CLILNetLE

DIGITAL PRACTICES IN AND OUT OF THE CLIL CLASSROOM: SWEDEN

A Report by CLILNetLE Working Group 4

Pia SUNDQVIST and

Liss Kerstin SYLVEN

JULY

2024

cost
EUROPEAN COOPERATION IN SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

universität wien

Funded by the European Union

CLILNetLE

Pia SUNDQVIST, University of Oslo
Liss Kerstin SYLVÉN, University of Gothenburg

NOTE. This country report presents results from the Swedish dataset, collected as part of two pan-European surveys administered by WG4 of the COST Action CLILNetLE. For the main report see *Digital Practices in and out of the CLIL Classroom: A pan-European survey of students and teachers*

Report published in July 2024

Table of contents

1. Digital Literacies Student Survey (DLSS): Sweden

1.1. Introduction

The Swedish DLSS survey was administered late in the spring semester of 2024, in April. Participants were recruited via the researchers' professional network. The time of administration was suboptimal since it is known to be difficult to collect data during the last two months of the spring semester in Sweden, and especially to collect data from students in grade 9, which was the targeted age group. School year 9 is the final year of compulsory school in Sweden and these students are involved in many mandatory national tests in several school subjects in the spring semester. The teachers are responsible for administering the national tests and, for this reason, teachers tend to be very pressed for time in the last months of the spring semester. In addition to organising and administering the national tests, the teachers also often have to assess them. Thus, although we invited many schools and English teachers to participate in this research, we anticipated problems with the recruitment. For the Swedish context, it would have been optimal to have had access to the translated survey material early in January but, unfortunately, this was not possible. In short, the main challenge for us as researchers was to actually be able to recruit participants. On the other hand, a key opportunity was the fact that we have well-established contacts with CLIL teachers.

We contacted our CLIL teachers across Sweden via email and invited them to participate with their grade 9 students in the DLSS. They were provided with all the information they needed and a link and QR code to the survey. When the survey closed, one class in grade 9 had participated (*N*=19). Thus, the Swedish data from the students are limited to only this one class.

It is estimated that approximately one third of all schools at upper secondary level in Sweden offer CLIL in one way or another (Paulsrud, 2019). CLIL is used as an umbrella term covering virtually all types of education instruction where another language (in the majority of cases, English) than students' (and often teachers') first language (L1) is used as the medium of communication. CLIL thus comes in many forms in Sweden, from schools using English as the medium of instruction in practically all subjects, except language arts, to classes where limited cross-curricular projects in one or two non-language subjects are taught and learned in English (Olsson & Sylvén, 2024). At mandatory level (grades 1-9), another language than Swedish as the medium of instruction can only be used up to 50 percent of all teaching time, and permission from the Swedish School Inspectorate is necessary. There are no official statistics showing how widespread CLIL is at mandatory level, but in 2020 approximately 100 schools asked for permission to use English to teach subject content (Skolvärlden, 2020).

There are no sanctioned requirements for CLIL teachers in Sweden, and no official CLIL teacher education. A few universities offer courses in CLIL within the teacher education program. Additionally, there are some in-service training courses specifically on CLIL for

practising teachers using English as the medium of instruction in their teaching already or are planning to do so. However, the vast majority of CLIL teachers in Sweden do not have any specific CLIL training.

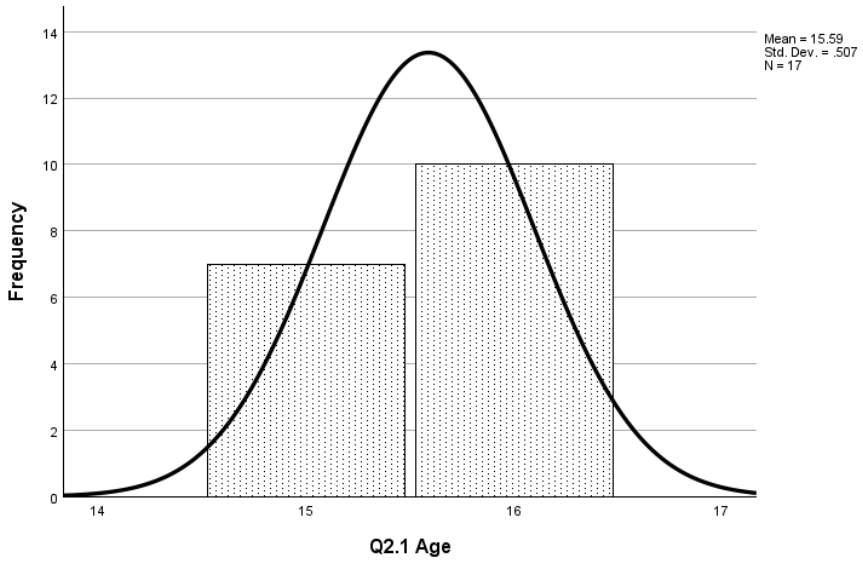
Research into CLIL in the Swedish context is relatively scarce. The studies that exist show in general that CLIL students are more proficient in L2 English from the start and do not develop more than their non-CLIL peers (Sylvén, 2019). There are primarily four factors that are believed to contribute to the comparatively low levels of progress in the target language: first, the fact that teachers, in general, do not have a specific CLIL-teaching education, second, there is no framework specifying what CLIL is (and what it is not), third, it is often introduced in upper secondary school, and fourth, English abounds in Swedish everyday society which might mean that a few hours of extra English in school does not make much of a difference (Sylvén, 2013).

1.2. Summary of main findings

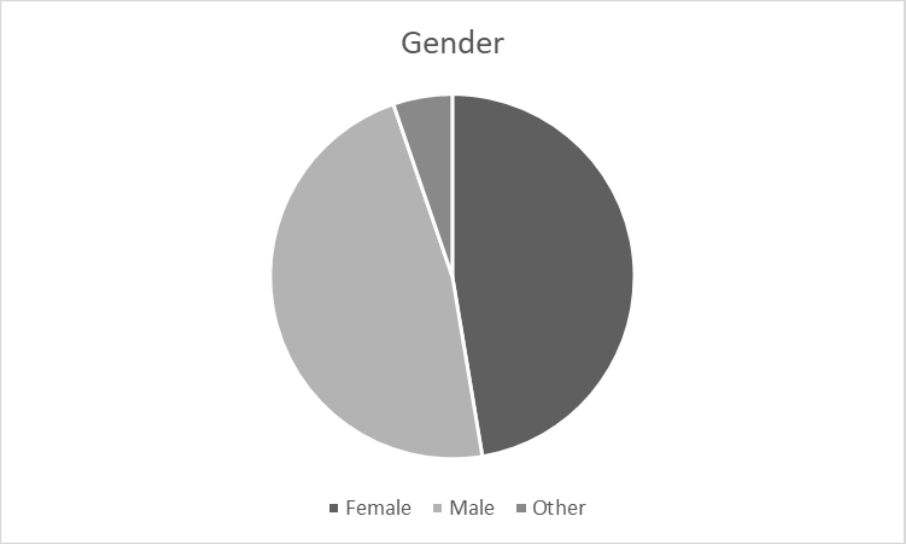
- While half of participants stated that Swedish was their L1, the other half reported two or more languages in response to the question about their home language. Thus, about half of the students seem to be multilingual, if we define being multilingual as speaking more than one language.
- The parental education level was relatively high in this sample.
- Laptop was the most frequently used digital device in school, followed by mobile phones. For extramural activities it was the other way around, with mobile phones as the most used device followed by laptops.
- With regard to digital technological problems, the most common variables for which the participants answered always were access to the internet and internet at school.
- Six variables indicated most frequently as sometimes being seen as a problem were these: time, school policy, lack of software, budget, teachers, and limited internet extramurally.
- The two variables indicated by most of the participants as never being a problem were parents and limited access extramurally.

1.3. Participant background

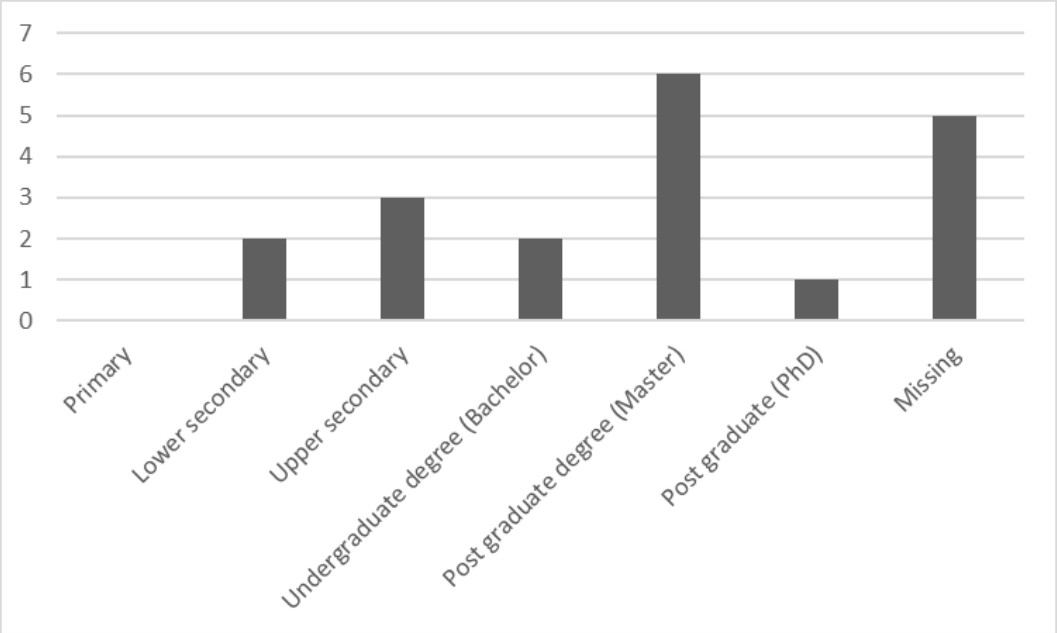
The 19 students in the Swedish sample were 15 or 16 years old (data missing from 2 students).



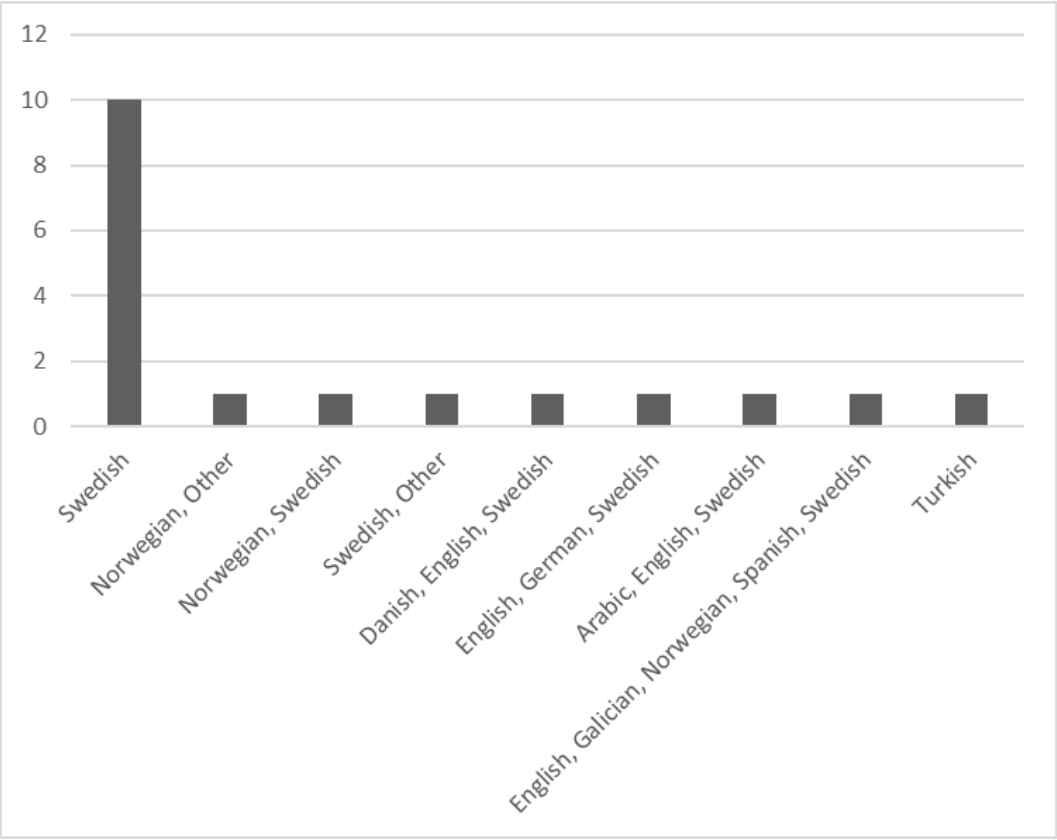
There was an even distribution between male and female participants. One participant answered the option “Other”.



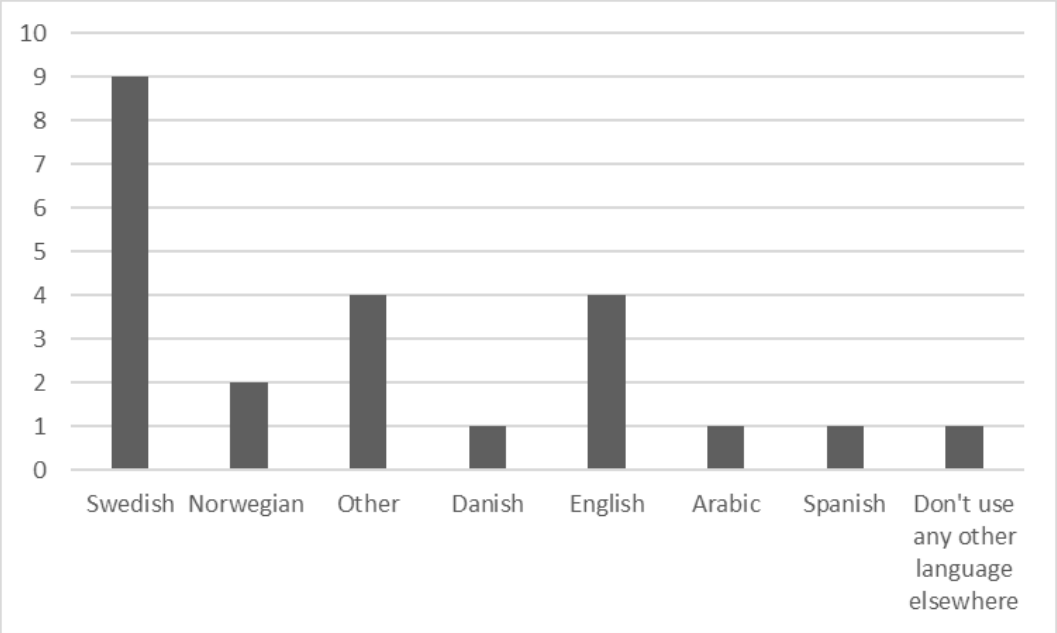
The **parental education level** was relatively high in this sample. The vast majority reported a post-graduate education level. Five participants reported lower or upper secondary school as their parents’ highest level of education. It can be noted that data are missing from five participants.



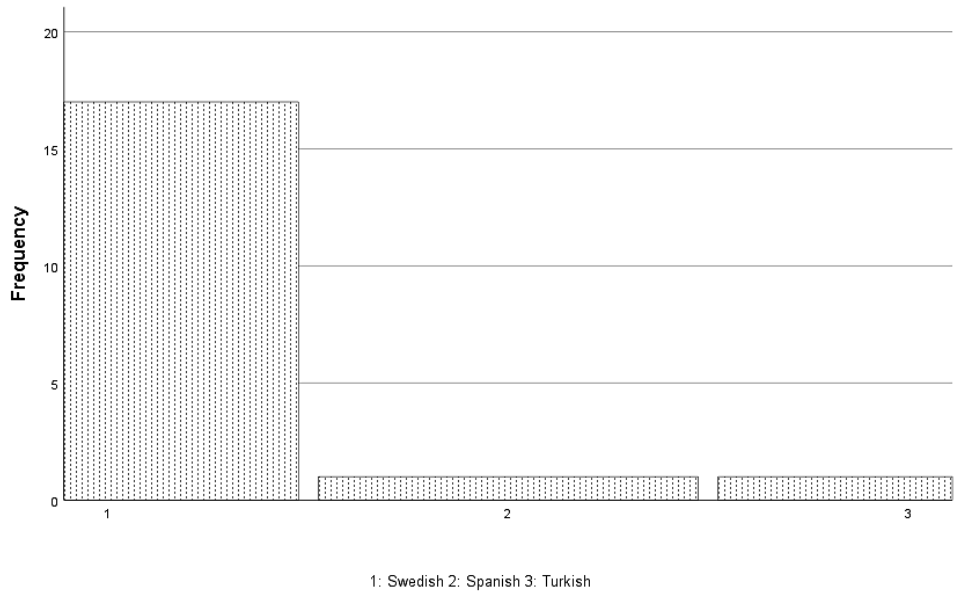
Half of the participants stated that Swedish was their **first language** (L1) used at home. Six participants stated that in addition to Swedish, they had one other L1 or sometimes several L1s, for instance, Arabic, Danish, German, and Norwegian. Thus, about half of the students seem to be multilingual, if we define being multilingual as speaking more than one language.



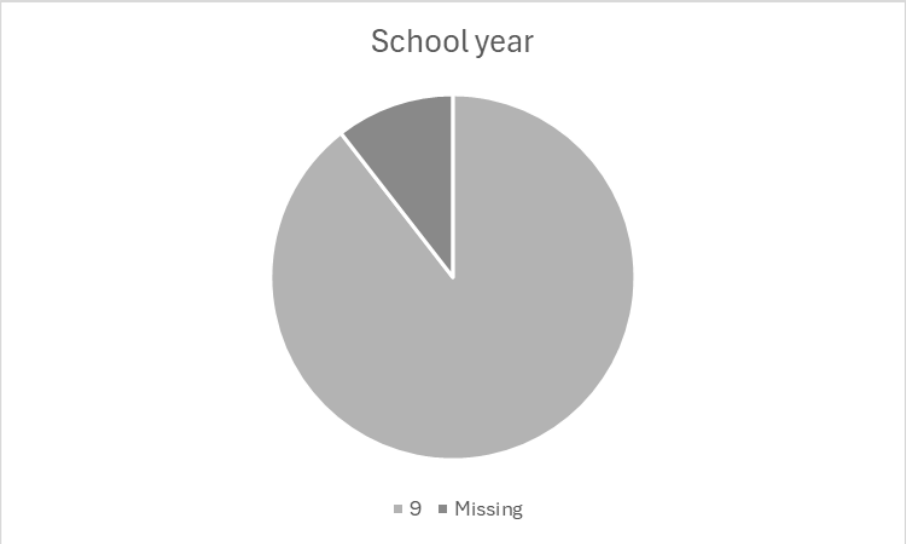
In terms of using **languages with family/relatives elsewhere**, nine of the Swedish participants reported to use Swedish, four reported to use English, four reported to use "Other", two reported "Norwegian" and one reported to use each Arabic, Danish, and Spanish. Only one participant answered that they did not use any other language elsewhere.



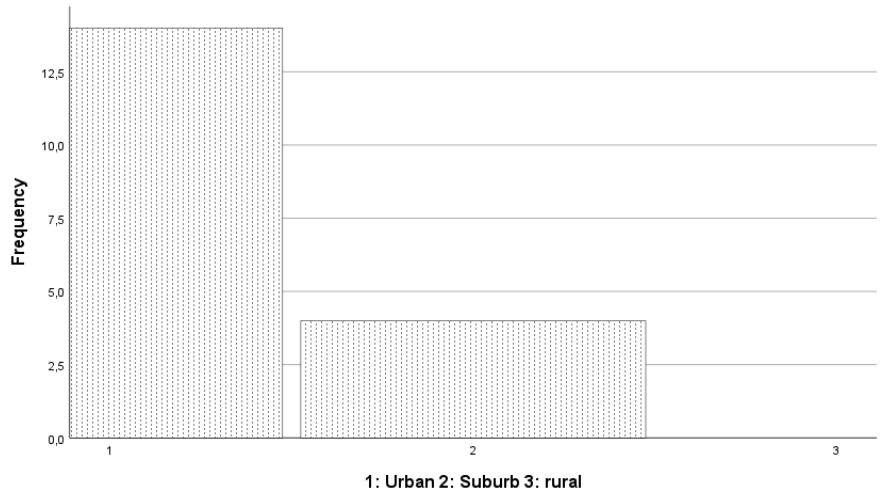
Regarding the participants' **main language of schooling**, we believe that the two students who answered Spanish and Turkish, respectively, have misunderstood this question. We suggest that their responses to this question, therefore, are disregarded.



The Swedish participants were in grade 9, which is the last year of compulsory school.



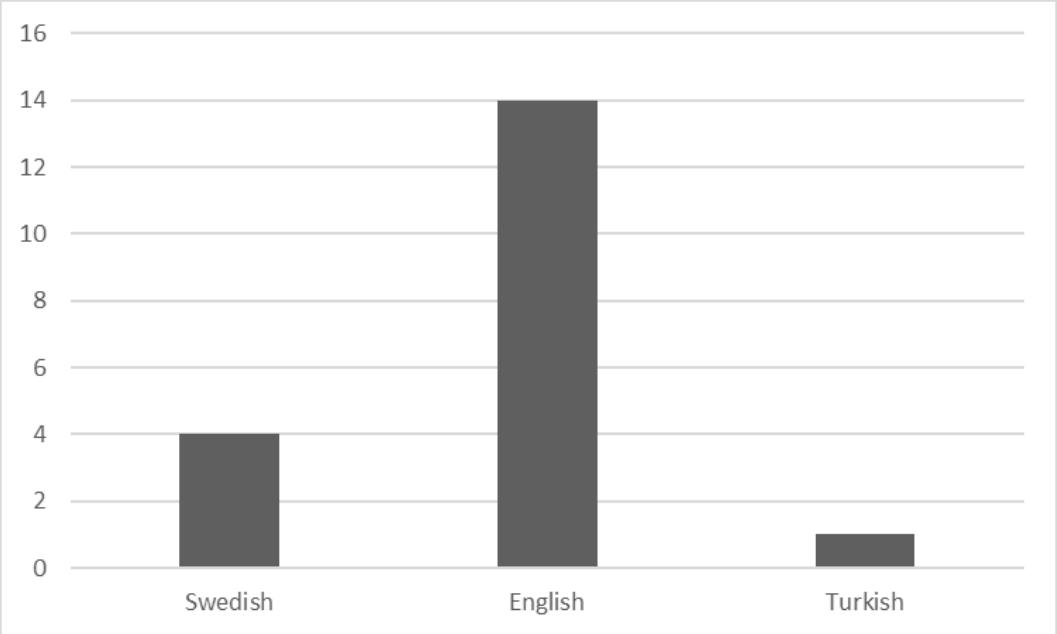
When asked about where their **school was located**, the Swedish participants gave different answers, although they all belonged to the same school, since only one class participated. Apparently, the majority (14 participants) classified the location of the school as urban, while 4 classified it as suburbian.



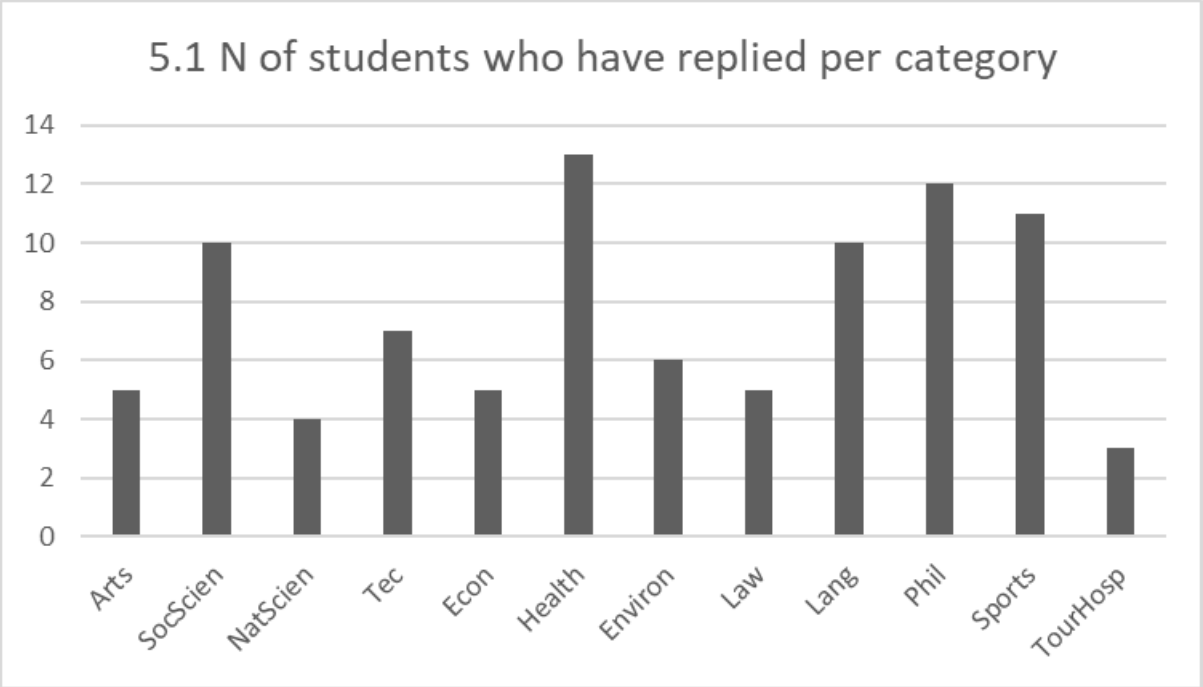
School location	Number
1 Urban	14
2 Suburb	4
3 Rural	0

1.4. Participants' CLIL learning experience

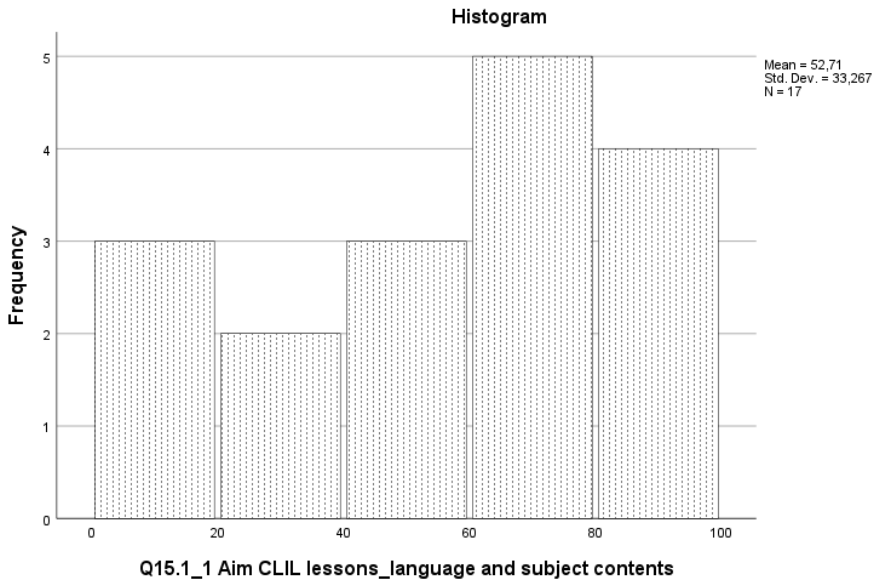
The **main CLIL language** was reported to be English by 14 students, Swedish by 4 students, and Turkish by 1 student. We strongly believe that the five students who answered Swedish and Turkish have misunderstood the question and that all 19 students had English as their main CLIL language. Thus, the answers provided in the chart below are most likely incorrect.



Regarding the **main CLIL subject**, it seems as if the participants have misunderstood this question, since the number of answers is scattered differently across the main CLIL subjects (see number of students who have replied per category in the chart we have created and inserted below). In addition, the language they do mention differs for each category. For example, it can be Swedish, English, or Turkish mentioned for one category/main CLIL subject. The data do not make any sense at all. Thus, we decided *not* to create graphs/histograms for each CLIL subject, since the answers to this question are viewed as unreliable. In conclusion, we cannot use the data connected with item 5.1 when it comes to Sweden.



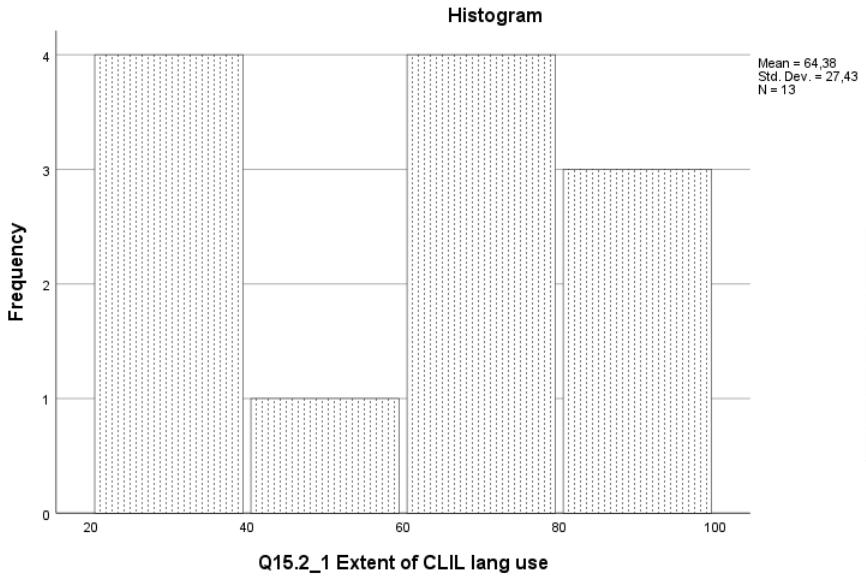
According to the participants, **the aim of the CLIL lessons** is equal between content and language, as the mean result was 52.71 on a 1-100 scale.



Q15.1_1 Aim CLIL lessons_language and subject contents

		N	%
0		3	15,8%
20		1	5,3%
21		1	5,3%
40		1	5,3%
54		1	5,3%
56		1	5,3%
62		1	5,3%
64		1	5,3%
66		1	5,3%
79		2	10,5%
80		1	5,3%
86		1	5,3%
93		1	5,3%
96		1	5,3%
Missing	System	2	10,5%

The **extent of CLIL language use** was reported to be 64.38 on a 1-100 scale. This means that a slight majority of the CLIL lessons was performed in the CLIL language.



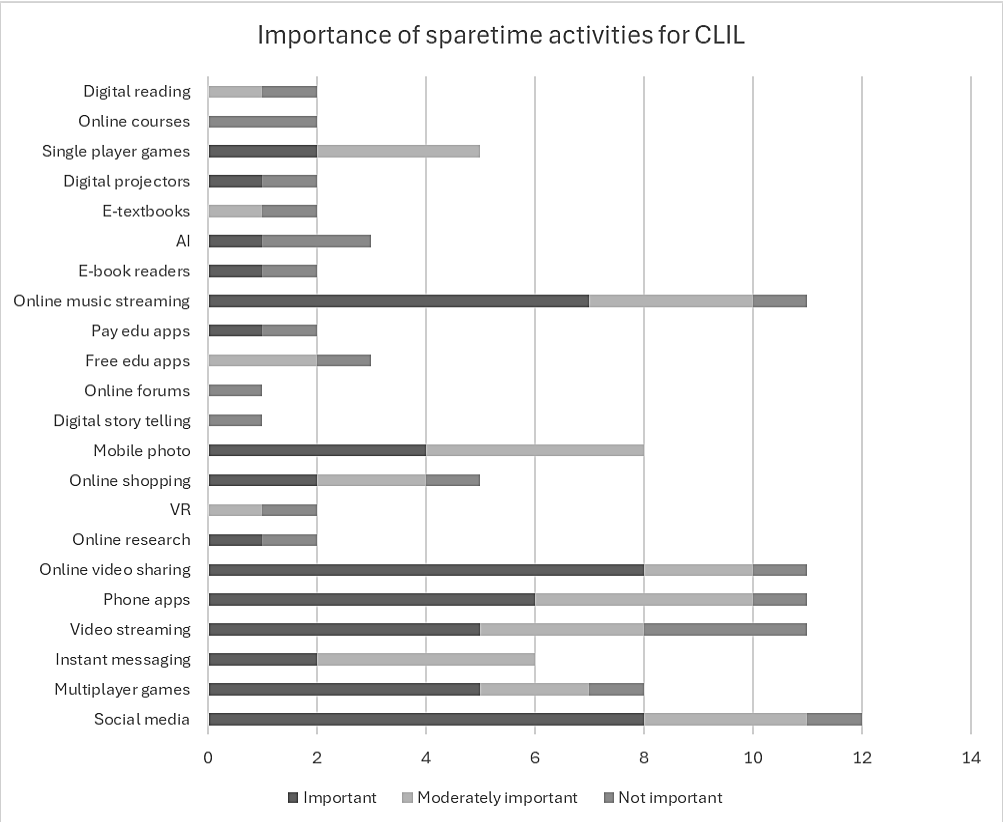
Statistics

Q15.2_1 Extent of CLIL lang use

N	Valid	13
	Missing	6
Mean		64,38
Std. Deviation		27,430
Range		72
Minimum		28
Maximum		100

1.5. Focus on spare time

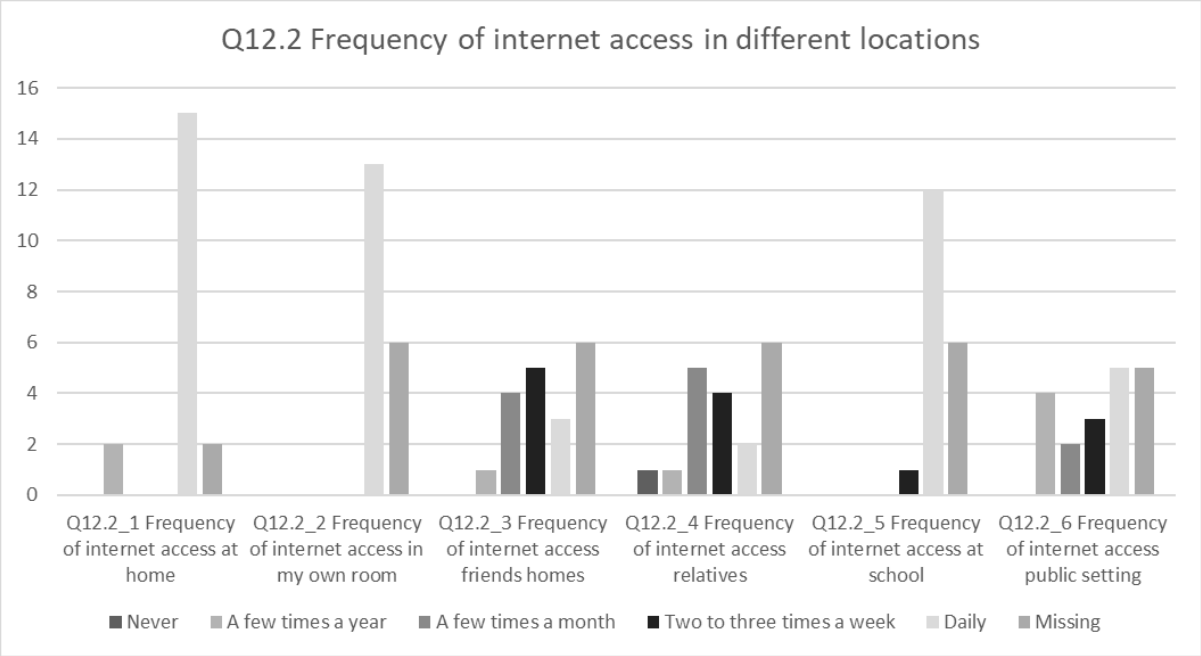
The three most important **spare time activities supporting CLIL learning** in the Swedish sample, were reported to be Social media, Online video sharing, and Online music streaming. Only two spare time activities were reported as not being important (Online forums and Digital storytelling). The graph below shows an overview of the answers to all the spare time activities.



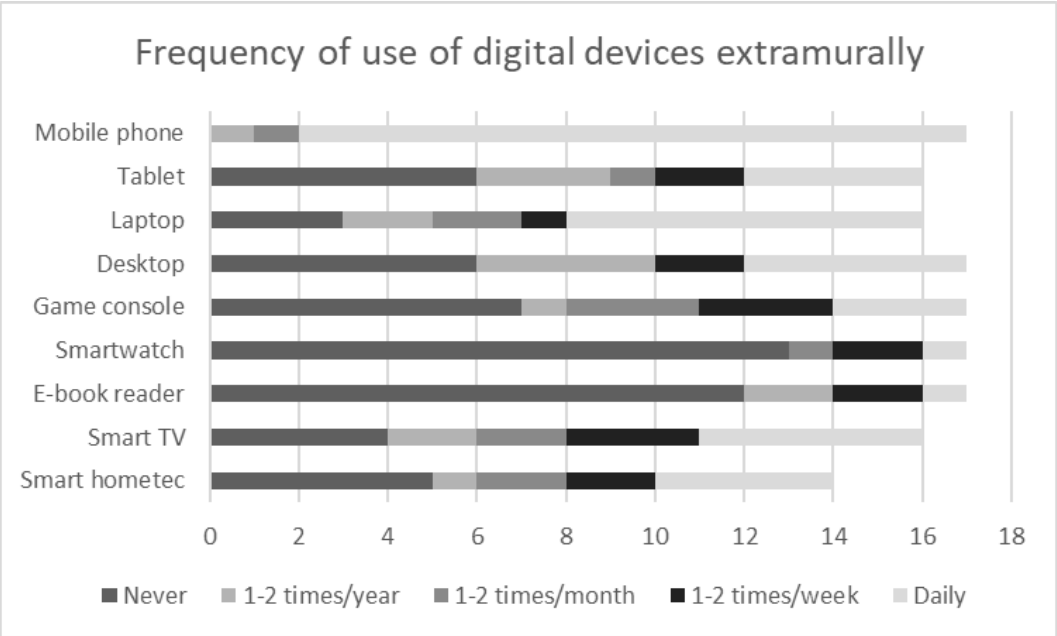
	Important	Moderately important	Not important
Social media	8	3	1
Multiplayer gaming	5	2	1
Messaging	2	4	0
Video streaming	5	3	3
Phone apps	6	4	1
Online video sharing	8	2	1
Online research	1	0	1
VR	0	1	1
Online shopping	2	2	1
Mobile photo	4	4	0
Digital storytelling	0	0	1
Online forums	0	0	1
Free educational apps	0	2	1
Paid educational apps	1	0	1
Online music streaming	7	3	1
E-book readers	1	0	1
AI	1	0	2
E-textbooks	0	1	1
Digital projectors	1	0	1
Single player games	2	3	0
Online courses	0	0	2
Digital reading	0	1	1

1.6. Access to digital devices in and out of school

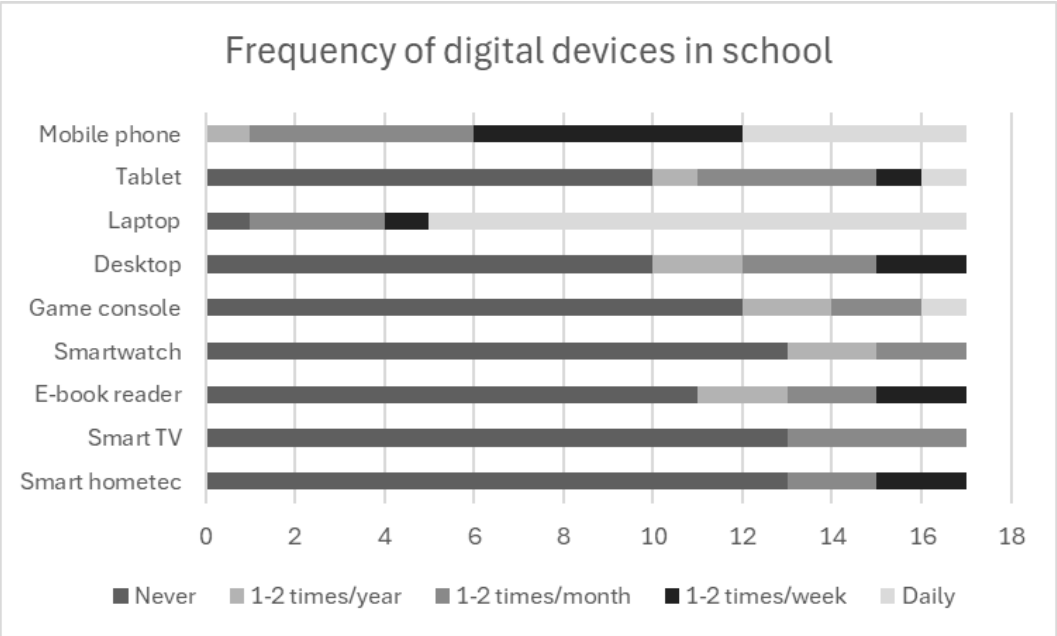
In the Swedish sample, participants **accessed the internet** most frequently at home, in their own room, and at school. The graph below shows the number of participants (Y-axis) and the six questions, with the answers per question, coded for the different locations (X-axis).



As regard the **use of digital devices extramurally**, the participants reported using the mobile phone to the largest extent, followed by laptop. Data are missing from two students for all the items in Q12.3. For a few items, data are missing also from a third student. Thus, the total number per item differs in the figure.

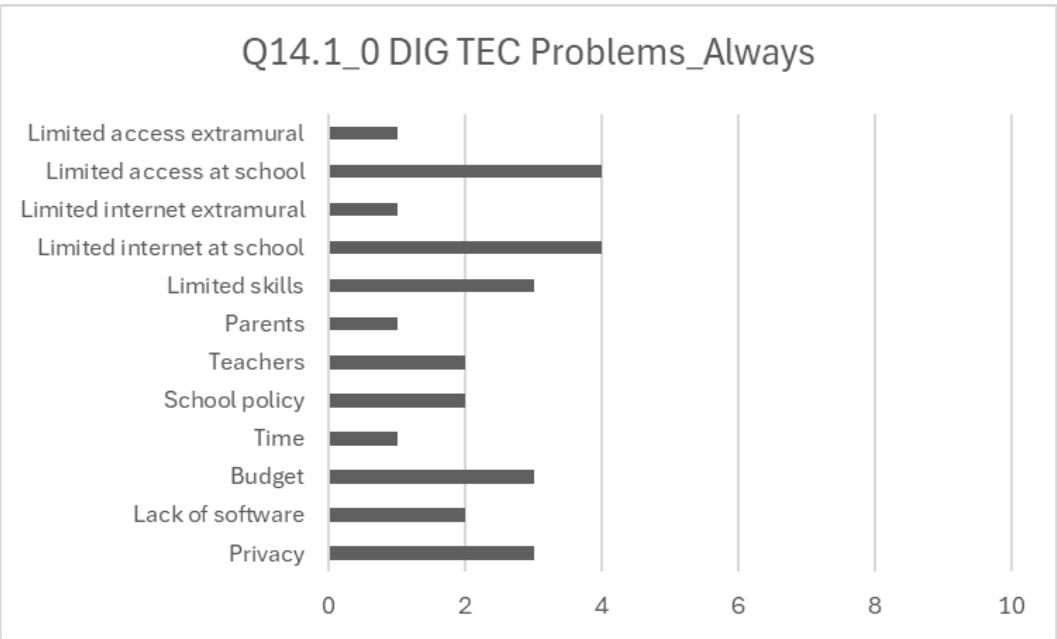


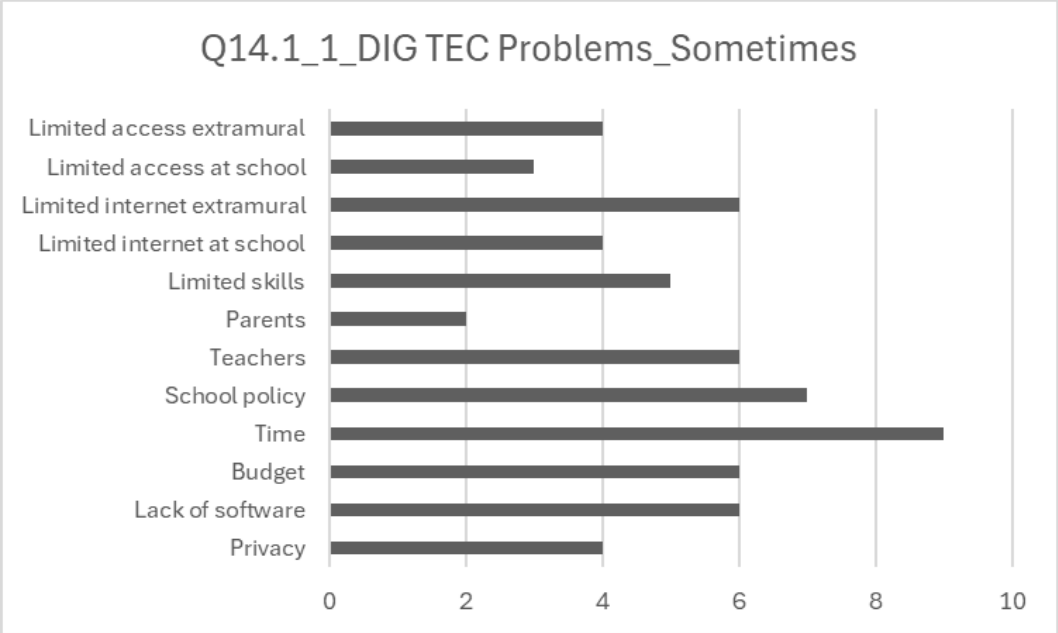
Laptop was the most frequently used **digital device in school**, followed by mobile phones. Data are missing from two students for all the items in Q13.1.

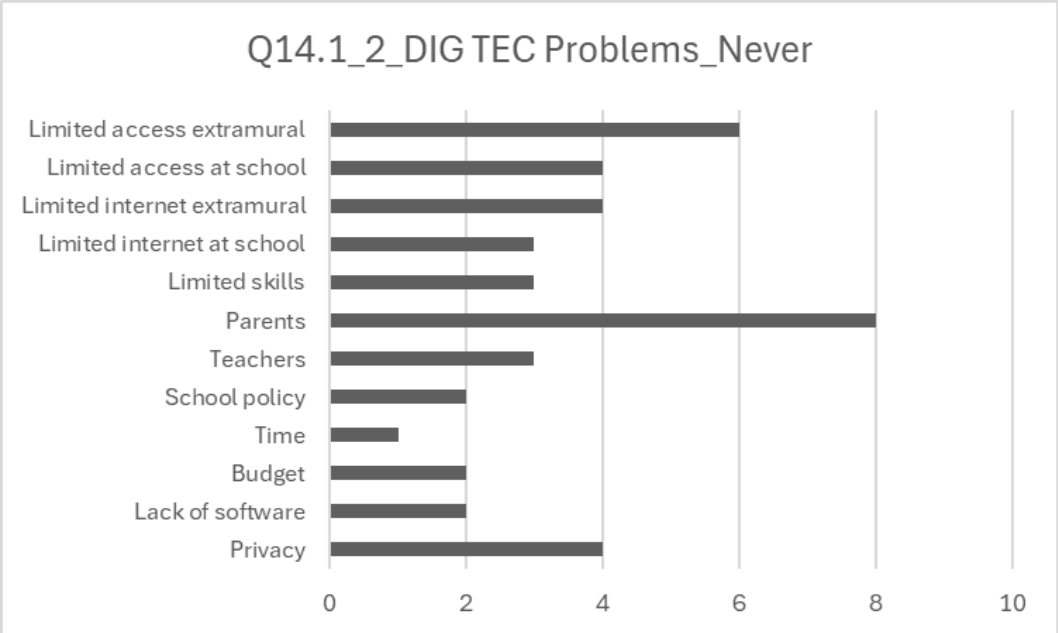


1.7. Challenges when using digital technologies

With regard to **digital technological problems** (item Q14.1), the most common variables for which the participants answered *always* were access to the internet and internet at school. The six variables indicated most frequently as *sometimes* being seen as a problem were these: time, school policy, lack of software, budget, teachers, and limited internet extramurally. The two variables indicated by most of the participants as *never* being a problem were parents and limited access extramurally.




Q14.1_1_DIG TEC Problems_Sometimes
Limited access extramural
Limited access at school
Limited internet extramural
Limited internet at school
Limited skills
Parents
Teachers
School policy
Time
Budget
Lack of software
Privacy
0
2
4
6
8
10


Q14.1_2_DIG TEC Problems_Never
Limited access extramural
Limited access at school
Limited internet extramural
Limited internet at school
Limited skills
Parents
Teachers
School policy
Time
Budget
Lack of software
Privacy
0
2
4
6
8
10

2. Digital Literacies Teacher Survey (DLTS): Sweden

2.1. Introduction

The survey was carried out in April and May 2024. Information was distributed to teachers via the researchers' professional network. The translation of the survey took longer than expected and could not be distributed until after Easter, which is suboptimal for data collection in this setting. April and May are very hectic months with, among other things, national exams. We believe this explains why there are very few CLIL-teachers in Sweden who participated. Thus, a main challenge for data collection in Sweden was the time frame. For optimal data collection in Sweden, we would have needed the translated surveys completed early in the spring semester, but this was not doable. Because of the limited number of teacher participants, the report for Sweden will not present any percentages.

2.2. Participant background

There were three participants in the Swedish DLTS sample, all female.

Two of the participants were **L1** Swedish speakers and the third reported speaking a language coded as 'Other'.

Two participants reported Swedish as the **official language of schooling** and the third reported 'Other'. Three different **main CLIL languages** were reported: English, Icelandic, and 'Other'. All three participants reported that their teaching **subjects** were 'Languages and communication'.

Two of the participants reported that the **age range of the students** was 13-16 years old and one of them reported it being 17-21 years old.

The **years of teaching** experience varied somewhat. Two of the teachers reported that they had been teaching for 10 years and one reported 24 years. In short, all three participants had long teaching experience. As for their **CLIL teaching experience**, the two teachers with 10 years of teaching experience had taught CLIL for 3 and 5 years, respectively. The teacher who had 24 years of teaching experience had taught CLIL for 15 years.

All three participants reported that they had received **CLIL training**. One of the participants reported that she had undergraduate qualification as regards CLIL, and also informal training. Another participant similarly reported informal training, while the third answered professional development (PD) as her type of CLIL training.

All three Swedish participants answered 'yes' to the question about them being **foreign language teachers**. The foreign languages mentioned by the three participants from Sweden were Albanian, Norwegian, and Spanish.

2.3. Participants' CLIL teaching experience

The **CLIL subjects** of all participants were "Language and Communication".

When asked about the **objectives of CLIL teaching**, participants had to use a 1-100 scale, in which '1' meant language-oriented classes, while '100' meant content-oriented classes. One teacher indicated 33, and another 86. Data are missing for the third participant.

When asked about the **language use in their CLIL lessons**, participants had to use another 1-100 scale, in which '1' meant multilingual classes, while '100' meant that only the CLIL language was used in CLIL classes. One teacher said 80, and another 70, showing that their classes tend to use more predominantly the CLIL language. Data are missing for the third participant.

2.4. Participants' school environment

The **main language of schooling** was reported to be Swedish by all three participants.

When asked about the **percentage of their student population that were bi-/multilingual**, two teachers indicated 11%, and the third said 29%. This shows a rather monolingual student population in these teachers' schools.

2.5. Use of digital tools in CLIL

Regarding their use of technical devices, participants' answers were as follows:

- **Mobile phone**: One teacher answered for personal use. One teacher answered "both" (i.e., both for personal use and for teaching). Data are missing from the third teacher.
- **Tablet**: One teacher answered for personal use. One teacher answered "both" (i.e., both for personal use and for teaching). Data are missing from the third teacher.
- **Laptop**: Two teachers answered "both" (i.e., both for personal use and for teaching). Data are missing from the third teacher.
- **Desktop**: No data.
- **Consoles**: No data.
- **Smartwatch**: One teacher used a smartwatch for personal use. Data are missing from the other two teachers.
- **E-book reader**: One teacher used an e-book reader for personal use. Data are missing from the other two teachers.
- **Smart T**V: Two teachers used a smart TV for personal use. Data are missing from the third teacher.
- **Smart home technology**: Two teachers used smart home technology for personal use. Data are missing from the third teacher.

When asked about their frequency of use of digital technology in the main CLIL language, results are as follows:

- Two teachers reported that they used **social media** a few times per term, whereas one reported never to do so.
- None of the three teachers had ever used **multiplayer games**.
- Two teachers reported that they used **instant messaging** a few times per term, whereas one reported never to do so.
- One teacher reported using **video streaming** a few times per month, whereas the other two had never done so.
- One teacher reported using **mobile apps** a few times per month, one a few times per term, and one never.
- One teacher reported using **online video** sharing a few times per week, one a few times per term, and one never.
- One teacher reported to do **online research** a few times per week, and the other two never.
- None of the teachers had used **VR or AR**.
- One teacher reported to do **online shopping** a few times per term, and the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **mobile photography** a few times per term, and the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **digital storytelling** a few times per month, and the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **online discussion forums/boards** a few times per term, and the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **free educational apps** a few times per week, one a few times per term, and the third teacher never.
- One teacher reported using **paid educational apps** a few times per term, and the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **online music streaming** a few times per week, one a few times per term, and the third teacher never.
- One teacher reported using **e-book readers** a few times per term, the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **AI** a few times per month, one a few times per term, and one never.
- One teacher reported using **e-text books** a few times per month, one a few times per term, and one never.
- One teacher reported using **digital projector/whiteboard** a few times per term, and the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **single player games** a few times per term, the other two never.
- One teacher reported using **online course platforms** a few times per term, the other two never.
- Two teachers reported using **digital reading devices** a few times per term, and the third never.

All three teachers reported spending 15 minutes per lesson on **digital technologies in CLIL lessons**.

All three teachers answered that they did teach **non-CLIL courses**. In addition, when they were asked if their use of digital technology in CLIL and non-CLIL courses differed, the answers were 47% and 49% for two teachers, indicating that their use did not differ (as measured in a 0%=no difference to 100%=substantial difference scale). Data are missing from one teacher.

2.6. Teachers' competences and challenges

Teachers' **competence levels of digital tools for feedback** were examined, as they were asked to rate their knowledge about each resource of a list given. One teacher answered that she had never heard of any of the listed digital tools for feedback. Another teacher answered that she was an 'average' user on all of these digital tools but the first one, where she was a 'beginner'. The third teacher answered that she was a 'beginner' for all items.

Next, teachers were asked if they experienced any **challenges** when using digital technologies in their context. All three teachers answered 'yes'.

2.7. Teachers' perceptions of digital technologies in CLIL

Teachers were presented with three statements about their perceptions of digital technology and use in CLIL. They were asked to rate their agreement with each statement using a 5-level rating scale.

- For **statement 1**, one teacher answered 'somewhat agree', one answered 'neither agree nor agree', and one answered 'somewhat disagree'.
- For **statement 2**, one teacher answered 'strongly agree', one teacher answered 'neither agree nor disagree', and one answered 'somewhat disagree'.
- For **statement 3**, one teacher answered 'strongly agree', one teacher answered 'neither agree nor disagree', and one answered 'somewhat disagree'.

As for the **importance of students' use of technology for CLIL lesson planning**, one teacher answered that it was 'extremely important' and two that it was 'quite important'.

About the relevance of technology for Critical Digital Literacies (CDLs) or skills, teachers used a 1% to 100% scale (1%=simply benefits language skills to 100%=benefits bi-/multilingual disciplinary literacy skills). One teacher answered 34%, one 45%, and for the third teacher data are missing.

2.8. Students' digital competences: teachers' perceptions

Two teachers answered 'sometimes' and one answered 'rarely' about **frequency of discussing technology** with their students. Two teachers answered 'rarely', and one answered 'sometimes' for an explicit link between discussion and CLIL learning.

Finally, about providing guidance of using tools outside of classroom. one teacher answered 'often', one answered 'sometimes', and the third answered 'rarely'.

2.9. Students' extramural use of digital technologies: teachers' perceptions

The three teachers seem to agree that social media, gaming, and instant messaging are the primary digital extramural activities amongst their students.

2.10. The teaching of Critical Digital Literacies in CLIL

When asked if they were aware of **Critical Digital Literacies** (CDLs), two teachers answered 'yes' and one answered 'no'. Regarding their frequency of use of CDLs in CLIL teaching, two teachers answered 'sometimes' to all the items listed. For one teacher, data are missing.

References

Olsson, E. & Sylvén, L. K. (2024.) Cross-curricular CLIL projects in Swedish middle school. *Nordic Journal of Language Teaching and Learning (NJLTL), 11*(3), 348-361. https://doi.org/10.46364/njltl.v11i2.1181

Paulsrud, B. (2019). Mapping CLIL in Sweden. In L. K. Sylvén (Ed.), *Investigating content and language integrated learning. Insights from Swedish high schools* (pp. 19-34). Multilingual Matters.

Skolvärlden. (2020). *Svenska ska vara huvudspråket i svensk skola*. Retrieved March 14, 2024 from https://www.vilarare.se/nyheter/intervju/anna-ekstrom-svenska-ska-vara-huvudspraket-i-svenska-klassrum/

Sylvén, L. K. (2013) CLIL in Sweden – Why does it not work? *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 16*(3), 301-320.

Sylvén, L. K. (Ed.). (2019). *Investigating content and language integrated learning. Insights from Swedish high schools*. Multilingual Matters.