The teacher in this study did employ many different resources and modalities such as visual media, body language, and translanguaging to enhance her students' reading. In the practices she initiated, she expressed engagement and her own embodied experiences. However, further research is needed on the use of different modalities and their potential to evoke interest and feelings of joy as well as to support L2 and literacy development in classroom work with literature in basic education for adults.

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## Appendix 1

Table 2 Dataset used in this study.<sup>4</sup>

Date	Type of data	Minutes	Activities
10 May 2021	Classroom observation	66 minutes	Introduction of classroom work with the novel
11 May 2021	Classroom observation	53 minutes	Introduction of classroom work with the novel
11 May 2021	Classroom observation	48 minutes	Introduction of classroom work with the novel
2 June 2021	Classroom observation	4 minutes	Classroom work with the novel
7 June 2021	Classroom observation	41 minutes	Classroom work with the novel
7 June 2021	Classroom observation	60 minutes	Classroom work with the novel
7 June 2021	Classroom observation	60 minutes	Classroom work with the novel
17 June 2021	Classroom observation	91 minutes	Classroom work with the novel
10 May 2021	Focus group conversation	87 minutes	Talk about classroom work with literature
31 May 2021	Focus group conversation	69 minutes	Talk about classroom work with literature

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4. In the lesson on 2 June, one attending student had not yet been informed of the study or given consent to participate, so the audio-recording could only be made when he was not present in the classroom.