*Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*
*Vol. 20, 1, 2026, 127–150*

# Newly Arrived Primary School Students' Cross-Chronotopic Movements through Language Learner Agency and Peer Scaffolding

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## Abstract

*Global migration continues to reshape and enrich educational landscapes, introducing increased linguistic and cultural diversity into classrooms. In Sweden, this has contributed to a multilingual school environment, in which newly arrived students navigate the new educational context through both a new language of instruction and their existing linguistic resources. This paper explores how two newly arrived students, in a Swedish primary school, engage in learning through Multilingual Study Mentoring (MSM). Drawing on a case study of the two students, the study examines how language learner agency and peer scaffolding emerge as involvement practices in Multilingual Study Mentoring sessions in Greek and within the mainstream classroom context. The findings highlight how support structures – established by the municipality, school, and educators – foster responsibility, belonging, and meaningful participation. By focusing on interactions including teachers, students and Multilingual Study Mentors the study shows how the students adapt, collaborate, and co-construct learning in ways that respond to their needs. The cross-chronotopic movement between the MSM room and the mainstream classroom also highlights the fluid and negotiated nature of involvement across multiple learning spaces. This paper contributes to a deeper understanding of student participation in multilingual education and sheds light on the under-researched role of MSM in the Swedish context.*

*Keywords*: ***multilingual study mentoring, migrant students, multilingualism, Swedish primary school, linguistic ethnography***

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eISSN: 1457-9863
Publisher: University of Jyväskylä, Language Campus

https://apples.journal.fi
https://doi.org/10.47862/apples.162741

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## 1 Introduction

Due to elective or forced circumstances, globalization and migration have contributed to the increased mobility of people across geographical regions, enriching societies with diverse cultures, languages, and knowledge (García, 2009). Although migration itself is not a new phenomenon, its interface with multilingualism has generated increased scholarly inquiry regarding educational realities in the receiving countries; particularly in the area of teaching and learning (Canagarajah, 2017). Sweden, as a multicultural and multilingual society, reflects these global trends as diversity shapes educational needs (Sahlberg, 2016). Notably, 26 % of children (0–17 years old) have a *foreign background*[1] (Thalberg et al., 2021) with 9 % of them born outside Sweden (SCB, 2020). Based on statistics for the 2023–2024 school year, newly arrived students comprised 3.7 % of all children in Swedish primary schools (Skolverket, 2024).

Language learning, especially within a new educational system, is an important and simultaneously demanding task for newly arrived students (Munhall et al., 2024). Educators are also called on to adopt inclusive pedagogical strategies to support these students, taking into consideration, for instance, their diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and their learning of and learning through a new language of instruction that places great demands on their pedagogic competence (Avery, 2017). By gaining a deeper understanding of newly arrived students' backgrounds, linguistic diversity can be used as a resource in the classroom, educators can create a more inclusive and dynamic learning environment, ultimately enhancing school success and fostering meaningful learning for all students (Skolverket, 2018).

In Sweden, short-term and state-financed educational provision is offered to support newly arrived students in their language and subject learning in the majority language (Cummins & Wadensjö, 2017).[2] This type of support, called *studiehandledning på modersmålet*, henceforth referred to as Multilingual Study Mentoring (MSM), is aimed at beginner Swedish-language-learning students within compulsory education (Skolverket, 2016, 2022). The purpose of MSM is to scaffold the students' learning of school subjects, for example, via translations and explanations of subject content (Skolverket, 2022). In cases in which students know multiple languages or have migrated to several countries before coming to Sweden, MSM is offered in the student's strongest[3] language (ibid). Multilingual Study Mentors (MSMs) should also work closely with the subject teacher(s) to help newly arrived students to achieve linguistic and academic independence within a few years (Rosén et al., 2019; Skolverket, 2022). MSM may be conducted both inside and outside the classroom and before, during, or after the lesson (Gareis et al., 2022) by MSMs who usually have knowledge of Swedish, students' so-called[4] mother tongue(s), and various school subjects (Roux Sparreskog, 2024). Nevertheless, there are no national requirements in current school regulations for qualifying as an MSM (SOU, 2019:18). Studies reveal implementation problems, indicating that MSM is an underutilized and marginalized practice (Hedman & Fisher, 2022; Munhall et al., 2024; Rosén et al., 2020).

In this paper, I examine the case of two newly arrived and beginner language learners, Patricia and Joost,[5] who were receiving MSM in Greek in a Swedish primary school.

1. Foreign background includes children who were born abroad and children who were born in Sweden to two foreign-born parents (Skolverket, 2024).
2. Regulations around MSM are found in the Swedish Education Act (Skollag [SFS 2010:800], chap. 12) and in reports and documents from the Swedish National Agency for Education (*Skolverket*).
3. The adjective *strongest* is neither my estimation nor a ranking of students' linguistic resources. It is an established term used in the Swedish National Agency of Education in relation to the provision of MSM. Usually—but not always—the language of previous schooling is considered as students' strongest language in the Swedish context.
4. "Mother tongue" (*modersmål*) is an established term in the Swedish context that can be found in policy documents (e.g., from the Swedish National Agency for Education). It is often used as a synonym for first learned language(s)/strongest language(s) and not in the literal sense, the language of the mother.
5. All names (participants, language center, and school) are pseudonyms. The two students chose their own pseudonyms. The remaining participants gave the researcher freedom to choose their pseudonyms.

This case provides illustrative examples of multiparty and multimodal[6] involvement practices that encompass social interactions, doings, and perceptions of the students, their MSMs in Greek, and a subject teacher.

## 2 Previous Research on Multilingual Study Mentoring

In the Swedish context, research on newly arrived students and their learning of Swedish as a Second Language (SSL) has tended to focus on educational organization and social inclusion (Bomström Aho, 2018; Bunar, 2010; Jepsson Wigg & Ehrlin, 2021; Nilsson-Folke, 2018; Nuottaniemi, 2023). There is also some research focusing on aspects of language education, and their role in inclusion (Hedman & Cunningham, 2024; Hedman & Magnusson, 2021; Juvonen, 2020; Magnusson & Rejman, 2022; Winlund, 2021). Some studies have also targeted the role of the MSM in student learning and student well-being, considering the MSMs' competences and focus on multilingual experiences (Dávila & Bunar, 2020; Eliaso Magnusson & Uddling, 2023; Hedman & Fisher, 2022; Munhall et al., 2024; Reath Warren, 2016). One conclusion is that the Swedish school cannot meet the educational needs of newly arrived students throughout their learning trajectories, either socially or pedagogically. Nevertheless, MSM is considered an important pedagogical provision for newly arrived students in Swedish schools, particularly in relation to their learning and academic achievement (SOU, 2019:18). Municipalities, however, are not obliged to hire MSMs, which means that access to this support may be limited, often due to financial constraints or practical difficulties in finding available MSM staff.

Research also focusing on the role of the MSMs (Dávila & Bunar, 2020; Eliaso Magnusson & Uddling, 2023; Hedman & Fisher, 2022; Rosén et al., 2020) shows that their role and agency are marginalized and their practices tend to be subordinated in the mainstream class. There is also lack of opportunities for MSMs to collaborate with subject teachers, leaving potential support for student development underutilized (Eliaso Magnusson & Uddling, 2023; Hedman & Fisher, 2022; Roux Sparreskog, 2024).

More notably, very few studies focus on primary school (see Hedman & Magnusson, 2021; Lindén, 2024; Snoder et al., 2021), with most studies focusing on the secondary and upper secondary levels (e.g., Munhall et al., 2024; SOU, 2019). Nor has previous research focused on the dynamics in mainstream classrooms between students, MSMs, and subject teachers. One exception is the study of Eliaso Magnusson, and Uddling (2023) in which they reported collaboration between MSMs and subject teachers that is enabled through common planning routines, follow-up, and well-being discussions. This study, however, only considers MSMs perceptions and not include the important aspect of student participation in relation to MSM. There is thus a need for in-depth studies that provide a detailed account of the teaching and learning practices within MSM, based on different prerequisites, language groups, and school subjects. Previous research also tends not to focus on student perspectives and the role of their multilingual resources and practices. This paper fills this gap by examining MSM in Greek for two learners in middle primary school, highlighting what has not previously been studied in combination—the perspectives of students, MSMs, and a subject teacher.

The aim is to provide new insights into how newly arrived students manifest involvement in their learning in relation to the provision of MSM. More specifically, I ask how the two students' involvement is manifested both during the MSM sessions and in the mainstream classroom. Here, the term *involvement*[7] conceptualizes situated and

6. Multiparty and multimodal constellations have also been documented in other studies (Åhlund & Aronsson, 2015) with a focus on peer corrections in second language classrooms, where the dyadic interaction between one teacher and one student is not the sole path to learning.

7. In literature, *involvement* is interchangeably used alongside terms such as *participation* and *engagement* (see Lave & Wenger, 1991; Tillapaugh, 2019). My definition views participation and engagement as inseparable components of involvement. Such definition aims to theorize involvement as social, dynamic, and evolving—providing a holistic view on how involvement is fluid, situated, and co-constructed between the participants.

dynamic sociocultural practices in which the two students meaningfully participate and engage in learning through social interaction, doings, dialogue, during learning activities (Bakhtin, 1981; de Oliveira & Westerlund, 2022; Tillapaugh, 2019; Vygotskij et al., 1987).

The overarching purpose is to contribute much-needed knowledge on the under-researched practice of MSM in Sweden, by highlighting newly arrived students' experiences embedded in the support structures that facilitate their learning.

## 3 Theoretical points of departure

To examine student involvement practices during MSM sessions, the paper adopts a phenomenological approach within the interpretivist paradigm, that is, a philosophical stance on how individuals make sense of their realities (Cohen et al., 2017). This approach includes the study of both social structures and local realities, with particular attention to the positionings of students and teachers (Copland & Creese, 2015b).

### 3.1 Chronotopes

To analyze the context in which the findings are situated, I employ the notion of *chronotopes* (Blommaert, 2020; Blommaert & De Fina, 2017) in conjunction with Puranen's (2024) approach, which connects chronotopes with language ideologies and practices. The notion of chronotopes—literally 'time-spaces' from the Greek ***χρόνος*** *(chrónos*) meaning 'time', and ***τόπος*** **(***tópos)* meaning 'place'—originates in M. Bakhtin's literary theory from the 1930s. It was introduced as a unit of analysis that considers interdependent temporal and spatial dimensions (Bakhtin, 1981). In this paper, chronotopes consist of the main theoretical framework that enables the analysis of student involvement practices.

Chronotopes are spaces to observe student involvement practices and doings, for example, activities, discourses, and interaction patterns, including role and identity manifestations (Blommaert & De Fina, 2017). These doings are dynamically and dialogically constructed as parts of wider chronotopes and cross-chronotopic relations that connect situated interactive moments to wider patterns of social order (Bakhtin, 1981; Blommaert, 2020). In addition, chronotopes represent metaphorical timespaces combining the localities (separate MSM room and mainstream classroom) of student involvement practices with the past, present, and future.

### 3.2 Analytical concepts

The analysis of student involvement practices is facilitated using two analytical concepts: peer scaffolding, and agency—both grounded in language learner's responsibility.

A focus on newly arrived language learners in educational contexts such as MSM reveals how pedagogical language scaffolding is central to the teaching and learning strategy. Pedagogical scaffolding helps students progress toward new skills, concepts, and levels of understanding within a supportive learning environment (Belland, 2014; Gibbons, 2015). Not only does scaffolding promote learner autonomy, but it is also crucial for multilingual students' involvement in language and content learning (de Oliveira & Westerlund, 2022). The notion of peer scaffolding, grounded in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of the *Zone of Proximal Development* (Vygotskij et al., 1987), has been explored in relation to how learners enhance their knowledge via interactions with knowledgeable others, facilitating both understanding and participation (Belland, 2014).

Language learner's responsibility is expressed through agentic doings that are co-constructed, situated activities, as displayed through interaction and participation in education (Mäkitalo, 2016). The notion of agency, also rooted in sociocultural dynamic perspectives of learning and being both socially produced and interpreted, is defined as the socioculturally mediated capacity to act (Ahearn, 2001; Wertsch et al., 1993). The

expression of agency shifts as individuals navigate different cultural, linguistic, and geographical spaces (Miller, 2012). In this case, newly arrived students' perceived sense of responsibility, along with their commitment to learning and interaction with teachers and peers, may foster other aspects of agency, positioning them as responsible and visible participants in the process of *becoming* legitimate speakers of the new language of instruction (McLaughlin, 2023, Mäkitalo, 2016;). Hence, in the analysis, I refer to this other form of agency of newly arrived students, as *language learner agency*. Of importance to this paper is also how students' perceived responsibility for their own learning may sensitize them to transitioning within particular localities in the educational context (Miller, 2012).

## 4 The study

This paper is based on a linguistic ethnography (Copland & Creese, 2015b) in one primary school (called Andromeda) in Sweden during the spring and autumn semesters of 2024. The school was in an urban municipality characterized by a relatively high proportion[8] of foreign-born inhabitants. In this school, I focused on the MSM practice in Greek. Although the MSMs taught the newly arrived students in several schools, they were not employed by the schools but by Galaxy, referred to as a language center. This center also operated as a reception unit for newly arrived students and was responsible for recruiting and distributing MSMs in different languages, based on individual school requests. In this paper, I focus on two newly arrived students in grade 5 (during spring semester 2024) and grade 6 (autumn semester 2024).

The linguistic ethnographic approach combines ethnographic methods with linguistic analysis to examine language use and interactions within social contexts, focusing on how these practices relate to broader social structures and underlying ideologies (Copland & Creese, 2015b). Linguistic ethnography involves several data sources, ensuring the inclusion of many perspectives on the phenomenon under study (see the notion of triangulation; De Fina, 2019). My linguistic ethnographic data involve transcripts from audio and video recordings and field notes from participant observations in Science and Social Science sessions. Data sources also include video/audio-recorded semi-structured interviews with and language portraits (Busch, 2012; Coffey, 2015; Snoder, 2022) of one Social Science teacher (Marianne), two MSMs in Greek (Noah and Anna), and the two students (Patricia and Joost), as well as photographic documentation from the educational contexts, including material produced by the students and the teacher. The visits are characterized as irregularly recurring (Jeffrey & Troman, 2004) and were decided by factors such as participant and researcher availability in each week.

Most of the data production took place in a separate group room (initially designed for Art lessons or free-time activities) in the same building as the mainstream classroom. In that room the MSM, students, and I sat together for the MSM sessions, which ranged between 35 and 55 minutes. Sometimes, prior to moving to the room, we would spend about 10 minutes in the mainstream class attending the lesson introduction. Usually, the MSMs had a short encounter with the subject teacher to make sure they knew what they had to work with, and/or to receive updates on the students' progress. Other times, when there were no other premises available, the MSM session took place in the common corridor where several MSMs in different languages had to sit together with their students around the same table. These sessions in the corridor were noisy and disruptive due to the high number of individuals present, reflect the marginalized conditions in which MSM takes place (Hedman & Fisher, 2022). During these two consecutive semesters, I

8. According to SCB (Statistics Sweden) more than 30% of the municipality's population is foreign-born. In accordance with research ethics and the guidelines of the Swedish Ethical Review Authority, references or exact statistics at the municipal level are omitted, as their inclusion could risk identifying the location and/or participants.

collected approximately eight hours of recorded MSM sessions (three sessions of Science and seven of Social Science), 32 pages of field notes, 30 photographs, seven language portraits, and five hours of interviews with all participants.

All participants were informed about the study prior to data production in a language that they understood well.[9] They gave their oral and written consent to participate, following guidelines from the Swedish Ethical Review Authority.[10] In the case of Patricia and Joost, consent was obtained first from their guardians and then the students themselves. Because other students would likely also be involved in interactions with the two focus students in the classroom, informed consent was similarly collected from them and their guardians.

The choice of this MSM practice in Greek is motivated by my former professional experience as an MSM in my mother tongue, Greek. This experience has provided me with valuable insights into structures, as well as familiarity with related routines and procedures in schools. However, although this familiarity can be a resource, it also poses challenges for reflexivity, meaning my ability to reflect impartially. Linguistic ethnography emphasizes the importance of context in interpreting language as shared utterances that reflect broader understandings (Rampton et al., 2015). Hence, my research builds on *meta-pragmatic reflexivity*—assessing what I hear in connection to dynamic situations— which also connects to the notion of social positions of both the ethnographer and participants (Emerson et al., 2011; Rampton et al., 2015). This reflexivity involves several layers, such as professional experience, shared language with participants, and common ethnic background and migration experience.

Recognizing these connections provides a grounded understanding of participants' perspectives. However, as an *insider ethnographer* (Emerson et al., 2011), I also reflect on what I do not share with the participants; for example, their Albanian heritage or the migrant status of my focus students, which could lead to misinterpretations or stereotyping, such as the imposition of specific identities (Kerfoot, 2016). Although a researcher, like everyone else, brings their own biographies and subjectivity to every stage of the research process, which can influence both perceptions and interpretations (Emerson et al., 2011; Salö, 2018), such cultural and interpretive skills are required for understanding the complexities of everyday activities (Rampton et al., 2015).

The analysis involved multiple readings and ongoing reviews of the data produced (Emerson et al., 2011); namely interactions, answers, student- and teacher-produced material and photographic documentation connected to the paper's objectives and theoretical framework. Close analysis of interactional data provides insights into how language is used by people, for example, to index social identities that were jointly produced between participants in the micro-moments of social interaction during MSM in relation to wider social structures (Copland & Creese, 2015a; Rampton et al., 2015; Tusting, 2019). Because the paper focuses on newly arrived students, I directed the analysis toward better understanding how their involvement was manifested in language practices, routines, and interaction patterns (Blommaert & De Fina, 2017; Puranen, 2024) of learning. This was also achieved by cross-examining the perceptions and experiences of teachers and MSMs and strengthening the interpretations and findings with *emic validation*[11] (Clayman & Heritage, 2021; Tusting, 2019). This facilitated the identification of patterns while being attentive to systematic expressions of involvement.

Based on both the fieldwork and subsequent close (re-)reading of the data, two chronotopic involvement styles, as core themes, were found to be recurrent in the MSM

9. Research participant information and consent forms were available in Greek, Swedish, and Albanian for the guardians of focus students who wanted to receive information in their strongest language. In phone calls, guardians were asked which language they wanted to have the information in.
10. *Etikprövningsmyndigheten* is the Swedish Authority responsible for ethical research on people.
11. *Emic validation* refers to a process of validating findings with the participants involved (Clayman & Heritage, 2021). In this case, this was achieved by the incorporation of newly arrived students', teachers', and MSMs' voices and understandings.

session routines and collaborative practices (Blommaert & De Fina, 2017). These styles are here referred to as *language learner agency* and *peer scaffolding*, which became the focal points of my analysis (Emerson et al., 2011). It is important that language learner agency and peer scaffolding were both found to be anchored in students' sense of responsibility that was reinforced by existing *support structures*. After detecting these focal points, I checked back in with the participants (Cohen et al., 2017) with follow-up interviews to validate the findings and check whether my understanding aligned with their viewpoints.

Data were produced multilingually[12] using several languages in a context of multilingualism and diversity (Copland & Creese, 2015b). Most of the data include Swedish, Greek, and English—languages that I speak. Because all the participants were multilingual, there were also occasions when expressions or words from other languages were used, for instance, Spanish, and Russian. Translation, a common activity in linguistic ethnography in contexts of diversity, was conducted by the author with a focus on representing participants' meanings and voices[13] (Copland & Creese, 2015b; Emerson et al., 2011). Table1 summarizes participant educators' multilingualism while the following section (5. Patricia & Joost) presents the students' language portraits adding an emic perspective and biographical information about the two students in focus.

TABLE 1. Educators' Linguistic Repertoires

| Educator | Role | Language[14] |
|---|---|---|
| Anna | MSM in Greek | Serbian, Swedish, Greek, Russian, English, Croatian, and Bosnian |
| Noah | MSM in Greek | Greek, Swedish, English, and Spanish |
| Marianne | Classroom Teacher | Swedish, German, English, and Spanish |

## 5 Patricia & Joost

The ethnographic fieldwork at Andromeda school began in spring 2024, when Noah was providing MSM in Greek to the two newly arrived students in grade 5, Patricia and Joost. Noah had experience working as a MSM and mother tongue teacher, as well as in diverse teaching roles both in Sweden and Greece. At that time of data production, Patricia had been in Sweden for one and a half years and Joost for just nine months. Both students had been receiving MSM since their arrival—Anna, the MSM, had worked individually with Patricia in 2023, prior to Joost's arrival. Patricia and Joost were also following instruction in SSL. MSM Anna also had experience working as a MSM and mother tongue teacher in Greek, Serbian, Croatian, and Bosnian. Although her educational background was in another discipline, she had pursued further studies to obtain an SSL teaching qualification.

MSM provision was scheduled to support the students with two sessions in Science and Social Science once a week for approximately two hours in total. Their classroom teacher, Marianne, who was also their mentor, had witnessed their overall school progress and development since their arrival. Marianne had a primary teacher qualification for ages 6–12 as well as a background in special education. During autumn 2024, when the two students started grade 6, Marianne was still their classroom teacher. There was, however, a change of MSM when Anna replaced Noah due to time and schedule constraints.

12. The data is also presented multilingually by including the original excerpts with participant utterances in whichever language(s) they expressed themselves.
13. One such representation is, for instance, the inclusion of excerpts first in the original language(s) followed by the English translation.
14. The order in which the languages appear in the table is based on the sequence in which the educators mentioned and included them in their language portraits during the interviews.

Nevertheless, both MSMs continued working for Galaxy, and collaborated closely.

Patricia and Joost have an Albanian background, but because Greek is both their strongest language and the language of their prior schooling, MSM support was in Greek. By Albanian background, I refer to the fact that the students' parents are of Albanian heritage and migrated to Greece as young adults. This constitutes a successive migration trajectory, in which people of Albanian heritage subsequently migrate from Greece to other destinations, such as Sweden, a pattern also documented in other countries (see Karatsareas & Ndoci, 2024, regarding the U.K.). Albanian Greeks constitute a group that tends to have endured years of stigmatization and marginalization in Greece, where there is neither state support nor institutional policies for continued development of their Albanian language (Karatsareas & Ndoci, 2024; Mattheoudakis et al., 2020) either in or outside of school. Both students mentioned that they (still) did not feel comfortable speaking Albanian, and that their knowledge of Albanian was limited—even though it was used at home by their families. In this paper, the vizibilization of Albanian Greeks aims to highlight the sociopolitical and historical backgrounds of learners' linguistic repertoires. This also underscores that students receiving MSM in the same language may differ in background, access, and orientation to that support.

In the following sections, I introduce the two students by presenting their language portraits and expanding on their fluid linguistic repertoires that carry personal stories and lived experiences of language (Busch, 2015; Coffey, 2015). These repertoires are best understood as "individual, biographically organized complexes of resources" (Blommaert & Backus, 2013, 15).

### 5.1 Patricia

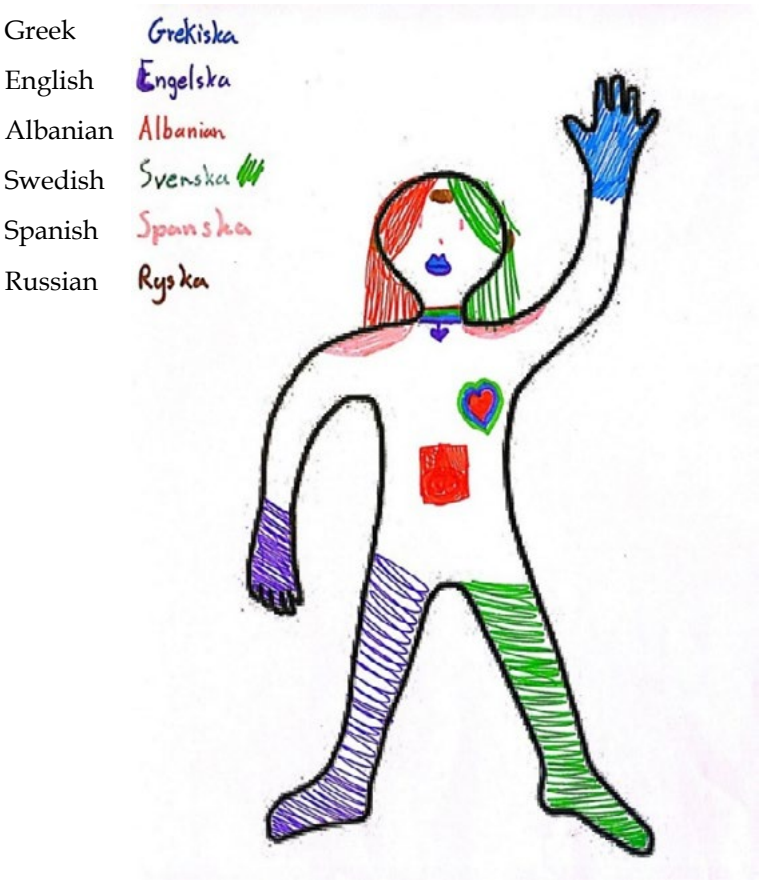


*Figure 1. Patricia's Language Portrait.*

Patricia was born in Greece to Albanian parents, started her schooling in Greece, and at the age of 10, moved to Sweden with her family "in search of a better life."[15] She expressed mixed feelings about moving to Sweden. Although she trusted her parents' decision, this new place was initially scary because she had to adjust to a new school system and was "the new kid"[16] who lacked friends. These feelings quickly passed, however, as she made new friends, and her new friends, along with the help that she got from all her teachers, were what made her happy about coming to Sweden. Patricia's educators perceived her as a dedicated and diligent student. During the interviews, she shared that one of her dreams was to study dentistry in the future.

Although Patricia's linguistic repertoire (visualized in her language portrait in Figure 1, above) includes several languages, she did not consider herself multilingual. She considered Albanian and Greek to be her "first languages", and that her repertoire also included English and Swedish. She included Russian as part of her linguistic repertoire because she had Russian-speaking friends, as well as Spanish—a language she had registered to learn prior to grade 6. During data production in the autumn semester 2024, I was informed that her wish to learn Spanish had been realized. She had started to attend Spanish language classes in another municipal school, because Andromeda did not offer such classes.

## 5.2 Joost


*Figure 2. Joost's Language Portrait.*

15. Text within quotation marks indicates utterances from participants that the author translated into English. In such cases, the original utterance is provided in the footnotes. Here: "...(Θ)α ήταν μια καλύτερη ζωή εδώ".
16. Original utterance: "…(Δ)εν μου αρέσει όταν είμαι καινούργια".

Joost was also born in Greece to Albanian parents and attended school there until she moved to Sweden with her family at the age of 11. Like Patricia, Joost's family decided to move to Sweden "in search of a better life",[17] but also for their children to have better opportunities in the Swedish school system. Joost's family had a friend who was already living in Sweden when they arrived and supported them in various ways as they settled in the new context—for example, by providing books to help them learn Swedish.

Coming to Sweden was initially confusing for Joost, as she recalled not being able to "comprehend anything" and "not liking it at all."[18] She found Sweden to be a very depressing country and the Swedish language unpleasant. Along with these initial challenges of entering a new school and missing her friends in Greece, she felt anxious about all that was unfamiliar in the Swedish school. These feelings quickly changed, however, as her classmates approached her, wanting to make friends. She also found the educational context supportive. with educators who "cared" and who "explained everything better than the teachers in Greece."[19] Her teacher and both MSMs considered Joost to be a motivated student who had made significant progress in the new educational context, given the short period she had been in Sweden.

Joost's linguistic repertoire (see Figure 2 above) consisted of several languages. Like Patricia, Joost considered Albanian and Greek to be her first languages, and that she also had knowledge of English, Swedish, and even Dutch—a language that she learnt on a language learning app, and together online with language buddies. She further included French and Spanish as part of her linguistic repertoire because she understood and liked the cuisine of these countries. Joost also had a Swahili-speaking friend and therefore understood some Swahili. Romanian was a language that she had not formally studied but wanted to learn in the future.

Having described the two focus students, we now move into the description of the context. Context is crucial in linguistic ethnography as language is viewed as socially embedded (Rampton et al., 2015). The following section presents the chronotope of the separate room, the locality where MSM sessions took place. Most of the data were produced in this room; therefore, describing this locality is important before presenting the main findings.

## 6 The chronotope of the "separate room"

As stated previously, MSM in Andromeda usually took place in a separate group room (when available). When I started the fieldwork, with the strong encouragement from Galaxy center to pursue MSM inside the mainstream class in mind, I initially reflected upon the separate room as a possible exclusive space. This perception was influenced by the notion of non-human matter (Fox & Alldred, 2022), which classifies these separate rooms as infrastructure that creates social divisions and stratifications between newly arrived students who cannot use the language 'adequately' and those students who have the skills to participate in Swedish as the dominant and legitimated language (Miller, 2012). Besides the separation and the social division from classmates, this room represented other structures of power (Fox & Alldred, 2022), reminding the students that because they were beginner language learners of Swedish, they were not as free to participate in classroom life. However, as will be shown, I found this view to be inaccurate and simplistic. Rather, student involvement and participation opportunities formed a vital part of these MSM sessions—the locality of the separate room contributed significantly to providing alternative agentic capacities and the legitimation of diverse linguistic choices (Miller, 2012) that were considered impossible in the mainstream classroom.

17. Original utterance: "…(Γ)ια την καλύτερη ζωή".
18. Original utterance: "Γιατί δεν καταλάβαινα τίποτα και δεν μ' άρεσε καθόλου".
19. Original utterance: "Είναι καλύτερα από την Ελλάδα οι δάσκαλοι εδώ πέρα".

During my fieldwork in several MSM sessions in the separate room, it became evident that it constituted a dynamic multilingual community of practice in which objects, meanings, and doings were organized by the participants in that specific timespace of behaviors, trajectories, and social identities (Blommaert & De Fina, 2017). By analyzing the "microscopic" chronotope of this separate room, one thus gains a deeper understanding of the co-existence and interaction of student identities and positionings within macro-social chronotope communities (Blommaert, 2015; Blommaert & De Fina, 2017) such as school, family, and society.

Furthermore, the movement between the chronotope of the separate room and that of the mainstream classroom constructed diverse support structures that were dynamically organized by the participants (Blommaert & De Fina, 2017). I therefore began to closely observe and examine how Patricia and Joost navigated within these chronotopic arrangements and effectively managed the various support structures organized by their teacher, MSMs, classmates, and in relation to one another. This examination involved exploring how these chronotopes facilitated involvement on multiple levels and fostered relational dynamics in learning. As mentioned, the two recurring chronotopic involvement styles—language learner agency and peer scaffolding—were found to be anchored in a strong sense of learner responsibility. How these learners' sense of responsibility interacted with agentive claims and peer scaffolding in the MSM context is further outlined and discussed below. Beginning with the role of language learner responsibility I aim to cultivate an understanding of how peer scaffolding and agency are contextually situated and enacted by the support structures.

## 7 Language learner's responsibility

As shown in this section, Patricia and Joost demonstrated responsibility for their learning throughout both semesters of ethnographic fieldwork. During the interviews, both students shared their families' motives for moving to Sweden: for a better life and better future opportunities after attending Swedish schools. These comments reflected a comparison with a chronotope of the past: the former country of residence and school system and embodied a common perception in Greece that Sweden is renowned for its welfare state and high-quality education. Patricia also expressed her dream of becoming a dentist, a profession that is considered high status in many cultures, constructing her own chronotopic imagining of her future (Puranen, 2024).

An example of student commitment and realized responsibility was Patricia's reoccurring behavior of waking up early on important days (e.g., on days of high-stakes tests), to do a final revision of the learning material before going to school. When sharing such behaviors, she always received praise and admiration from both Anna and me. Patricia was proud of her own dedication and commitment and Anna expressed how such a behavior was highly valued within the chronotope of MSM, and important for Patricia's "becoming" (Mäkitalo, 2016) within the new school system.

In parallel, both Noah and Anna acknowledged these two students' commitment and considered them to be high performers, dedicated, and knowledgeable. Both Anna and Noah stressed the importance of building further on the students' previous knowledge in the Swedish school and in the new language. Anna never missed a chance to praise their diligence and hard work, during MSM sessions and brought it to my attention in our encounters. According to Anna, Patricia and Joost came to school "very well-studied"[20] because they "take things seriously"[21] suggesting potential for a "bright future".[22] Anna's perception was that the students were well aware of the challenges of performing academically in a language they were still learning. Often, at the end of

20. Original utterance: "...(Π)ολύ διαβασμένες".
21. Original utterance: "...(Τ)α παίρνουν σοβαρά".
22. Original utterance: "...(Λ)αμπρό μέλλον".

MSM sessions, Anna reminded the students of the importance of dedication to their studies and school responsibilities, noting also that they would receive their first grades upon completing grade 6. The students listened attentively and agreed, viewing tests and grades as significant milestones in their learning. Anna also kept reminding them of their strong academic performance and emphasized the importance of maintaining such a high standard, particularly with the National Test[23] approaching.

During the follow-up interview with the two students in the spring semester 2025, I mentioned that I have noted how they increasingly took responsibility for better understanding the teachers' motives and tasks in various subjects. I specifically highlighted some of their recurring behaviors that I had perceived as expressions of responsibility. Both recognized this sense of responsibility in their involvement in learning and further discussed how they positioned themselves as regards this responsibility.

Patricia shared that she did not study as hard and as regularly at home, yet she managed to learn a great deal during her daily schooling. Her comment reflected an indirect comparison with a past chronotope—the Greek school—where students are expected to study rigorously and competitively to outperform their peers. My understanding though, was that Patricia enjoyed the perceived relaxed study pace of her current class, along with the emphasis on collaboration through group projects and group activities. Patricia's goal in the new school was to achieve passing grades and to attend university in the future. She believed it would be more valuable to focus on specific school subjects or knowledge that she found useful, rather than memorizing every single detail from. For example, history textbooks about previous Swedish monarchs, such as "when Gustav Vasa[24] was born."[25] Meanwhile, Joost said that she regularly studied at home but without putting too much pressure on herself, making sure to take breaks. She was a student with an interest in sociopolitical issues who sought to educate herself further online and through discussions with her mother, who encouraged her to read different books and pursue a career as a politician.

During our discussions, both students thus focused on their own positioning and responsibilities as newcomers in Sweden. When I specifically asked them what educators could do better to support newly arrived students, they responded that first and foremost educators should "make them feel welcomed",[26] then they should provide additional books to support Swedish language learning, as well as "offer individual time to sit down together and assist them in learning and understanding the new language."[27]

In the two following findings sections, I address the research question of how the two students' involvement was manifested both during the MSM sessions and in the mainstream classroom.

## 8 Language Learner Agency

Learner responsibility was particularly expressed in the MSM sessions via Patricia and Joost's use of available resources and support structures in ways that developed their agentic behavior. They actively participated in and organized MSM sessions, ensuring they completed the assigned exercises and had something to present or discuss with the subject teachers (outside of the MSM room) when asked. In this particular chronotope,

23. *Nationella prov* in Swedish/SSL are standardized tests administered to students in grades 3, 6, and 9. However, because Patricia and Joost moved to Sweden after completing grade 3 in Greece, they were about to take the National Test for the first time in grade 6.
24. Gustav Vasa (King of Sweden between 1523 and 1560) is a significant figure in Swedish history who played a pivotal role in shaping modern Sweden.
25. Original utterance: "Όμως τώρα αν μου πεις πότε γεννήθηκε ο Γκούσταβ Βάσα, αυτό δεν θα το θυμάμαι".
26. Original utterance: "Να τους κάνουν να νιώθουν welcomed".
27. Original utterance: "Και αν μπορούνε και ο μαθητής που είναι καινούριος, να κάτσει λίγο με τη δασκάλα και η δασκάλα να τον βοηθήσει στα σουηδικά. Να τα μάθει, να τα διαβάζει, να τα καταλαβαίνει κλπ".

manifestations of agency—previously defined as the sociocultural mediated capacity to act (Archer, 2000; Wertsch et al., 1993)—facilitated student involvement and challenged assumptions about them being positioned as disempowered, minoritized language speakers (Miller, 2012). In this case, the newly arrived students were not passive recipients of MSM support due to limited linguistic resources but were rather involved in the MSM sessions as active epistemic agents. Epistemic agency refers to how students position themselves as active and responsible knowledge builders that co-construct knowledge with peers and teachers (Damşa et al., 2010). Their teacher, Marianne, had also observed how their perceived sense of responsibility was expressed via epistemic agency, adding that "…they know what the goal is, where they are going, and this is necessary for the MSM to move forward."[28]

Both Patricia and Joost participated actively in the MSM sessions by taking various initiatives. In the following excerpt 1, Anna requests a definition of the term "natural resources" to ensure that the students have understood the key concepts of the unit. Joost is immediately ready to answer to Anna's question, but Patricia takes charge of the turn-taking scheme (Mäkitalo, 2016), initiating the task division between her and Joost. Turn-taking can be affected by social aspects of context and number of parties participating in an interaction (Sacks et al., 1978), especially in this case, when Anna did not pre-allocate turns. Here, Patricia self-selects to participate by providing the answer with Joost, acknowledging that Joost had begun answering (pre-turn consideration) the question about "renewable natural resources" (Sacks et al., 1978). Excerpt 1 illustrates their negotiation of how to proceed with their turn-taking.

EXCERPT 1. MSM in Social Science, 2024-11-07

| | **Original** | **Translation** |
|---|---|---|
| Anna | Τα-<br>Για να με πείτε τα *naturresurser*, τι είναι, τι σημαίνει αυτό; | The-<br>You guys, tell me, *natural resources*, what are they, what does that mean? |
| Joost | *Förnybar*[*a*-] | *Renewa*[*ble*-] |
| Patricia | [Οκέι, πες τα *förnybara* κι εγώ θα πω τα *icke-förnybara*.] | [Okay. you say the *renewable* and I will say the *non-renewable*.] |
| Anna | Μμμ. | Mmm. |
| Joost | Οκέι. Να πω; | Okay. Shall I speak? |

Patricia enters the interaction through an overlap, which can be viewed as negotiated participation (Sacks et al., 1978). First Anna and then Joost agree to Patricia's suggestion, and subsequently Joost also asks Anna's approval to proceed with Patricia's suggestion. This constitutes an example of learner-initiated agency via interactively determined turn-taking (Sacks et al., 1978). Excerpt 1 thus also serves as an example of how the two students position themselves as active shapers (Archer, 2000) of the sociocultural chronotopic micro-context in which they participate. At the same time, this raises questions about whether such negotiation of agentive performance would be possible if the participants were in the mainstream classroom or whether this aspect of agency is tied to the relational and spatial context of the separate room, where their multilingual interactions are legitimized and valued as resources for achieving new language learning goals (Miller, 2012).

Within the chronotope of the separate room, the two students participated more actively, creating opportunities to express themselves in their preferred language(s). In this way, they sought further explanations from the MSM on aspects that had been unclear in the mainstream classroom, and they could collaboratively tailor the learning

28. Original utterance: "(A)tt de tar ju sitt ansvar, de vet vad är målet, vart ska jag och det behövs för att studiehandledningen ska leda framåt."

experiences to better meet their needs. This is illustrated in excerpt 2, in which forms of language use were spatiotemporally located (Puranen, 2024) and characterized by the coexistence of multiple styles and named languages. In excerpt 2, such language practices occurred while the two students interacted with Noah during a gap-filling exercise in History[29]. Initially, Noah asks Joost how she filled in one of the phrases.

EXCERPT 2. MSM in Social Science, 2024-05-23

| | **Original** | **Translation** |
|---|---|---|
| Noah | Πώς συμπλήρωσες τη φράση σου, Joost; | How did you fill in your phrase, Joost? |
| Joost | *So he can get more money.* | *So he can get more money.* |
| Noah | Μμμ. *För att få pengar. För att spara.* Ωραία! Και το δεύτερο κομμάτι; Ποιες είναι οι συνέ:::πειες; | Mmm. *To get money. To save up (money).* Nice! And the second part? What were the co:::nsequences? |
| Joost | [*He saved Sweden and got more land.*] | [*He saved Sweden and got more land.*] |
| Patricia | [↑ Αααα!] | [↑Aaah!] |
| Noah | Μμμ ((affirmative nod)) | Mmm ((affirmative nod)) |
| Joost | >Έσωσε τη Σουηδία και πήρε περισσότερα χωράφια.< | >He saved Sweden and got more fields (back).< |

Joost chooses to respond to Noah's initial question in English. Noah confirms Joost's answer ("Mmm") and rephrases it in a more formal register (informal: "to get money"; formal: "to save up"). Later, Joost repeats the same utterance in English ("He saved Sweden and got more land") and then translates it into Greek, using a simpler tone in the latter. In this way, the separate room emerges as a translingual safe space (Wei, 2011), enabling the students to construct an agentic chronotope by drawing on various linguistic resources from their repertoire to meet their communicative needs. This agentic use of languages is supported by the MSM who, situated within a multilingual environment, also adopts heteroglossic practices (Blommaert, 2015). Noah's responsiveness to the students' linguistic choices enables flexible, meaningful engagement with the subject content. Within this dynamic, the participants appear to oscillate between understanding the content, accessing the appropriate vocabulary in the new language, and navigating the broader synchronic chronotope of the classroom, where formal language use is expected in such tasks.

## 9 Peer scaffolding

Agentic behaviors were evident not only in the examples presented earlier but also in moments of peer scaffolding (Gibbons, 2015). According to Noah and Anna, the inclusion of two students—rather than just one—in the MSM sessions had a positive impact on both their learning and social life. Noah shared, in a brief after-lesson conversation, that since Joost had joined the MSM sessions with Patricia, both students had shown noticeable improvement in school performance. Both MSMs and the teacher had also noted that Patricia and Joost were close friends who supported one another, a dynamic that was apparent from the outset of the ethnographic fieldwork.

During the MSM sessions, peer scaffolding was manifested through affirmations, gestures, dialogue, and collaboration between Patricia and Joost. Because I observed such behaviors in the separate room, I discussed this matter with the students during the follow-up interview. They both said that their close collaboration aimed to support not only each other but also their peers in the classroom. They often tried to complete

29. The history chapter this excerpt refers to is about the Swedish King Karl XI and specifically about 'The Reduktion', which refers to the comprehensive process of the Swedish Crown repossessing lands and properties that had been previously granted to the nobility.

the task independently (e.g., find the answer in a text) and then check with one another. If one student could not find the answer, the other pointed to the passage and waited for them to find the answer on their own. This was realized by using several linguistic resources to accomplish communicative purposes (Canagarajah, 2018), such as English, Greek, and Swedish, often in a translanguaging[30] manner (Blackledge & Creese, 2017) —that is, by drawing flexibly on their full linguistic repertoires rather than separating languages (García, 2009). Joost described this linguistic flexibility as "*κάνουμε* blanda!" ("we are mixing"). It also came to my attention that in the mainstream classroom, they either chose to collaborate in group projects or were assigned by the teachers to do so, because they shared other languages than Swedish in which they were stronger, such as Greek.

Peer scaffolding was prominent in the separate room, for example, toward the end of one MSM session in which the students were preparing for an oral task assigned by the teacher, Marianne. This task, to be completed upon their return to the classroom, required them to select a term from a specific Geography chapter and present it to their teacher and classmates. Patricia quickly selected the term öar (meaning "islands") and, with the support, prompts, and praise from both Anna and Joost, was able to progressively formulate an utterance in Swedish giving the definition of island: "ett land som har vatten runt" ("a piece of land that has water around it"). However, when it was Joost's turn, she seemed unsure about completing the same task. Although she had selected the term *halvöar* ("peninsulas"), she said that she lacked the vocabulary to explain the term even in Greek, her strongest language. In response, Patricia took the initiative to support her by offering a literal translation of *halvöar* **i**nto Greek, as *μισό νησί* **(**"half island") suggesting that explanation of the term could be inferred logically. Anna acknowledged this support and continued to encourage Joost to construct the definition step by step. Patricia rejoined the interaction (see excerpt 3), stepping in to complete Joost's sentences and translating them into Swedish when Joost struggled to find the appropriate words.

EXCERPT 3. MSM in Social Science, 2024-10-03

| | **Original** | **Translation** |
|---|---|---|
| Joost | Όταν είναι [το μισό στη γη, όταν είναι το μισό-] | When half of [it is on the land, when half of it is-] |
| Patricia | [*Halv på vatten, halv på länd.*] | [*Half on water, half on land.*] |
| Anna | Μπράβο! | Bravo! |

Patricia supports Joost in completing the utterance in Swedish through cooperative overlap, reflecting the collaborative nature of classroom interaction (Gardner, 2013). At the same time, Anna's praise shows an affective dimension in their learning process (Zembylas, 2021). Excerpt 3 illustrates how the two students engage in interaction and task completion despite being beginner language learners in the target language (Gardner, 2013).

Peer scaffolding also extended beyond the MSM sessions. Both students shared that they often completed exercises with help from classmates in the mainstream class. In excerpt 4, Noah, while reviewing Joost's exercise book, asks how she had arrived at the correct answer before their MSM session, guessing she had asked her teacher, Marianne. Joost explains that a friend had helped her, which is why the answer was written in Swedish (rather than English, as she would usually do). She also notes that she had found the answer in a specific textbook passage.

30. Translanguaging here refers to the flexible use of linguistic resources employed by multilingual people to make sense of their worlds (Blackledge & Creese, 2017). In the case of students of minoritized languages, translanguaging functions as a pedagogical tool that facilitates participation and knowledge-building beyond boundaries of named languages (Wei, 2018).

EXCERPT 4. MSM in SO, 2024-05-16

| | **Original** | **Translation** |
|---|---|---|
| Noah | Αυτό, εσύ, φίλη μου Joost, μόνη σου το έγραψες ή σε βοήθησε η κυρία;! | This one, my friend Joost, did you write it by yourself or did the teacher help you?! |
| Joost | Με βοήθησε η φίλη μου, κιόλας το λέει στο βιβλίο. | My friend helped me, but it is also written in the book. |
| Noah | Σε βοήθησε η φίλη σου; Μμμ. | Your friend helped you? Hmm. |
| Joost | Ε ναι, αφού το έγραψα στα σουηδικά. | Well yeah, because I wrote it in Swedish. |

Throughout the data production process, both students consistently acknowledged the help that they received from each other and their peers. They described this support as valuable for understanding the lesson in the absence of MSM and as a source of additional assistance along with that of the teacher when needed. Notably, when asked, Joost mentioned the classmate support before that of classroom teachers, explaining that she trusted her friends, which made the situation less stressful, especially given the flexibility to use English and Greek as auxiliary languages. This indicates that peer interaction was not only academically helpful but also contributed to their well-being (see also de Haan & Elbers, 2005) because it displayed care and offered also a quicker and more adaptable explanation on task completion. In this way, cooperation served as a learning strategy that facilitated understanding, participation, and task completion in small groups, where one student's success contributed to the success of another (Belland, 2014; Slavin, 1980).

Patricia referred to further explanations and further translations from teachers and peers as strategies to understand advanced tasks. Marianne confirmed this strategy, saying that she encouraged student cooperation, posing questions to peers, and even copying from each other's books —something that was considered bizarre by the newly arrived students because they regarded this as *cheating*. In the interviews, Marianne mentioned that when new migrant students arrived in her class, she prepared all the other students to welcome their new classmates (cultivating collective responsibility) in what she referred to as *stödstrukturer* ("support structures"). These were for instance, making strategic seating arrangements and assigning students significant responsibility for ensuring the smooth integration of new arrivals into the classroom routines. She believed in the power of peer support in learning, which she compared with the socialization and skills acquisition that occurs in young children.

EXCERPT 5. Interview with Marianne, 2024-05-29

| | **Original** | **Translation** |
|---|---|---|
| Marianne | Och framförallt, gruppens stöttning.<br>De hjälper och jag tillåter att skriva av hhh.<br>Jag uppmuntrar att eleverna skriver av. | And above all, the group's support.<br>They help and I allow copying hhh. I encourage the students to copy. |
| | Och så brukar jag säga det att hur är det småbarn lär sig? Hur lär sig bebisar? | And then I usually say, how do young children learn? How do babies learn? |
| Researcher | Hhh. | Hhh. |
| Marianne | Ja, men de härmar-<br>Ja, de tittar hur gör andra barn, hur gör vuxna. De härmar, gör efter, imiterar och det är precis så vi lär oss. Vi måste få skriva av varandra hhh.<br>Så jag brukar faktiskt uppmuntra till det och de tycker det är jättekonstigt hhh. | Yes, but they imitate-<br>Yes, they watch how other children do things, how do adults do things. They imitate, mimic, replicate, and that is exactly how we learn. We have to be able to copy from each other hhh. So, I tend to actually encourage that and they think it is really strange hhh. |
| Researcher | Ja, hhh. | Yes, hhh. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Marianne | De tycker det är så hhh-<br>De tycker det är, speciellt nyanlända elever. För de är det så-<br>Det känns som att de fuskar har de sagt till mig. Nu när de har varit här ett tag och fått språket sa att det- det var så konstigt hhh., man fick skriva av. Men jag tror att det är så man lär sig, man måste få skriva av och sen att ta ansvaret och öva och träna lite hemma också. | They think it's like that hhh-<br>They think it's, especially newly arrived students. For them, it is-<br>It feels like they are cheating, they have told me. Now that they have been here for a while and have learned the language, they said that- it was so strange hhh., you were allowed to copy. But I think that's how you learn, you have to be able to copy and then to take responsibility and practice a little at home too. |

In excerpt 5, Marianne explains how she encourages student collaboration and even *duplication*—something that is typically considered cheating or plagiarism, because it violates societal norms and conventions, and is therefore not allowed (Rylner Kjellgren, 2025). Through a cultural lens, *copying* as a learning strategy is often criticized in the Greek context, and there are consequences for students found engaging in such practices (e.g., receiving a failing grade). Patricia and Joost did not act in accordance with this chronotope of the past—the Greek school system—although they sometimes were called on to explain why they did it.

During one MSM session in Social Science, Noah was narrating the content of the lesson while Patricia, having finished solving her assigned exercises, was attentively focusing on his explanations. Meanwhile, Joost was copying from Patricia's book while listening, a practice that caught Noah's attention, prompting him to ask Joost why she was "copying". Joost quickly clarified that, rather than copying it should be referred to as βοήθηση ανθρώπου ("helping a person"). Noah later acknowledged this explanation but asserted that such practices are acceptable only if a student has fully comprehended, reflected on the lesson content, and is then able to write an answer. Both Noah and Anna observed the benefits of peer support in both learning and well-being, with Noah emphasizing that classmates play the biggest role in developing the oral language skills of newcomers, saying "I truly believe they will learn to speak primarily from their classmates; and, of course, also from the school environment, especially in the classroom when I'm not present."[31]

## 10 Concluding discussion

At Andromeda, Patricia and Joost—two newly arrived students, benefited from a strong network of support structures that had been established by the municipality, school, classroom teachers, and MSMs. These structures facilitated learner responsibility in the form of epistemic agency (Damşa et al., 2010). The coordinated support outlined above created opportunities for Patricia and Joost to engage meaningfully in both academic and social aspects of school life (Canagarajah, 2018). The findings thus provide new insights into how newly arrived students manifest involvement in their learning in relation to the provision of MSM. More specifically, the findings show how Patricia and Joost's involvement is enacted through interactional expressions of agency and peer scaffolding, with a particular focus on how these are anchored in their perceived sense of responsibility as language learners as they navigate both within MSM sessions and in the mainstream classroom context, in their process of becoming (Mäkitalo, 2016).

The separate room, where the MSM sessions took place, was an important locality in which involvement practices were highlighted through the lens of the chronotopes. The separate room also functioned as a translanguaging space, allowing a multilingual framework that focuses on speakers and their needs (McLaughlin, 2023). It was in this space that the students drew on past experiences and diverse embodied cultural resources

31. Original utterance: "(Α)λλά πραγματικά από τους συμμαθητές τους θα μάθουν να μιλάνε, πιστεύω, και από το σχολείο φυσικά–μέσα στην τάξη, όταν δεν είμαι παρόν."

from their trajectories of migration, enabling them to communicate, collaborate, and learn in new contexts (Canagarajah, 2018; Miller, 2012; Nuottaniemi, 2023). Moving beyond a monolithic view of context, this indispensable space illustrates how social, spatial, and temporal features are agentive in shaping students' opportunities for legitimate involvement as they navigate their educational paths in their new country of residence.

The MSM space serves as a crucial chronotope for identity formation and collaborative practices (Blommaert & De Fina, 2017; Puranen, 2024). In this chronotope, the co-presence of Patricia and Joost fosters a relational dynamic that promotes agency while encouraging peer scaffolding and behaviors that reflect mutual support, well-being (de Haan & Elbers, 2005), and a sense of belonging. In this environment, affect (Zembylas, 2021) and cognition intertwine via a performed sense of safety and trust— first by the MSMs but also through the collective contributions of everyone around the students. The cross-chronotopic movement (Blommaert, 2020) between the MSM room and the mainstream classroom reflects the fluid, negotiated nature of student involvement across multiple learning spaces.

In the different chronotopes, the students act as what Choudhry (2016) calls linguistic chameleons—editing and adapting their linguistic and identity performances in accordance with the perceived norms and affordances of each context. This reflects adaptability but also emerging agency claims, as a capability to choose, shape (Archer, 2000), and take responsibility for one's role in the learning process. It is in this interplay between peer interaction, linguistic practice, and chronotopic dynamics that Patricia and Joost's involvement becomes visible. The MSM space, then, is not simply a place of language support, it is a dynamic and agentive environment where emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions of learning intersect. By examining how language learner agency and peer scaffolding are enacted across these spaces, this paper highlights the ways in which two newly arrived students manage their learning trajectories, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of involvement in multilingual school settings. Future pedagogies should more effectively acknowledge that migrant students navigate such historicities as part of multilingual lives, meaning that they draw on a diverse range of linguistic resources (Busch, 2012) that are overlooked within school settings.

**TABLE 2. Transcription Key (adapted from** Jefferson, 2004**).**

| Symbol | Meaning |
|---|---|
| - | (Self) interruption or cutoff |
| *italics* | Word(s) in a language other than the main language of transcription (here English) |
| ? / ; [32] | Rising intonation |
| ! | Emphatic intonation |
| hhh. | Laughter |
| [ ] | Overlapping speech |
| : | Sound extension |
| ((word)) | Author's comments or contextual notes |
| (word) | Missing word |
| ↑ / ↓ | Marked rise or fall in intonation |
| > word < | The words indicated between the symbols are spoken faster than surrounding talk |

## Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the participants for their openness and trust.

## Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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32. In Greek, the question mark looks like a semicolon (;) in Latin script.

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Received June 12, 2025
Revision received December 1, 2025
Accepted December 3, 2025