Continuous Admission

Effects of Continuous Admission on teachers’ working conditions in Swedish adult education

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Abstract

This study aims to shed light on the effects of the policy of continuous admission on the professional role and working conditions of language teachers in Swedish adult education. The primary material for the study consists of interviews with five experienced language teachers in Sweden. The policy of continuous admission allows students to enrol at any given time throughout a given course, taking away the traditional beginning and end of term and creating a different classroom situation than language teachers are initially trained for. The results of the study reveal didactic consequences of the policy for classroom cohesion; group work; lesson planning and lesson realization; grading; teaching methods; and possibility for students to obtain good grades. They furthermore show that the attitudes among teachers and school leaders towards the policy tend to be generally negative. Socio-cultural theory underpins the study, and in terms used by the theory, the aspect of socio-cultural competency has been found to be lacking in the education that adult students receive as a result of the policy of continuous admission. This is further connected to the syllabus. In the light of these results, the study proposes a number of measures that could alleviate the situation. These entail modifications to group sizes and course length that take into account socio-cultural competency.

Keywords; Kontinuerligt intag, SFI, English language didactics, policy, municipal policy, school politics.
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1 INTRODUCTION

This study investigates the policy of continuous admission, known as ‘kontinuerligt intag’ in Swedish, which is implemented in most — if not all — schools of adult education in Sweden. The policy of continuous admission (henceforth C.A.) enables new students to enrol at any given time throughout the term, consequently creating a very different kind of classroom situation compared to the one that language teachers are traditionally trained for. This policy exists for two main reasons. On the one hand, it is a consequence of regulations from the Swedish Department of Education (Skolverket Läroplan för vuxenutbildningen 2012), which stipulate in the 2012 curriculum for adults that there should be a greater focus on the needs of the individual students (Skolverket Läroplan för vuxenutbildningen 2012:8). On the other hand, it also exists as a consequence of the decentralisation of the Swedish School system that took place in the 1990s.

The situation that this policy creates first came to my attention during a teacher practice period at a school of adult education in southern Sweden, where the policy had led to a situation that was perceived as problematic, in particular by the language teachers; as a result of the policy, the class size varied throughout the term, which was perceived as having practical as well as professional implications. In this study, these problems are scrutinized against the backdrop of didactic theory, so as to provide a critical assessment of the policy of C.A. from the perspective of language didactics. While there exists a multitude of research on the area of the decentralisation of the Swedish school system, there appears to be none conducted with a particular focus on the effects of the policy of C.A.

1.1 Contextual Background

As has already been mentioned, the wider socio-political context that the present study fits into is, on the one hand, the decentralisation of the
Swedish school system, and, on the other hand, the idea of flexible solutions — i.e. the Department of Education’s initiative to put more focus on the individual needs of the student. In the present section, these two aspects are accounted for in some further detail.

Decentralization, first, made the individual municipalities in Sweden in charge of education, the idea being that this would create more freedom to shape education on the local level. This has had at least two major consequences for the Swedish school system. On the one hand, as Stenlås (2009:16; 21) points out, it has decreased the professional ‘power space’ that individual teachers and principals enjoyed while still under state control, so that it is no longer teachers’ professional norms and values that govern the development of school in general, but rather what local politicians perceive as being of importance. In short: learning has become secondary to politics. On the other hand, the second major consequence that decentralisation has had is that, depending on budget and politics, each municipality now receives an education system with varying sizes of budget and resources. This is different to a centralised, state-run model, where budget and decision making come from a state education ministry and consequently are the same for every municipality.

In the decentralised system, adult education schools receive students from central municipal boards with the twist that the schools that are best equipped to accommodate the students are allotted more students than other schools, and a bigger budget per student. Consequently, schools of adult education exist in a state of competition with each other and the leaders of each school need to constantly pitch their school as the best one to the municipal authorities. The principals are put into a tough position, in that they need to tell the boards that their school is outstanding, when in fact it might not be, at the same time as they also have a responsibility toward the students and teachers for ensuring quality and a smoothly running school.

Schools of adult education thus exist in a state of competition with each other, and they do so in order to ensure quality, the idea being that if a supplier of a product (in this instance: education) is in competition with another supplier of the same product, the two suppliers will strive to improve their product to increase demand and in that way stay in business.
One way of competing is by means of policy of admission. The policy of C.A. in adult education, which is the focus of this thesis, is a solution to the problem of students wanting to enrol at any given time during the term. Since all schools are now in the position where they need to compete for, and tailor the education to the needs of, the individual students, the policy of continuous admission has become the standard admission policy throughout Swedish adult education. One school cannot drop the policy for fear of losing students to their competitors.

The policy of C.A. allows students to enrol on to a given course at any time throughout the term. The implementation of C.A. differs slightly from school to school but on the whole it results in an admission count of four to five times per term, i.e. once a month, or – as in some municipalities – whenever new students apply.

In addition to decentralisation, there is – as already pointed out – a further reason for the existence of the C.A. policy, viz the idea of flexible solutions. In the VUX 2012 syllabus there is an important passage that stipulates that the goals of education should be made from the perspective of the student: “The goals of the teaching have been formulated with the perspective of the individual in mind… The starting point of the education are the needs and capabilities of the individual student”(Skolverket.se Läroplan för vuxenutbildningen). It is this wording in the syllabus that constitutes the basis for flexible solutions and, by extension, for the policy of C.A.

Although it is now in effect at most schools of adult education, it is not entirely clear when exactly idea of flexible solutions came into effect, or how it was staged and launched. The policy of C.A. as such is proposed in several bills in the Swedish Parliament. The earliest bill that can be found with any mention of C.A. on the Swedish Parliament’s homepage is from 2009, and the latest one is from 2012. In the bill from 2009, municipalities are encouraged to offer C.A. and flexible study-options to adult students. This bill was motivated by the feeling that, due to sizeable cuts in the budget, adult education could not cater to the demand of applying students.

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1 My translation. At the time of writing the document has not been officially translated. The original quotation in Swedish from the syllabus is included in the Appendix 1
2 AIM

The overarching aim of this study is to shed light on the effects of the policy of continuous admissions on the professional role and the working conditions of language teachers in Swedish adult education. The following research questions function to guide the investigation:

- In the view of language teachers, how does C.A. affect teaching and learning?
- What is the general attitude among teachers and school management towards the policy of C.A.?

3 THEORY

A number of different sets of ideas have been relied upon to provide the theoretical underpinnings of the current study, namely socio-cultural theory, the notion of group cohesion and the concept of Visible Learning. In the following, these ideas will be explained and terms will be defined.

3.1 Sociocultural Theory

According to sociocultural theory, learning is a collective process based on the cooperative interaction that occurs in a group when it is confronted by a problem. Interaction with others in the learning environment is decisive for what is learnt and how it is learnt (Lundahl 2010:158). Dysthe (2003:44) writes that different members of the group possess different qualities, strengths and weaknesses that are integral to understanding the entirety of whatever task or problem is at hand. Since knowledge and skills are divided among members of a group, learning must be a social activity. This view stands in stark contrast to the traditional western view of learning and teaching, according to which knowledge is something that can be copied from one brain to another, completely intact, so that the sender of a message (the teacher) codes knowledge in language and gives it to the receiver (the student), whereupon the receiver decodes it and stores it for future use.
According to Säljö (in Dysthe, 2001:49) this traditional view is what has been wrong in schools and institutionalised education.

When it comes to language learning, we make a language our own by engaging in the activity of creating a subjective meaning of language that interplays with others’ subjective meanings of it. Meaning is conceived in the actual activity of interaction, and what meaning is created depends just as much on the addresser as the addressee (Lundahl 2010:161).

According to socio-cultural theory, the process of learning falls into two main stages, namely, on the one hand, other-regulation, and, on the other hand, self-regulation.

Other-regulation is the process of being taught new knowledge; of being guided and introduced to the task at hand by someone else. Other-regulation is (ideally) followed by self-regulation, which is a stage of development where the learner can begin to use the knowledge obtained through other-regulation independently (Lundahl 2010:159).

When a learner needs help from the teacher to reach new levels of understanding, the teacher can use so called scaffolding strategies, that is strategies that help the learner to know how to do something. These can be anything from explaining vocabulary in a text that the class is about to read, to using visual aids in order to explain something. Once the learner has reached the next level of understanding, (s)he is said to have reached The Zone of Proximal Development, (e.g. Vygotskij, 1980). According to Lundahl, this is made possible by language and the power that the individual feels when being part of the social context.

The final aspect of sociocultural theory that will be brought up here is the notion of Sociocultural competency. This skill is about how language is used in different social contexts. One must know what to say to whom in the multitude of social situations in which language is used (Lundahl 2010:117).

3.2 Visible Learning

In his book Visible Learning (2010), Professor John Hattie of Auckland University (2010) synthesizes over 800 meta-analyses on what impacts learning in students. The research has been conducted in most of the English speaking world for the past 15 years. Due to its extensive coverage, it can be
used as an indicator, but not a rule of thumb, on what may and may not work in education. Hattie maintains that his research should rather be viewed as an explanatory story of student learning than a ‘what works’ story.

Since the gathering of data for Visible Learning has been conducted in the English speaking world and with children and teenagers, all of what his research entails might not be entirely relevant to the present study, which deals with adult education and policy in Sweden. However, parts of Visible learning are relevant, as presented below.

In general, all of Hattie’s research aims to bring discussions about education down to one basic idea: *know thy impact*. Hattie proposes a system that aims at involving everyone in the school as collaborators in the learning process. In Hattie 2012, which is based on his 2010 meta-analysis, Hattie incorporates the attitudes of school leaders, and points to attitudes that give the highest outcomes in student achievement. This constitutes one of the aspects of Hattie’s work that have proved to be pertinent to the present study. In this model he outlines two basic archetypes of school leader, the *Transformational Leader* and the *Instructional Leader*. The transformational leader strives to inspire teachers toward a common mission that aims to develop the school’s capacity to work as a whole. This type of leader focuses more on the relationship between school-leaders and teachers in order to attain high student achievement. According to Hattie this leader is less predictive of high student achievement whereas the instructional leader is more focused in the relationship between students and teachers and therefore has a higher positive impact on student achievement. The instructional leader has high expectations on teachers’ didactic capabilities, visits classrooms and is actively concerned with the daily workings of the school in order to keep disruption of the learning environment to a minimum (Hattie 2012:154).

According to a meta-analysis conducted on 2,883 principals selected for Visible Learning, the impact of the instructional leader was significantly greater than that of the transformational leader. Such leaders are focused on the impact of teaching in the school and building trust and a climate that is
open to the discussion of what currently impacts learning in the school (Hattie 2012:154).

To sum up, the ideal management according to Hattie’s investigation is actively engaged in daily evaluation with the teachers of how the teaching impacts on student achievement.

Another aspect of Hattie’s work that is of interest to the present study is the idea of classroom cohesion. Classroom cohesion is a general term that refers to the process of getting to know each other that the students in any given class undergo throughout the term. A class that exhibits strong classroom cohesion has students that, over the course of the term, get to know and work with each other well. In *Visible Learning*, classroom cohesion was found to be one of the strongest factors that impacted learning:

The major effect identified by the meta-analyses and a key factor in positive classroom climate is classroom cohesion – the sense that all (teachers and students) are working towards positive learning gains… learning outcomes were positively associated with cohesiveness, satisfaction, task difficulty, formality, goal direction and the material environment. They were negatively associated with friction, cliquishness, apathy and disorganization. (Hattie 2010:103)

One might infer from this quote that strong classroom cohesion can do much of the work for a teacher, with regard to student self-motivational and self-regulation strategies.

According to Hattie (2010) another factor that is fundamental to maintaining a successful learning process is the aspect of class size. He explains that teachers need to know the learning intentions and success criteria of their lessons and to know how well they are attaining these criteria. It is important for teachers to be able to know where to go next with the class so as to bridge the gap between the students’ current knowledge so that they can master the next step of learning (Hattie 2010:239). This is similar to the idea of the one of proximal development.
4 MATERIAL AND METHOD

The primary data for the present study consists of interviews with five teachers of language at schools of adult education in central and southern Sweden. The five interviewees are presented in Table 1. The teachers are named Teacher 1-5 for the sake of anonymity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Nr. of working years</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 1</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Eng, His, Politics</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 2</td>
<td>68²</td>
<td>Eng, Geography</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>SFI</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 4</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Eng, Spanish</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher 5</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Eng, PE</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interviewees were found through contacts gathered at different VFU³ schools connected to Linnaeus University. It was important that the informants were experienced and had worked in adult education over some period of time so that they could compare their working conditions as shaped by the policy of C.A. with past experience of other policies.

The interviews, which were carried out during the autumn of 2012, were conducted over the telephone with one teacher at a time. They lasted for approximately 1 – 3 hours each and were conducted in Swedish for the most part. With reference to the teacher of SFI, it was of interest to interview a language teacher of another language than English to see if the problems caused by the C.A. policy were similar or not to what the teachers of English have experienced.

² The teacher is recently retired but this does not affect the results in any way as the last school that the teacher worked at implemented C.A.
³ VFU is a Swedish acronym for Teacher trainee practice period schools
The interviews were semi-structured, which means that the interviewer has a guide that is followed, but that can be deviated from, should interesting and relevant aspects reveal themselves. Semi-structured interviews are used to gather qualitative information; according to Laforest (2009:1), they provide access to perceptions and opinions, and they are effective for gaining insights into problems that are not immediately perceptible but that nonetheless cause concern in certain areas or in certain segments of the population.

In semi-structured interviews the inclusion of open-ended questions is preferred, as such questions can shed light on areas unnoticed by the interviewer, and can prove to identify new ways of seeing and understanding the topic at hand. The first interview question is such an open-ended question on how the policy of C.A. has affected the interviewees’ teaching in general. Questions 2 to 5, next, were designed to point up how language teachers experience that the policy of C.A. affects their possibilities to fulfil their professional role. Questions 6 and 7, finally, deal with the attitudinal approach to C.A. among teachers and school management in general. The questions used in the interviews were as follows:

1. How has C.A. affected your teaching in general?

2. How does this policy affect lesson planning?

3. How does the fluctuating class size impact the learning?

4. How does the fluctuating class size affect classroom cohesion?

5. What long term consequences does C.A. create with regard to (i) grading and (ii) student achievement in subsequent courses?

6. How representative are your views on C.A. of the views of your colleagues or of other professionals that you work with?
What view do your school leaders have on C.A.?

The answers given by the interviewees are presented in Appendix 1.

4.1 Problems and Limitations

The limitations of the present study are several. First, due to risking the anonymity of the teachers, interviews could not be conducted with the school leaders. This is a disadvantage considering the fact that the study aims, in part, to account for attitudes among school leaders towards C.A. However, their views and stances are portrayed by the interviewees, who were asked about the views of their respective school management. This should, at least in part, make up for their absence in the interviews.

Also, since the interviewees were not met in person, their answers were not recorded (although in hindsight, this could have been done by using Skype). Kvale (2009:195) notes that the optimal way of registering an interview is through the use of video or audio recording equipment, since otherwise one must take notes, which can be distracting, and which prevents the interviewer from focusing fully on conducting the interview. However, as Kvale also affirms (2009:195): if circumstances do not permit the use of recording equipment, one has no choice but to resort to taking notes.

Moreover, every effort has been made to ensure that any notes taken represent the views of the interviewees and not the interviewer; any summarized replies have been read back to the interviewees, to confirm accuracy. In the end, the fact that the interviews were not recorded might not have been completely detrimental, since it may have allowed the teachers to feel more inclined to speak freely. There is, of course, no way of proving this, but the interviews did have an open atmosphere, and there was a sense of the interviewees getting something off their chest. The interviews served to highlight the teachers’ experiences – and the teachers’ view of the students’ experiences – of C.A. as well as to reveal common trends in how each teacher has adapted to the parameters that this policy creates.

Another limitation is that the interviews were conducted by telephone rather than face to face. This was because no time or place could be found during the busy autumn term to make the journey for an in situ interview; all
the interviewees lived in different municipalities, all of them far away from the interviewer. An in situ interview with each informant would have been optimal because aspects such as the body language and the more relaxed nature of speaking to each other in the flesh might have revealed more information on the subject.

Yet another disadvantage is that the answers that the interviewees have given are the collected experience of only five teachers. These answers obviously cannot be generalized to represent the entire adult teaching core. However, when the interviewees were asked how representative their views were of those of their colleagues, all confirmed that their colleagues were of an almost identical disposition with regard to the policy of C.A. Furthermore, since these teachers each work in different counties in Sweden, their views could be thought of as a general indication of what language teachers’ attitudes are toward this policy – regardless of municipal affinity. Kvale (2009:187) notes that one of the ten most common criticisms of qualitative interviews is that the interview results cannot be generalised because of a low number of interviewees. This aspect, he argues, might sound important, but one must remember in such discussions that the interviewer is, in fact, enjoying a privileged position and outlook into the everyday world of the interviewee, and that a controlled and skilful use of questions and explored trajectories can yield a rich vein of new phenomena from a single interviewee. Consequently, although the problem of representativeness remains, the present choice of method should nevertheless provide high-quality material.

4.2 Ethical Considerations

Any research using informants of any kind obviously involves ethical aspects such as anonymity, confidentiality and so on (Kvale 2009:85). When the informants used for this study were asked if they would like to participate in an interview, they were guaranteed the following: their identities would not be disclosed; the material would not be used for any other purpose than the present study; and the interviews would not serve as the basis of an evaluation of the informants’ professional roles as teachers, but rather as material for an analysis of how teachers carry out their work.
under the C.A policy. The interviewees were also informed of the over-
arching aim of the relevant study, and of the fact that they were able to pull
out of the study at any given time prior to publication. Getting informants’
approval on these grounds constitutes what Kvale (2009:87) terms *Informed
approval*.

5 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

In this section the results of the interviews are presented and analysed
against the backdrop of the theory outlined in Section 3. This section is
divided into two main parts, each of which deals with one of the two
research questions, presented in Section 2.

5.1 Perceived effects of C.A. on Teaching and
Learning

This section deals with research question 1, that is: in the view of language
teachers, how does C.A. affect teaching and learning? The issues raised in
this section centre on didactical elements that the teachers have experienced
to be affected by the policy of C.A.

From the answers provided by the informants (see Appendix 2), the
policy of C.A. seems to have two over-all consequences: on the one hand, it
creates fluctuation in class size, and, on the other hand, it entails a decreased
course span for students enrolling after the course has started. These
consequences in turn seem to have a number of repercussions for teaching
and learning. In the subsequent sections, we will deal with each
consequence in turn.

5.1.1 Fluctuating Group Size

Because C.A. allows students to be continuously added to a given course,
the size of any class will inevitably fluctuate throughout the term.
According to the informants, this, in turn, has repercussions for a number of
didactic aspects:
(i) classroom cohesion,
(ii) group work,
(iii) lesson planning and lesson realization,
(iv) grading, and
(v) teaching methods.

Most of the informants find that fluctuating group size affects learning to a lesser extent in advanced level English than in beginners' classes, since the students’ knowledge of the subject is generally greater in the higher courses, and more of the language has been internalized at this level. The process of self-regulation (cf. Section 3.1) is, furthermore, more familiar to advanced students, which makes problems with classroom cohesion less severe. Repercussions are, however, not absent on advanced levels – only less noticeable. In the following, each of the consequences of fluctuating group size will be discussed in some further detail.

Repercussions for Classroom Cohesion

As already mentioned, one of the repercussions of fluctuating group size is that classroom cohesion is disrupted. Traditionally, when a class embarks on a term, it is comprised of a set number of students, which remains the same throughout the course. Throughout the term students get to know each other, and a teacher that can handle classroom cohesion can create a strong sense of togetherness within the class. Such a sense of togetherness in a class is important for a variety of reasons: the subsequent memories and knowledge of the students become suffused with positivity; more is learned because of that positivity, and a wider variety of communicative skills can be learned throughout the course, for the simple reason that it is a joy, rather than a chore, to attend classes. This ideal situation is, however upset by the fluctuation in group size that the policy of C.A. entails. Because the class keeps growing, the students become socially fragmented, and learning becomes isolated to the individual students rather than encompassing the class as a whole. The interviewees remark that there is seldom any feeling among the students that they are all learning together and enjoying it, because they have very little chance to get to know each other and give the
class as a whole an identity. Instead it becomes more important to just get through the course and pass.

Teacher 4 views the growing class size as disruptive because it is difficult to know what the class will look like from one week to the next. Additionally, new students feel outside of the group, and there is little to no time to bring them into the class socially. Teacher 4 explains that before the policy of C.A. was implemented, adult classes, on the whole, easily formed strong classroom cohesion. It greatly benefitted the students to know each other well. This aspect is now lacking according to teacher 4. Teacher 2 presents a similar picture:

There needs to be a positive atmosphere in the group, if they enjoy what they’re doing they’re learning!! C.A. creates fragmented group cohesion and in a way segregates the students into smaller groups or pairs so nobody knows each other. (Appendix 2 Teacher 2)4

Teacher 5 compares the present situation of C.A. with the time of ‘Kunskapslyftet’ (roughly translated as ‘The Knowledge Drive’), which was an initiative aimed at adults in order for them to better their grades. At that time there was no C.A. Admission was handled directly by the school rather than by the municipality. During this drive students experienced strong group motivation and cohesion within and outside of the classroom. A positive outcome was the formation of informal study groups that formed outside of the classroom (Appendix 2 Teacher 5).

Repercussions for Group Work
Another effect of fluctuating group size is that group work suffers. As was mentioned in Section 3.1, Socio-cultural theory suggests a number of advantages with group work. It is a way of learning that is highly social and especially benefits language learners because of the need to find the correct language for solving problems or other tasks that come up. It is, furthermore, beneficial in that the skills of the individual group members

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4 Where interviews have been quoted, it is the author's summaries that have been used.
can be utilized to solve problems. Yet another advantage is that it enables students to use the target language outside of the classroom in an informal setting; a setting that is closer to that in which the language is used naturally. These are important moments of language learning, where the students have a chance to make the target language more their own. These types of group work – writing a project together or doing research and presenting findings in the class – can seldom be carried out in a class whose constitution is constantly changing. The interviewees remark that the closest that students get to group work are short conversational exercises in class. In teacher 5's words:

It becomes impossible to give the students group assignments and there are very few oral presentations. Everything that has to do with the group disappears and there isn’t really a substitute for group work. A course is a journey that you experience together, you reach a goal and destination and you can look back. Now it’s just a series of unconnected lessons that you try to create some sort of sequence out of.

(Appendix 2 Teacher 5)

Repercussions for Lesson Planning and Lesson Realization

Due to the constantly increasing class size, it becomes very difficult to plan a term’s worth of work and carry all of it out. The teachers explain that they try to get in as much of the syllabus as they can, for as many of the students as they can, but feel that they are unable to cover all aspects properly with all the students.

The lessons are seldom connected to one another, since it becomes impossible to refer back to a previous lesson when the class has suddenly grown by a few students. There is little to no time to re-teach the last lesson to a few students while the rest of the class want the next module. As Teacher 5 puts it:

I have to structure my lessons as independent study sessions. You have to see each lesson as a practice session rather than connected to each other. The new students become very stressed by this. All the students want continuity in the lessons but don’t get it.

(Appendix 2 Teacher 5)
The teacher of SFI (Teacher 3) had the same problems as the English teachers in this regard, irrespective of whether they taught beginners or advanced level students:

I plan the term with the students that are initially enrolled in mind. I make a term plan that I think will work well for the group but then the group expands as the term progresses and I can’t follow my lesson plan. I have to include ‘repair sessions’ where I re-teach parts of the language that the students do not master. I have to be on my feet all the time and it is very tiring to be so intuitive and spontaneous with what I teach every day. I’m exhausted every day and it is a skill new teachers do not possess from lack of experience. I know more or less every question that will come up. (Appendix 2 Teacher 3)

According to Wilkins (1974:59), a sound approach to basic methodological principles of language teaching is to know what the objectives of the teaching are. However, there are no immutable objectives in language teaching; rather, the objectives must be set in relation to the particular situation with which the teacher is faced and in accordance with the specific needs of the particular students. When we relate this fundamental principle of language teaching to the above quote, it is clear that Teacher 3 has to set the goals of the course from lesson to lesson, with an ever expanding group, rather than in conference with the students at the beginning of term. What Teacher 3 initially is going to teach in the coming term is determined by the needs of the first students that are enrolled on the course, but is then altered as the term progresses and the class grows.

Additionally, a practical problem that occurs with new arrivals is that the teacher has to familiarize the new student or students with the course and get them up to speed. This is not re-teaching but rather getting new students up to speed in general with the course. If the students arrive before the lesson starts this is a plus but they seldom do so, which means that time has to be taken from the other students who are on time in class to amalgamate the new students into the course. The interviewees see this as a disruption to the lessons, and since new arrivals are frequent on a weekly basis almost every second or third lesson has a choppy start without a teacher in the room for the first twenty to thirty minutes.
In summary: term planning has to be rethought from lesson to lesson. The teacher’s role as a planner, goal setter, facilitator of knowledge and evaluator becomes reduced to ‘on the fly’ re-teaching, and much is left to the students to do in their own study time.

Repercussions for Grading
Fluctuating class size also means that the teachers are unable to get to know their students as well as they would prefer. This in turn means that the National Test has to serve as the main basis for grading, in the hope that the students do not have too many gaps in their knowledge so that they risk failing. Teacher 5 explains this observation in detail:

Students often come to me asking if I think that they will pass the course. They want to know how well they’re doing and I have almost no clue at all because of C.A. The guarantee of knowing what grade I should give them is the National Test but it is difficult to know if the students will pass it or not. I would have been able to have a better idea of this with a homogenous group that had clear start and finish dates for the course…I encourage the students to get their bearings with a number of texts and worksheets that I have. (Appendix 1 Teacher 5)

Although the National Test is an appropriate measurement of knowledge of the language in the eyes of the interviewees, they find it wrong to be so dependent on it. It should be a substantial aid for grading, in addition to other tests of language, rather than the only measurement to set the grades by. Some teachers find that they need the national test more than others, but all are more dependent on it than they feel they should be.

Repercussions for Teaching Methods
Finally, the situation of a growing class size results in a shift in the style of teaching. A greater number of students in the class means that the teacher must rely on a greater degree of self-regulatory skills in the students and those skills are not always fully developed from the beginning of students’ time at adult educational schools. Part of a school’s mission is to develop independent learner capacity, but that skill takes time to perfect and not all the students have it from the offset.
Hattie (2010:88) argues that different class sizes entail a shift in what it means to achieve excellent teaching. This is an important aspect, which is relevant to the situation created by the policy of C.A. Not only do teaching methods have to change with a growing class, but the question of what it means to teach a class well changes when the group grows with new students.

The smaller the class, the more time the teacher can give to each student. Also, the style and methods of teaching are different. Normally, a teacher takes this into account and chooses methods accordingly, at the beginning of term. With C.A., however, the teacher might have to start with a group of ten students and in three months have a class of thirty. The teacher then has to judge when in the term to change teaching methods. Are the lessons going to follow the book, with exercises that require a lot of individual teacher attention throughout the term, or should the teacher start like this and then shift to more sweeping grammar and speaking training sessions with a higher degree of self-regulation?

Teacher 5 says that despite the situation with a fluctuating group size, she is still able to modify the lessons to a certain degree, and says that the subject of English is more flexible than, for instance, history, where chronology is important. Teacher 5 works with grammar from the texts in the textbook and dips in and out of the different parts of the assigned course book aiming to fill as many gaps as possible. This fragmented patchwork technique of teaching does work to a certain degree, although it is not ideal for all the students, especially not for those who lack motivation.

5.1.2 Decreased Course Span

In the previous section, the first of the two over-all consequences of the policy of C.A. was discussed – namely fluctuating group size. It is now time to turn to the second main consequence – that is the fact that C.A. inevitably entails a decreased course span for students enrolling after their course has started. This obviously has repercussions for students' opportunities to take full advantage of the course, and, consequently, obtain good grades.

Teacher 1 observes that it is much harder for students who enrol well into the term to attain a higher grade — not impossible, but much harder —
partly because they are only getting about half a terms’ worth of teaching, and partly because, due to an unsound beginning, it becomes difficult for the teacher to anticipate the students’ lingual weaknesses and, consequently, to help them. Teacher 1 voices examples of instances where new students who are admitted mid-term struggle to stay on the course; very few students will begin to learn English and then ascend to attend upper secondary courses at the same school. Most students that attend upper-secondary courses do so as new applicants. In the opinion of Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 this is because being able to enrol at any given point in the term is a disservice to the students rather than a favour — the course becomes much harder to complete.

Teacher 4 found that to have C.A. in the beginning of a beginner’s course was detrimental to attaining stable core knowledge of the target language:

You shouldn’t have C.A. with beginners but we do. One does the students a disservice with C.A., they get a fragmented foundation in the target language. It can work with learning from home modules as long as the students study the full amount of weeks in a term. Problems arise when they don’t study a full term’s worth of work. (Appendix 2 Teacher 4)

5.2 General attitude among teachers and school management towards the policy of C.A.

The previous section discussed the results pertaining to the first of the two research questions used for the present study. The present section moves on to the second research question, that is "What is the general attitude among teachers and school management towards the policy of C.A.?" In the following, attitudes among teachers and school leaders will each be discussed in turn.

5.2.1 Teacher Attitude

The interviewees feel as though their professional space – i.e. their capacity to influence their working environment – is limited because of the policy of
C.A. This illustrates an important point made by Stenlås (2009:16), namely that it is no longer teachers’ norms and values that serve as the prime driver of education, but rather the political goals of the relevant municipality. C.A. is in place to facilitate an environment where the needs of the students come first. Yet, in the eyes of the interviewees, the policy contradicts itself. It aims to facilitate the required flexible environment, but in terms of delivering quality education the interviewees feel that it falls short of that aim.

The interviewees give a homogenous picture of how C.A. tends to work against attaining good teaching quality. All the teachers are of the opinion that this policy has an overall detrimental effect on the ability to complete their professional role as regulated by the syllabus. What that implies is that five experienced teachers working at five different schools in five different counties in Sweden think that this policy is detrimental to their teaching.

The interviewees’ perception of their pedagogical working conditions in the current situation of C.A. seems to coincide strongly with a point made by Enkvist (2000:82). Enkvist compares recent developments in Argentina with the situation in Sweden. Argentina has gone through a decentralisation much like Sweden, where municipal authorities are in charge of the school system and the state has a smaller part to play. This has resulted in a system where there are clear class divisions between municipalities, ‘quick-fix’ solutions to a lack of teachers, such as a widespread increase in IT use in all subjects and student autonomy schemes where students teach themselves the subject. According to Enkvist (2000:84), the outcome for teachers in Argentina and Sweden are similar. Historically, teaching has been the profession that stands for optimistic development, but when the national school system gets broken down teachers are no longer considered to be representatives of the state, but rather local municipal employees (2000:84). A psychological division, with regard to power relations, occurs between teachers and the school, and teachers and the students. Enkvist argues that because of these divisions, teachers become provoked as professionals as well as as citizens, since whereas their job is to hand over a nations’ cultural heritage, they are obstructed in doing so.
Teacher 5 voices what the consequences can be when market forces are used in education to ensure quality:

The politicians don’t see what their policies really entail… There is money in this as well. Students might be inclined to study for longer if there was the funding to do so. A high turn-over rate or pass rate if you will is what the politicians look for when choosing the best ‘supplier’ i.e. school. One is often encouraged to pass weak students. It’s the market-place operating in the school system and it has different values. Teachers feel lost in all this. What was the point of my job? The money, to achieve a high pass rate or to develop my students? (Appendix 2 Teacher 5)

It would seem as though the climate that C.A. creates calls the professional role of teacher 5 into question. In the opinion of teacher 5, the point of the job seems to become secondary to the aim of the municipality, which is a high-turnover rate of students. There is a different set of values, which teacher 5 does not perceive to be focused on the quality of the education. In teacher 5’s opinion, C.A. has changed the identity of what a teacher should be:

The role of teachers has changed. Humanistic character-building has little place in the new role that teachers have. It is next to impossible with C.A. and individually designed courses. Yet necessary, or else we wouldn’t receive any students. C.A. benefits no one and has its price. (Appendix 1 Teacher 5)

This is in line with Irisdotter’s findings, according to which there has been a shift in perceived teacher identity, from the humanistic character building qualities traditionally associated with the teaching profession, to a client and customer based system, where teachers provide knowledge without having responsibility for the student to develop ‘insightful’ knowledge (Irisdotter, 2006).

When asked how representative of other language teachers in Swedish adult education the interviewees’ thought their views are, they all refer to their colleagues at their schools having the same views, that is, they are negative toward the policy of C.A. and the classroom situation that it has created.
The policy of C.A. has furthermore called into question the teachers’ subjective view on what constitutes excellent teaching. The interviewees have a similar ethos toward teaching. Their view is essentially that yes, you are there to teach the subject, but as a teacher you are also taking part in developing your students’ minds and expanding their horizons. The teachers feel that this aspect of what is excellence in teaching has become so limited as a consequence of C.A. that the policy has become a hindrance to their ability to optimally fulfill their professional roles.

Teacher 2 maintains that the basic caveat of achievement in high quality teaching exists in creating an environment where students enjoy what they are learning together. It is also up to the teacher to teach well, and Teacher 2 is of the opinion that if you teach well, your students will process the knowledge they receive and be able to come back to it. This rings true to Hattie’s work about what it means to achieve excellence in teaching with regard to class size and cohesion as presented in section 3.2 (Hattie 2010:103). The teacher has to decide what it is going to mean to be a good teacher to the respective classes. However, despite these insights, Teacher 2 felt hindered by a fragmented knowledge base in the students:

But you have to rely on your skills as a teacher; when you teach and teach well, your students are able to return to a course and carry on. If the students have fragmented knowledge they don’t have the basics. C.A. creates an environment that creates fragmented teaching despite high quality teaching and attendance. (Teacher 2)

5.2.2 Attitudes among School Leaders

As was pointed out in Section 4.1, no interviews with school leaders themselves were carried out for the present study. However, the interviews with the teachers have provided a reasonably well-defined picture of attitudes towards C.A. even among school leaders. According to the informants, the principals of each of the five schools are more or less responsive to the opinions of the teachers. At Teacher 2’s school, the management has changed the enrolment scheme to two enrolments per term. This means that they effectively has two terms running at the same time.
One term runs from January until the beginning of June and one term runs from March until October the following term, after the summer break. This has improved, to some extent, the teachers’ didactic possibilities and the students’ opportunities for learning. The problems with classroom cohesion are under control, and teachers can once again plan teaching and refer back to previous lessons. This two term system works very well, but it is only possible to put into practice because of the size of the relevant school; this school has a large language department with several teachers of English. Because of the larger size of the English department there are more teachers and therefore there are more options for start an end dates courses. However, if it is a small department with one or two teachers, flexibility as to multiple start and end dates can be severely curtailed due to the small number of teachers available to teach the course.

The school management teams at the other schools have not been so willing – or able – to respond. Teacher 1 experiences outright denial of detrimental effects from the perspective of the school management, while Teachers 3, 4 and 5’s school managements acknowledge the problem, but profess inability to tackle the issue. At Teacher 5’s school, the management is very aware of the situation, but the competitors and the municipal faculty that handles the school do not recognize C.A. as being problematic. That is, in the case of Teacher 3, 4 and 5 the management is mostly sympathetic to the teachers, but find that they have very little professional space to manoeuvre in. As a principal you are put into a difficult position of having the municipal authorities’ interests to contend with, which are financial and political, in addition to the responsibility toward the learning and achievement of the students and the working conditions of the teachers. It would seem as though the interests of these three groups do not always coincide

New principals get pressured from their superiors and are forced to put pressure on their employees. There are strong demands from the municipality on a high pass rate. Frankly it must be horrible to be a principal in that situation, to be caught between the needs of teachers and the directives of the municipality. They’re interested in numbers, not people. (Appendix 2
Teacher 3)

It is a problematic situation because the principal has to show how well the school is performing so that the school gets more students and thus a bigger budget. The drawback of this is that the principals cannot give an honest picture of what is going well or not in their school. If the principal does show the municipal authorities the shortcomings of the school, they will send students to a competitor. It could be argued that had adult education not been organized according to a model of competition, this situation would not exist.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to find out how C.A. affects the professional role and working conditions of the interviewees. In order to achieve this aim, two research questions were set up, inquiring into, on the one hand, what effects teachers experience C.A. to have on didactics, and, on the other hand, what the general attitude seems to be towards C.A. among teachers and school management. The data was obtained by means of semi-structured interviews with five language teachers.

As for the first of the two research questions, C.A. seems to have two overall consequences – a fluctuating group size and a decreased course span. These consequences in turn have a number of repercussions for didactics, such as poor classroom cohesion; problems with having group work; obstruction of teachers' ability to plan and execute teaching; disruption of teaching methods and too great a dependency on the National Test for grading.

The results for the second research question – which was about general attitudes among teachers and school leaders towards C.A. – teachers were on the whole negative toward the policy. According to the informants, school leaders have varying opinions in different schools, and they also find themselves caught between the interests of the municipality and the interests of the teachers.

In the Swedish Syllabus for English in adult education, — SKOLFS 2012:18. — there is a passage relevant to this study, which makes clear the
importance of the group in language learning. With the perceived problems of C.A. in mind, it is important to connect the findings of this study to what the syllabus stipulates that the students should learn.

The syllabus states that the student should be given the opportunity to develop an all-round communicative ability, by using language in functional and purposeful contexts. This ability includes, on the one hand, understanding spoken and written language, and, on the other hand, expressing oneself and interacting with others in speech and writing, as well as adapting the use of language to different contexts and situations, purposes and recipients. In addition, the student should have the chance to develop the ability to use different strategies to support communication, and to solve problems that arise from a lack of knowledge of the language (SKOLFS 2012:18).

In short, the syllabus holds that the student should develop socio-cultural competency (cf. Section 3). However, based on the results of the present study, this aspect of language learning does not appear to receive the amount of attention that it needs. In a fragmented class, there is little time for such exercises that would challenge the student to adapt to different situations, as the interviewees have elaborated on. Such exercises come with problem based teaching in groups over long periods of time, or with specific group work tasks — all of which has proven difficult for the teachers to organize under C.A.

Furthermore, the Syllabus stipulates that the student must produce spoken and written language on their own and together with others. This is seldom possible to achieve, as the teachers have voiced with their criticism of the C.A. policy’s effect on group work, classroom cohesion and possibility to provide a sound foundation in the target language.

The system of flexible solutions, of which C.A. is a part, opens up an important question in education; should education be student-centred, teacher-centred or, indeed, education centred where the content of the course is fixed? Should the needs of the students shape the parameters of the education they receive or should they conform to a fixed system? Egidius (2006:78) describes a shift in the last three decades from a fixation on
teachers to a fixation on students in Swedish Teacher education that is part of an increased perspective on market forces popularized in the 1980s. Egidius also describes how this shift of focus in education becomes a question of interpretation. How should teachers navigate between the demands from educational authorities to sculpt what the student is going to study from the student’s personal needs versus what the syllabus states should be the subject matter of the course at hand? It is an ambiguous area that teachers tread, which affects the quality of the teaching that they can provide.

In general, policy needs to exist; rules and parameters need to be in place for a school to be able to have a model to function according to. However, those policies need to be secondary to, and supportive of, maintaining successful learning, rather than setting the parameters for learning itself. In the situation perceived by the interviewees, the latter has become reality: the policy of C.A. determines the parameters of the teaching by creating a myriad of situations that impact the learning environment, rather than aiding teachers in their pedagogical work. In the light of these results, it seems justified to conclude that something has to be done about the policy of C.A. and the wider culture of flexible solutions. To simply suggest that the municipalities should devise new admission policies from square one, or that there should be a return to a centralized system, such as the one that existed before the decentralisation, is, however, not very productive. It is of far greater interest and worth to suggest modifications to the current system.

The benefit of a municipal system is arguably its power of flexibility and ability to adapt to the ever changing needs of students according to its specific catchment area. There is a genuine need from adult students to be able to enrol throughout the term and to receive education tailored to their needs, but the current system is in need of restructuring, so that the didactic element does not suffer as it currently does.

One could try to modify or optimize the current system in several ways, some of which are attitudinal and some practical. As regards attitudinal changes, first, it is of interest to consider Hattie’s discussion of Ben Levin’s book *How to change 5000 schools:*
He starts from the premise that the heart of school improvement rests in improving daily teaching and learning practices in schools, balanced with the notion that the school is the unit of evaluation – that is, that everyone in the school needs to collaborate to ensure that the daily teaching and learning practices are the focus of the school, and all are responsible for its success. This ties directly to the message in this book that teachers and school leaders are fundamentally evaluators. It ties with claims that the culture of the school is the essence of sustained success. (Hattie 2012:150)

From this quote, it can be concluded that it is in the overall culture of all who work in a school, and their attitudes toward learning, that sustained success can be found, rather than in a policy aiming to facilitate the success, but do the schools of the interviewees’ live up to this ideal? The policy of C.A. and the wider concept of flexible solutions aim to facilitate a culture that accommodates the student, though their existence is political too. Levin outlines several points in summary of what attitudes do and do not work in creating and managing a school system. What does not work is to work from the position that

- A single change can create improvement in a short time;
- The starting place is governance and policy
- New curriculum and standards can, by themselves, foster betterment

(Levin. B 2008)

With this in mind, one can draw the conclusion that flexible solutions and C.A. will not work. These policies are “single changes” and they come from governance and policy. Instead Levin argues for a culture where learning and teaching are discussed and evaluated by all in the school. The focus of school leaders must be on maintaining learning and student achievement for a school’s students to achieve well.

As regards practical changes, next, there must be a way to devise a scheme so that all students who need to enrol at a later point in the term receive the education that they are entitled to in the syllabus (the aspect of
group learning, adaption strategies and interacting with others in the target language). Below are several alternative solutions to what kinds of admission policy that could be put in the place of C.A. These modifications take into account what has been said about group learning, classroom cohesion and the teacher’s ability to be able to plan and execute teaching.

The first suggested modification has already been mentioned in the Section 5, namely the double term system. One term would begin in January and end in June, and the other term would begin in March and end in October, following the summer holiday. In this system the class size is manageable, and the problems associated with a fluctuating group size are alleviated, at the same time as the students still have two chances to enrol. If such a system were put in place, the problems presented by the current implementation of C.A. would be alleviated, as they have been at one of the interviewees’ schools. However, as also presented in section 5, this works at schools that have a large English department. It might not be optimal for smaller English departments due to the need for several teachers because of the multiple start and end dates of the terms.

The second suggestion is to have a smaller class size, but to have many classes. Where once there was one big class of 25-40 students, the school could instead have several smaller classes that had no more than a maximum of 10 students in each. These classes could have, for example, 3-5 students at the beginning of term and, as the term progresses, the classes could fill up, but to no more than a maximum of 10 students. The smaller class size would be manageable in terms of familiarization, classroom cohesion and group work. It would perhaps also be easier to stick to a term plan since the classes are small and do not fluctuate greatly. This modification might be feasible if there were enough teachers to manage all the groups. However, due to the nature of C.A., there would be a varying number of students studying English at the school and it would be uncertain how many teachers would be needed. The number of teachers needed might actually vary throughout the term. This could result in overwork for the already hired teachers but it might also force school management to hire substitute teachers. That would not be wholly detrimental, as new teachers
and teacher students could benefit from the need of substitute teaching positions.

The third suggested modification is to have a system that has an initial admission period of perhaps three weeks. After the admission period, any students wishing to enrol would be put into half distance courses with most of the work done by the students at home. There would be a total of, say, eight in situ lessons with the teacher. Such a course might have to run into the following term, but the longer course length would mean that there would be more time in two terms to facilitate socio-cultural competency in the course.

An aspect that was interesting but cumbersome about the present study was that in no other type of education (as far as could be found) does one have the situation of a continually growing class size and decreased course span that C.A gives rise to. Therefore, to find literature that could be relevant to the analysis of the results was a challenge. The choice of sociocultural theory was appropriate, since most of the problems caused by C.A. concerned classroom cohesion and group learning. In addition, Hattie’s message to make learning visible to all, in order to attain the greatest achievement from students, rang true to the issues discussed in this paper.

This study has pointed up consequences of C.A. for didactics and teachers’ professional role; another aspect of interest would be to address the role of C.A. and flexible solutions in the current situation of low enrolment of new students of pedagogy, and imminent shortage of teachers nationwide.
References

Primary Sources

Interviews with five teachers of language. Located in Appendix 2.

Secondary Sources


Laforest, Julie. Gouvernement du Québec 2009. Charting a course to safe living, Guide to Organizing Semi-Structured Interviews With Key Informant


Appendix 1

**Original quotes from official documents that have yet to be officially translated into Swedish.**

Eleven ska ges möjlighet att, genom språkanvändning i funktionella och meningsfulla sammanhang, utveckla en allsidig kommunikativ förmåga. Denna förmåga innefattar dels att förstå talat och skrivet språk, dels att formulera sig och sammanspela med andra i tal och skrift samt att anpassa sitt språk till olika situationer, syften och mottagare. Dessutom ska eleven ges möjlighet att utveckla förmågan att använda olika strategier för att stödja kommunikationen och för att lösa problem när språkkunskaperna inte räcker till. (SKOLFS 2012:18)

Vuxenutbildningen ska sträva efter flexibla Lösningar när det gäller organisation, arbetsätt och arbetsformer med utgångspunkt i individens behov och förutsättningar. (Läroplan för vuxenutbildningen 2012:8)

Eleven ska få interagera i tal och skrift samt producera talat språk och olika texter, på egen hand och tillsammans med andra, och med stöd av olika hjälpmedel och medier. (SKOLFS 2012:18)

Kommunerna bör uppmuntras att erbjuda ett kontinuerligt intag av studerande samt erbjuda flexibla studietider. (Riksdagen.se)

Appendix 2

When questions were put to the teachers they often gave answers that encompassed and linked into other areas so that they unwittingly answered
one of the other questions. Thus some questions have no answers that
directly follow them in the Appendix.

- **KI** means Kontinuerligt intag i.e. Continuous Admission.
- ********* is the name of the school or other name that could potentially
  reveal the identity of the teacher.

**TEACHER 1**

Vad är konsekvenserna av kontinuerligt intag för undervisningen i
engelska?
Particulary affects beginner classes the most, grund and beginner classes.
Lessons are based around the teaching of sequencial grammar and degrees
of difficulty – based like a pyramid but also cumulative – for example you
can’t understand one aspect unless you understand the one before, example;
learning of question forms in the present tenses is much harder, there two
present tenses in engelish whereas in Swedish there is one. Present simple
present continous it maesit difficult whether the to learn question forms in
the present if you have missed the lesson on present tenses.
It becomes less important when you teach gymnasium level although the
amount of work coming in half way through a course becomes enormous to
be able to catch up with their class mates. Especially if they have other
subjects as well. From a student point of view and teacher point of view this
policy is disastrous. From an administrators point of view this is excellent,
regular flow of new students to compensate for the drop-out rate, more
money for the school because you get more money per student from the
municipalities and state.
Affects everything in the class while you try and amalgamate the new
students into the class, have to give the other students other things to do
while integrating the new student.

**CLASS SIZE**
5-6 years ago class sizes were between 10-15. I could teach English A B C and grund and have time left over for other things in the course- you could vary didactics. Today I struggle to teach the course because I have classes of 26-30 students. Most teachers will tell you that they teach the absolute minimum to pass the national test and no more because of so many students. In grund level students it affects enormously – class size. Very few actually pass grund level English, drop out or give. Very few students follow from grund level up to gymnasium level. Those who do gymnasium come in from outside.

Increased pressure from the ledning that we teach using computers. The computer should be a support but the more we use computers the better we are considered by our ledning. They base this praise on the fact that they can use computers in the teaching of mathematics. One teacher can go around a class of 30-40 monitoring 30-40 different lessons so that each student is in fact doing different things. This is how our ledningsgroup would like us to teach languages. You just need one teacher and help them all. This is in fact disastrous because A you are no longer teaching and B it doesn’t teach you to speak, programs from the internet can teach you structured grammar like stencils and language labs from 70’s but are no more effective. This is popular because it is cheap. Higher student to teacher ratio. Studies show that the ideal number of students in a language group is 12-15 but we’re a long way off that.

-Vad har dessa för konsekvenser för …

1 betygsättning
Much harder to attain a good grade, not impossible but harder.
2 elevens prestationer desto högre upp i kurserna den kommer?
Yes enourmasly, only getting half a terms’ teaching. Due to an unsound beginning it is difficult to be able to predict the shortcomings that the student has and how to correct hose weaknesses in their core knowledge of English.
3 kan en elev egentligen så mycket som denne borde kunna när den när gymnasial engelska?

4 Vilka förmågor (om några) tenderar att bli bristfälliga? Läsning, skrivning, tal, vokabulär, grammatisk kunskap?

It affects them all equally badly.

4.1 Vad får kontinuerligt intag för konsekvenser för hur du lägger upp didaktiken? Hur navigerar du dig igenom detta?

Påverkar kontinuerligt intag mängden lektionstid du kan lägga på de olika momenten såsom läsning, skrivning och tal? Blir det en ojämna fördelning under terminens lopp?

Hur påverkas lektionsplaneringen?

It destroys your lesson planning completely, often the students arrive without you being aware that they are coming.

Hur påverkar kontinuerligt intag möjligheten att utföra så pass mycket som man ska på en termin?

Påverkar kontinuerligt intag möjligheten att lägga upp mål för terminen?

It delays and makes it harder, for the new students. It makes it harder for me to bring all my students up to level they need to be so they can pass their exams.

Påverkar den varierande klasstorleken din didaktik?

Påverkar den varierande klasstorleken eleverna? Blir gruppen homogen?

You have outsiders coming and it is difficult to bring them into established groups within the class. They have to sink or swim, there is nothing I can do about that.

-Vilka andra processer/åtgärder/policy finns som hämmar undervisningen i engelska?

Individuell kurser, skräddarsydda kurser. Part of the government’s muddled thinking they want ***** to tighten up their attendance since it is using state money. At the same time it wants ***** to be competitive, individually designed course. In one way it is good, mother with small children and through the internet telephone and email can stay in contact.
with the teacher and she can follow the class from a distance. By law her children have a right to a dagis place, in reality there is a long queue and she can’t get them in there. So according to flexible solutions she can get distance undervisning with two visits a week with me. However being a young mother she never knows if she can come or not come because she has babies and needs a baby sitter. This means that I the teacher must fit in with the ups and downs her babies’ early years. This includes finding rooms that are available for short notice and preparing a lesson for one student at short notice. Private lessons are not allowed at **** however teachers are now forced to teach an individual course but it is not termed as private rather it is termed as flexible and individual. The other area where individ anpassad undervisning doesn’t work where students want to take a holiday to Thailand and fit the course around their travels and are not allowed to do that in a main course and therefore switch to an individual course with ‘individ anpassade’ solutions. So here the teacher now acts as a teacher and as a travel bureau.

Means extra work for the teachers where the students want essentially private lessons one on one teaching. This completely changes the didactics one not paid, 1 to 37 you are paid baldy for it, another great success for the teaching unions.

Another problem is the makeup of the classes. It’s hellish on the immigrant students; they are made to learn English and Swedish at the same time. Any linguist will tell you this is insane. They suffer from heavy language interference. It is also incredibly frustrating to teach a class that has so many different lingual backgrounds that all interfere with their learning of the target language. This is a problem that could be alleviated easily. Let the immigrant students learn Swedish for a number of terms before they begin learning English, but no, genomströmning is the name of the game from municipality.

Påverkar dem målen som du sätter för undervisningen?
Påverkar dem mängden stoff som ska hinnas med på en termin?
Hur påverkas lektionsplaneringen?
In general how does 'kontinuerligt intag' affect your teaching?

Before we started once a term and ended once a term. Csn grants would often be taken away if the student didn’t manage a course after two attempts. The school would put in plea for the student. “can this person utilize the time”

Prior KI school policy, plan out the time, to avoid collisions, it was easier to explain what was expected of the students. “was it easier to explain before KI?” Yes, the emphasis is on the individualism, but I maintain that they are part of the group. We had to by policy interview the students 3.4 times a term on what the students needed. The trouble was that we were unable to organize it, 30 students 12 min for a short interview. Affected the interview strongly, the corridor and you’ve got the other students screaming for their teacher. You can’t give a qualitative interview. At the end of the day you teach as well as you can, interview a certain number of people that need it the most. Important to have a good relation with the good, sorry the homework isn’t done, personal stuff. 40 minute lunch break.

Course material, shop won’t stock it, takes 2 weeks to get it, photocopying enormous amounts. The new student would miss information about the planning for the whole term. 3 tests – a grade from those tests. How well they merge into the group is individual. weak students are more aware that they have missed something.

Union 10 years the need for mall study rooms. 10 to go separate writing room, 20

The actual teaching, refer to a grammar construction and then they have to say to Jan sorry this was before your time and have not got the time to re-teach. But you have to rely on your skills as a teacher, when you teach and teach well, your students are able to return to a course and carry on. If the students have fragmented knowledge they don’t have the basics. Ki creates an environment that creates fragmented teaching despite high quality
teaching and attendance. I’m keen on pair work and group work, the new faces haven’t the experience or the teaching from the past term.

There needs to be a positive atmosphere in the group, if they enjoy what they’re doing they’re learning!! KI creates a fragmented group cohesion and in a way segregates the students smaller groups or pairs so nobody knows each other.

How does this policy affect lesson planning?

Does the fluctuating class size impact the learning?

-How does the fluctuating class size affect group cohesion?

What long term consequences does this policy create with regard to..

-Grading? G VG MVG

I still have this system of 3 tests per term plus work that they hand in to me and I grade them on that. Someone who comes in late has less of a chance.

Nothing is gained with KI. They miss a certain amount.

-Student achievement in subsequent courses?

Fragmented grund up to english A. Things are missed, when you get to English A you can’t finish teaching grund level english because that is what they haven’t really grasped. Pressure to pass? – I fell that if you look at this läroplan you assess them on knowledge but if they’ve got knowledge you grade them on that and nothing else. That is how I’ve tried to implement my teaching.

-When the students reach gymnasium level English is their knowledge of English up to par? – If not, is that largely due to the effects of kontinuerligt intag?

-Have you found that certain abilities are more affected than others, writing, reading, speaking, vocabulary? No it is general. I don’t think that KI affects it that much, the ses people missa bi of everything. It gives a fragmented base for late comers. doesn’t affect any ability more than others.

How representative are your views on this policy of your colleagues or of other professionals that you work with? Very much representative. At************ they started a course in the middle of the term and finished in the next middle of the term. The school was big enough to do this. You started a course in february in stead of January. In our school the head had
been a teacher. Was this the rektors idea? 5 deputy heads but they organized the middle term start. That policy alleviated the pains of KI.

In ******** worked individually, very little conversation. A lot of ******** have immigrants, Swedish English, immigrants don’t have bi-lingual advantage they need more hours. If you teach and teach well so the student learns something that knowledge doesn’t disappear. You get a student at English A who writes an essay that you don’t know what it is about.

Who is responsible for this policy?

Läroplanen gives info on what is expected of you to teach. KI is practical and political, stops you from carrying out what is in the läroplan? Yes! This is political and municipal.

What other policies exist that you feel affect your teaching in a detrimental way?

Not that I can think of. if you go back 10. 20 30 40 years, there was much more money in education. People are having to work out systems that fit economically. Politicians get hold of these plans that they have no idea what are like for the teachers on the ground.

As a teacher there is a big distance between your work and the decision making is being made. There is the leadership at every school plus an utbildnings part of municiaplaty that are making decisions.

**TEACHER 3**

In general how does ’kontinuerligt intag’ affect your teaching?


How does this policy affect lesson planning?
Man gör en planering utifrån dem personer jag ‘tror’ att ja har i kursen. en planering som lämpar sig efter gruppen, men sen blir gruppen rörig och jag kan inte följa min planering – kunskaper som elever inte besitter-

Does the fluctuating class size impact the learning?
-How does the fluctuating class size affect group cohesion?
What long term consequences does this policy create with regard to..
-Grading? G VG MVG
-Student achievement in subsequent courses?
-When the students reach gymnasium level English is their knowledge of English up to par? – If not, is that largely due to the effects of kontinuerligt intag?
-Have you found that certain abilities are more affected than others, writing, reading, speaking, vocabulary? Språkutvecklingen – ser ut som så att den skriftliga förmågan hänger långt efter. Receptiva och produktiva. Receptiva ligger högre medan de produktiva blir sämre. Tal bättre än det skriftliga. KI är en bov I dramat. Gruppstorlek också en bov. Inte tid att jobba med

How representative are your views on this policy of your colleagues or of other professionals that you work with?

Who is responsible for this policy?
Skolverket markören har rätt att starta sitt sfi efter 3 månader, ska inte behöva vänta i mer än tre månader. Olika från kommun från kommun. KI blir konsekvensen. Vissa styrdokument i händerna på vad politikerna ger en och då är detv ekonomiska insitatment iböand insitament oförenliga.

What is the view on KI from your leaders?

What other policies exist that you feel affect your teaching in a detrimental way?
TEACHER 4

In general how does ’kontinuerligt intag’ affect your teaching?
Negativt om du vill ha kort svar.

How does this policy affect lesson planning?
Man vet aldrig när det dyker upp någon, stör planeringen, måste flexibel.

Does the fluctuating class size impact the learning?
Det finns ett tak. Aldrig hänt att klassen blir större än trettio. Men det stör och är jobbigt i det att jag inte vet hur gruppen kommer se ut från vecka till vecka.

-How does the fluctuating class size affect group cohesion?

What long term consequences does this policy create with regard to..

-Grading?
Inte mycket försvårat men ändå inte jättelätt. De har koll på var de är. Presentations när de kommer in nya. Har ingen tid att införliva eleverna. finns inte tid att kolla deras engelska när de börjar.

-Student achievement in subsequent courses?
Man kan inte ha KI på första terminen men vi har det. Man gör elverena en björntjänst med KI, de får fragmenterad början. I distansundervisning kan det fungera när man läser klart hela terminen plus den tiden man missar i början. Problemet kommer när eleverna inte går hela terminskvoten av lektioner.
-When the students reach gymnasium level English is their knowledge of English up to par? –
If not, is that largely due to the effects of kontinuerligt intag?
Mycket svårt att saga, helt olika förutsättningar.
-Have you found that certain abilities are more affected than others, writing, reading, speaking, vocabulary?

Who is responsible for this policy?
Står ingenstans i styrdokumenten även om vi ska premiera individuella lösningar och studieplaner, arbetsförmedlingen tycker att det ska vara så här KI, vi vill inte, detta är ett politiskt och kommunalt beslut med KI. Eftersom de andra aktörerna erbjuder det så måste vi också det.
What other policies exist that you feel affect your teaching in a detrimental way?
Inga andra som KI.
NP
Man är väldigt beroende på NP eftersom man har en suddig bild av vad de kan. förlitar mig på NP nästan totalt.

Som lärare blir man skitstressad, ofta är de nya sena och ska de andra vänta.

Identitet de e synd om eleverna, flyttafokus. Inte rätt mot eleven heller. det drabbar eleven, blir inte bemött som de ska egentligen av mig. De vandrar in i en situation där de är ett problem utan att riktigt veta om det eftersom vi erbjuder kontinuerligt intag.

**TEACHER 5**

In general how does 'kontinuerligt intag' affect your teaching?
Nya eleverna stressas och de missar en massa, eleverna vill kontinuitet men får det inte. Inget riktigt kursslut och eleverna vill ha det. (reorisk fråga)-Vad är en kurs egentligen? Kursstruktur blir luddig o man förlängs, de känner varandra inte i gruppen alls. En annan sammanhållning förut. Mycket anonymitet nu, små grupp indelningar. 4 intag på terminen, men eleverna kommer inte alltid, halva terminens lektioner går till att införliva nya elever extra informella
kl asses – konversation. Eleverna uppfattar det som jobbigt, ledning ska ta reda på det med enkät.

How does this policy affect lesson planning?


Kan lätt bli själviska, inte så intresserade av de andra eleverna. De e roligare att jobba i ett klassrum där alla gör test, läxor samarbete tillsammans. Alla sitter i samma båtkänslan är nog

Does the fluctuating class size impact the learning?
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What long term consequences does this policy create with regard to..

- Grading?
Den sociala biten, de nationella proven blir viktigare mått på kunskapen, KI gör att jag har mindre koll på elevens kunskap. Dessa uppgifterna ska vara klara samt NP. Svårare att hålla koll på deras kunskap.
Elever kommer ofta med frågan ”tror du ja klarar kursen?”. De vill veta var de ligger och jag har nästan ingen koll på det alls på grund av KI. Garanten blir NP men det blir svårt att veta om eleven kommer kunna klara det. Skulle haft bättre koll med en homogen grupp från kursstart till slut. Elevena vet också väldigt lite om var de ligger. Uppmuntrar dem till att kunna checka sig själva nivämässigt med ett antal texter.
Kommer mindre till engelskan än till andra lektioner, andra ämnen mer klossbygg. Kan inte checka av lika mycket som t ex historie epoker. Lägger lite vikt på att de är aktiva på lektionerna. Mindre utrymme i betygssättningen att visa vad de kan. mer bekräftelse kolla sig mot andra som faller bort på grund KI de får inte bekräftelse som de behöver veta om var de ligger.
- Student achievement in subsequent courses?
- When the students reach gymnasium level English is their knowledge of English up to par? –
If not, is that largely due to the effects of kontinuerligt intag?
- Have you found that certain abilities are more affected than others, writing, reading, speaking, vocabulary?
How representative are your views on this policy of your colleagues or of other professionals that you work with?
mycket representativt, en sorg hos lärare. Påverkar indentiten, var inte utbildade för.

Who is responsible for this policy?

Olika från kommun till kommun, skolverket regeringshåll inte tänka terminer, läsa året om i sin egen takt. Ligger centralt, SkolFS- kommunerna har på sig att utbildningen ska drivas på detta sättet. Orrätvist behandlade, klarar detta lika bra som de privata handläggaren, kvalitetskrav!!-