



UNIVERSITY OF
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MULTILINGUAL LEARNING CONTEXTS IN SWEDEN

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Sweden

- 9 593 000 inhabitants
- \approx 20% who were born in another country or whose parents were born in another country (\approx 150 languages)
- Principal language = Swedish
- 5 official minority languages (not necessarily L1 speakers)
- Swedish Sign Language (\approx 12 000 speakers)
- Other sign languages (\approx 1 000 speakers)
- EFL from third grade, English music, films, tv programs, games etc. No dubbing, only subtitles



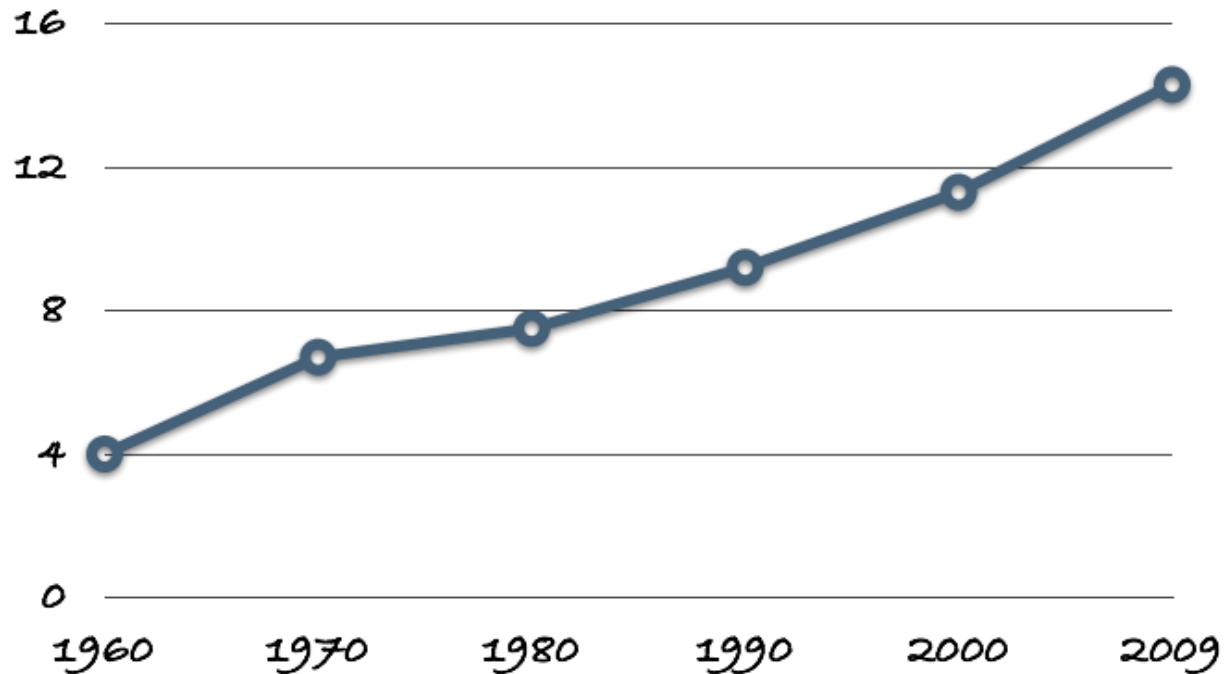
Official minority languages

- Finnish
- Yiddish
- Meänkieli (Tornedal Finnish)
- Romany Chib
- Sapmi

- (Swedish Sign Language)

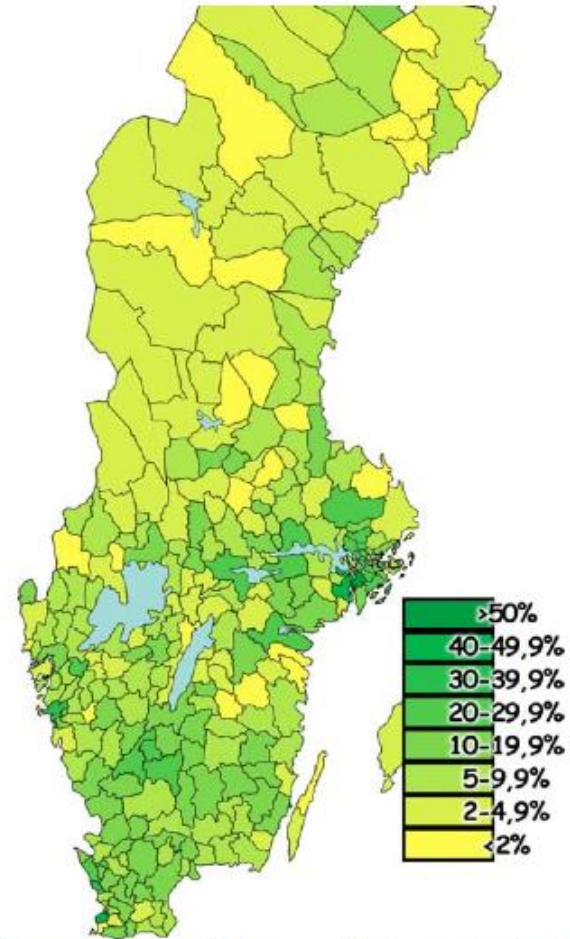


Percentage of inhabitants born outside Sweden 1960-2009





Percentage of children with Swedish as an additional language 2009



*Andel skolbarn med annat hemspråk än svenska per kommun
(exklusive Norrbotten) år 2005.*

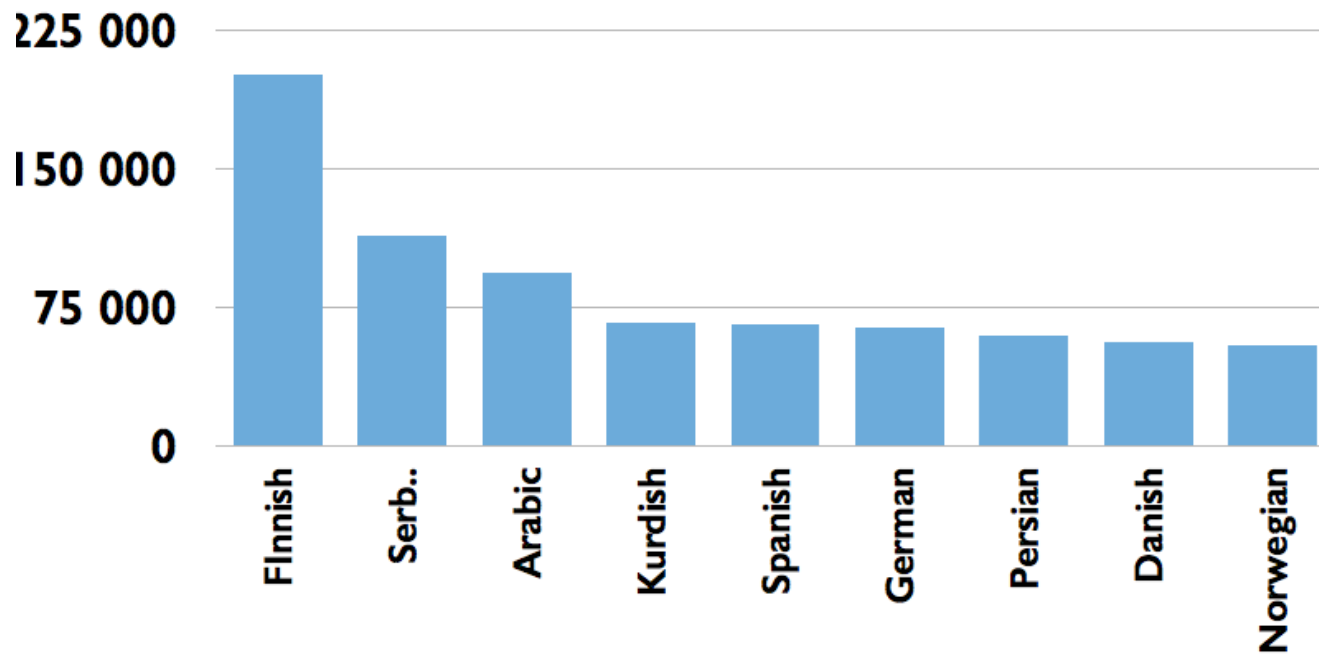


The Swedish language act

- All residents of Sweden are to be given the opportunity to learn, develop and use Swedish. In addition
- persons belonging to a national minority are to be given the opportunity to learn, develop and use the minority language, and
- persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, and persons who, for other reasons, require sign language are to be given the opportunity to learn, develop and use the minority language.
- Persons whose mother tongue is not one of the languages specified in the first paragraph are to be given the opportunity to develop and use their mother tongue.

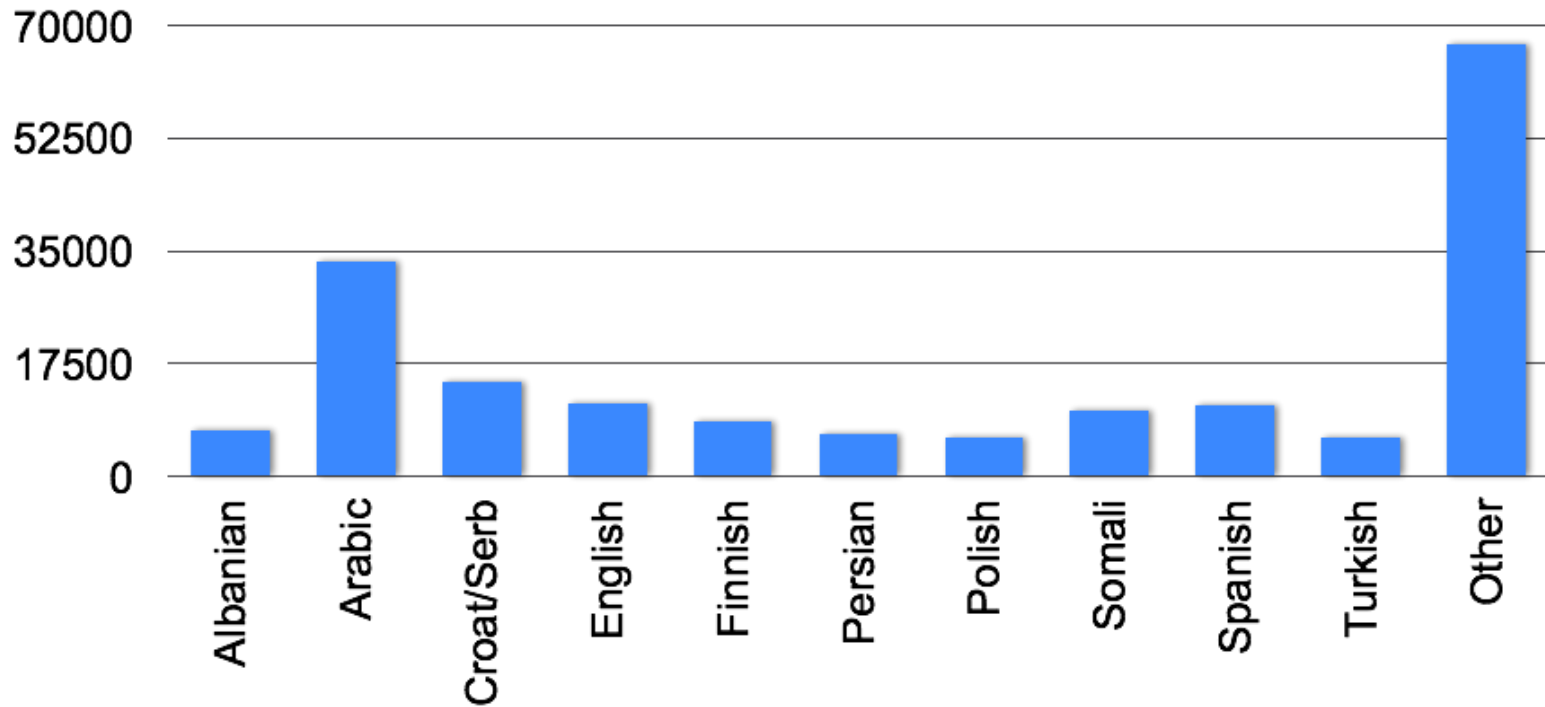


Languages of immigrants with large group of speakers 2009





Mother tongue education applied for 2009





Some (mixed) typical characteristics of Swedish

- A relatively rich vowel system
- Accent 1 and Accent 2 (banan= the track, banan = banana)
- Very productive compounding
(smalmatskokboks författartävlingsvinnare = winner of a competition for authors of low fat cookbooks)
- SVO word order, but very much V2
- No standard pronunciation
- 29-letter alphabet (including, Å, Ä Ö)



Swedish syllable structure and orthography

Transparency

Syllable structure		Transparent			Opaque	
	Simple	Finnish	Greek Italian. Spanish	Portugese		
	Complex		German Norwegian Icelandic.	Dutch Swedish	Danish	English



Swedish Morphology (syntetic)

- Mainly inflective
- Inflects nouns for number, grammatical gender and definiteness
- Inflects verbs mainly for tense (but also mode and diathesis)
- Inflects adjectives for comparison and to agree with the noun



Nouns and adjectives (5 declensions)

- En fin bil (A nice car)
- Den fina bil-en (The nice car)
- Den fin-are/fin-aste bil-en (The nicer/nicest car)
- Två fin-a bil-ar (Two nice cars)
- De fin-a bil-ar-na (The nice cars)

- Ett fin-t äpple (A nice apple)



Verb tense (4 conjugations)

- Att simma (to swim)
- Jag/du/han/hon/den/det/vi/ni/de simma -r
I/you/he/she/that,we,you/they swim(s)
- Simma-de (swam)
- Har simmat (have swum)



Educational challenges

- Very limited language statistics
- Late arrivals — preparation classes debated
- Segregation and background variation
- Not enough — and not very well educated — teachers of the students' mother tongues
- Very little cooperation between mother tongue teachers, special eds. teachers and Swedish as a second language teachers.
- Limited linguistic knowledge among non-language teachers



Educational challenges

- The relation between minority languages and “other” languages
- Swedish is a “relatively small” language => limited number of assessment and training materials
- More or less no assessment materials in other languages than Swedish – and little research on multilingualism in relation dyslexia/other communication disorders
- No agreed definition of dyslexia
- Over- and underdiagnosis
- Bilingualism vs biliteracy
- The PISA shock