Researching and Developing Swedkid: A Swedish Case Study at the Intersection of the Web, Racism and Education

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to provide an insight into three phenomena: the condition of racism in Sweden, the complexity of identity, and the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in classroom settings. It also offers an analysis of how such phenomena combined in the development of a specific educational resource, the Swedkid project (2001-3) which aimed to develop an anti-racist website (www.swedkid.nu) for students and teachers in Swedish schools. A case study approach was used for the analysis in the thesis, in which the Swedkid project was viewed as an instance of web-based, anti-racist educational resource development. This instance (or case) provided a prism of opportunity for learning about ‘race’, ethnicity and the role of ICT in the classroom. The case study embraces a number of sub-studies (Papers I-V and Appendix 1) which explore independently and in combination, how the website was developed and received, the Swedish national context, intercultural and anti-racist work in education, racist experiences of young people, and ICT as part of anti-racist work in the classroom. Three sets of findings (or themes) emerged from the study: namely, the existence of racism in Sweden, that young people’s conception of identity is complex and that the Swedkid website constitutes a significant anti-racist intervention.

The overall aims of the research were to:

- utilise the Swedkid project as a learning opportunity
- explore the Swedish context for the project
- investigate and develop an understanding of racism and ethnicity in Sweden generally and in education in particular
- investigate experiences of racism among young people, and
- explore how ICT can support anti-racist work in classroom settings

Three research questions were also posed in the research:

- How can ‘race’, ethnicity and experiences of racism be understood in Sweden generally, in education and among young people?
- How can ICT support anti-racist work in classroom settings?
- How useful were the approaches taken and the methods used in the project?

A variety of methods of data gathering were used which include systematic literature searches, interviews, questionnaires, classroom observations plus a project logbook. Three theoretical clusters were
particularly helpful in the analysis; relating to globalisation, racism and new technology (e.g. Castells, Jansson, Pred, Essed, Ladson-Billings, Delgado & Stefancic, Aviram & Tami). The research suggests an uneven picture in Sweden generally, and among Swedish young people in particular. While there have been some conscious and planned strategies to eliminate racism and discrimination, and high ambitions and good intentions from policy-makers and teachers in terms of recognising inequalities of schooling and counteracting racism, there is also a continuing picture of hostility, difficulty, denial and insecurity within education and more generally. The study also illuminates the complexity of identity and knowledge transfer, between locally-situated individuals and the different levels of global, European, national and local. It is suggested that the formation of identity is a process which involves viewing someone as ‘the other’ and can be transferred into a racist discourse and as such, used as a basis for legitimizing exclusion. However, responses to the Swedkid website suggest that engagement with other, wider identities (in this case, the characters on the website) can provide the possibility of intervention in stereotypical perceptions and expansion of notions of identity. It is also suggested that the Swedkid website can be used successfully in supporting anti-racist work in classroom settings, although dependent on the skills and commitment of the teacher. The advantages of using ICT for Swedkid lie in the possibility of visualisation and simulation, hence, it provides virtual experience of complex phenomena. The website can thus work as a springboard into informed rather than common-sense or everyday discourses of racism/anti-racism, with virtuality enhancing the classroom work of the teacher. Overall, studies presented in this thesis illustrate how a combination of ICT and anti-racism can offer opportunities for challenging commonsense views of racism and ethnicity, provide counter-stories as evidence that racism exists, and thus offer alternative perceptions and viewpoints on this topic in education and elsewhere.
Papers included in the thesis:


V. Hällgren, Camilla (2005). ‘Nobody and everybody has the responsibility’ – responses to the Swedish antiracist website SWEDKID. *Journal of Research in Teacher Education* 12, (3) 53-77.

Permission for republishing the original articles in this thesis has been given from the publishers as well as from the co-authors.

Paper I-III are co-authored and the author’s involvement is as follows:

*Paper I*: mainly contributing to the section relating to Sweden.

*Paper II*: generally contributing to the entire paper, but specifically, to the sections related to patterns of immigration, Swedish population, racism, information technology and education as well as to the conclusions.

*Paper III*: Mainly contributing to introduction, sections on educational policies and change, values, terminology, experiences of racism, and strategies for challenging racism in schools, Critical Race Theory, as well as to the conclusions.
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PART 1
1. Introduction

The starting point for the research presented in this thesis was the Swedkid project which concerned research and development of an anti-racist website (www.swedkid.nu) aimed at students and their teachers in Swedish schools. This instance of an educational resource development provided a prism of opportunity for learning about ‘race’1, ethnicity and experiences of racism2, as well as the role of ICT in supporting anti-racist work in classroom settings. Thus, the aims of research are, first, to utilise the Swedkid website development as a learning opportunity; second, to explore the Swedish context for the project; third, to investigate and develop an understanding of racism and ethnicity in Sweden and in Swedish education; fourth, to investigate experiences of racism among young people; and fifth, to explore how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) might be important to anti-racist work in classroom settings.

The Swedkid project concerned research as well as development and involved design, utilisation and evaluation of the website as a pedagogical tool for challenging racist and anti-democratic ideas among young people in Sweden. It was also a multi-agency project that involved various departments in the Faculty of Teacher Education at Umeå University, private companies such as Paregos3 and Skandia Ideas for Life4 (insurance company) as well as schools, teachers and students. The research-base and responsibility for development were primarily the responsibility of the project team5 based in the Department of Mathematics, Technology and Science Education at Umeå University, together with the Department of Interactive Media and Learning6 (IML) at Umeå University. The Swedkid project was also part of the Comenius-funded project Eurokid (2000–3) which mainly involved three countries – Britain, Spain and Sweden7 – in the creation of home-language websites, which went on-line in October 2002 (Britkid in a revised form), and a linked Europe-wide website which was developed later including the English translation of the Swedish and Spanish websites and went online in July 2003.

At the time I became involved in the Eurokid project, and subsequently the Swedkid project, I worked as a lecturer in the Department for Interactive Media and Learning (IML). I taught
courses as well as developed multimedia teaching tools for use with in-service and pre-service teacher education. However, alongside my undoubted fascination with ICT, I sometimes had a nagging question about ‘what it was really good for …?’ Consequently I saw being involved in the development and research of an anti-racist website as an opportunity to evaluate the usefulness of the computer for a specific purpose – in this case, as a means of support for teachers and students working against racism. I could not foresee then how deeply interested I would become in racism in all its complexity and the consequences it has for the everyday lives of individuals in Sweden. The inherent duality of racism and technology resulted in a certain tension in the project around whether the main focus should be racism or ICT. The project became in the end more about challenging racism than about technology although technology proved to be a productive starting point, and an important medium for bringing out the issues. This mirrors the focus of the thesis. Even though website development was the basis for the thesis, it is not its main focus. The relationship between the Swedkid project and the thesis is further explained in section The Swedkid Project and the Thesis. For a detailed picture of how the website was created, see Appendix 1.

Looking back, Swedkid was a project that glittered. Compared to the other countries involved in the Eurokid project, Swedkid received greater attention and financial support, for example, from government ministers, national agencies, private sector companies, the media and the University. Thus, in March 2001, only a few months after the study had begun, the project team was invited by the then Schools Minister Ingegerd Wärnersson to make a presentation at a meeting of European Council of Education Ministers in Uppsala, as an example of the impact of educational research on educational practice in Sweden. Several years later, in 2003, Swedkid was awarded the Evens Prize for Intercultural Education in Europe, and in 2004, the website project was a finalist in the Stockholm Challenge Award. A further outcome of this public attention was that a number of projects were funded on the basis of their connection to Swedkid. For example in 2002-2003 a research overview was commissioned by the Swedish National Agency for Education of intercultural and anti-racist issues in Swedish schools. This resulted, in 2005, in a commission from the Ministry of Justice to participate in an investigation of structural discrimination, including the school sector. Also, involvement in
the wider Eurokid project generated a range of conference papers and articles as well as a project book entitled: *Kids in Cyberspace: Teaching anti-racism using the Internet in Britain, Spain and Sweden* (Gaine & Weiner, 2005).

Involvement both in the development of the Swedkid website and in a number of related projects has undoubtedly been beneficial to my overall studies, but at the same time, could make for an awkward balance. What I therefore try to do in this Kappa is to illuminate what was learnt in the project and its associated sub-studies, mainly through the five individual papers that make up Part 2 of this thesis. Thus, keeping the initial notion of my involvement in the Swedkid project as an opportunity for learning more both about racism, and the role of technology in classroom practice, the core logic for the design of the thesis became the case study. Consequently, the development of Swedkid and its associated research studies can be viewed as a case of educational resource development i.e. the creation and development of an anti-racist website aimed at students and teachers in Swedish schools. (For further details on the case study approach, see section *The Swedkid Case Study*.)

**Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis has two main parts, Part 1 (the Kappa) and Part 2 (Paper I-V), plus Appendix 1. The Kappa has five sections. First, a brief introduction sets the scene, as we have seen, followed by a presentation of the structure of the thesis and explorations of the relationship between the Swedkid project and the thesis. The first section also provides outlines of the main aims and research questions and ends with a summary of the papers that make up Part 2 of the thesis. Section two offers an overview of methods used for data collection as well as the case study methodology adopted for the analysis, and a discussion of ethics in the research process. Section three provides a review of the key theoretical frameworks included in the research, and is followed by a discussion, in section four, of the three main emergent themes and the ways in which they connect to or illuminate the overall research questions. Section five provides a Swedish language summary. The papers that form Part 2 of the thesis are selected from a variety of presentations and publications made in the course of the Eurokid and Swedkid
projects. In addition there is an Appendix (1) which offers a detailed account of the how the website was developed.

The Swedkid Project and the Thesis

The starting point for research in this thesis was the Swedkid project, thus, this thesis concerns three interrelated elements: first, development of the Swedkid website as part of the Eurokid project; second, the research studies carried out as basis for the website (and for this thesis); and third, the Swedkid case study, which constitutes the analytic approach for the thesis and brings together the knowledge gained from the first two elements in the form of a case study.

The Swedkid project was part of a European Union-funded project Eurokid (2000-2003) which had as its main aim, to create and deliver on-line, national home-language and English language websites for the countries involved (Britain, Spain, Sweden and initially Italy) with an additional European-wide linking website. The websites were to be freely available to anyone with access to the Internet. The project also involved collaboration with other of groups and individuals (see Appendix 1).

The Swedkid website is built on characterisation and the visualised experiences derived from interviews with a selection of young Swedish people, and is constructed around eleven characters living in an imaginary town. Starting from the town, it is possible to visit the characters at home and share their interests and viewpoints expressed in dialogues with other characters. Frequently, the user is invited to respond to questions posed alongside the dialogue. A digital portfolio (Ryggsäcken) is available where users can write about themselves and their experiences, store notes and web-links and keep record of responses they have given to the dialogues. The ‘teachers’ room enables teachers to gain an overview of how their students are working on the website, as well as provide print-outs of students’ responses, which can be used as base for face-to-face discussions. Access to a wide range of linked websites and information sources is also available from the website, such as a glossary of terms and a link library (for a more detailed overview of website methodology see Papers I, II and V as well as Appendix 1). The Swedkid website became available online in October 2002, but
as has been said, its development was only one part of the Swedkid project, which also generated a number of papers, presentations and articles about the research undertaken for the project.

Swedkid was both an educational project concerning the development and delivery of an anti-racist website, and a research project/thesis. There was, however, no clear division between the different parts; rather, they were understood as symbiotically related to, and dependent on, each other. The research studies were woven into the development of the website right from the beginning, whilst developmental elements were limited to the website’s creation and delivery. Thus the Swedkid project was more than a curriculum development project. It was research-based in that research informed development and evaluation, and other research studies were generated by the project. The predominant reason for pursuing a research theme was to give the website credibility – sceptics would be more likely to accept the premise and arguments embedded in the website. Interestingly, the emphasis on research in Swedkid contributed to a stronger overall research focus for the Eurokid project. The Swedkid project also attracted commissions to undertake further related projects; see, for example, sub-study 3 (Paper III) which was developed as a result of approaches from two different governmental bodies. This thesis concentrates mainly on the research focus of the Swedkid project and other studies generated by the project.

A case study approach was developed for the analysis: Swedkid here was viewed as an instance of a web-based, anti-racist educational resource development. This instance provided a prism of opportunity for learning about ‘race’, ethnicity and experiences of racism, and the role of ICT in supporting anti-racist work in the classroom (Stake, 1994; Yin, 2003). Thus, the bounding system of the case of Swedkid constitutes the event of creating, launching and using an anti-racist website. (This is explored in more detail in the section 2.)
Aims

The research had five primary aims, to:

1. Utilise the Swedkid website development as a learning opportunity.
2. Explore the Swedish context for the project.
3. Investigate and develop understanding of racism and ethnicity in Sweden generally, and in Swedish education in particular.
4. Study experiences of racism among young people.
5. Explore how ICT can support anti-racist work in classroom settings.

Three further questions were also posed regarding the case study and its sub-studies:

1. How can ‘race’, ethnicity and experiences of racism be understood in Sweden generally, in education and among Swedish young people?
2. How can ICT support anti-racist work in classroom settings?
3. How useful was the actual approach taken in the project, and the methods used?

These questions permeate the aims and the case study and are also reflected upon in the concluding section of the Kappa. Figure 1 presents the relationship between the research aims and the various sub-studies.

Figure 1: Relationship between research aims and sub-studies.
Taking as an example, the aim of seeking to learn more about racism, ‘race’ and ethnicity in Sweden, is addressed to various degrees in all sub-studies and in Appendix 1. In particular, sub-study four shows how experiences of racism were researched by means of interviews while sub-study five (see Paper V) provides examples of how experiences of racism accessed via the website were perceived in the classroom. Development of the website in collaboration with the Eurokid team is considered in Sub-study one (see Paper I) as well as aspects of the development specific for Swedkid is presented in Appendix 1. The Swedish context is addressed in sub-study two (see Paper two), in particular, the positive reception of Swedkid, and also to some extent in sub-study three. Sub-study three (see Paper III) deals more explicitly with intercultural issues and anti-racism in Swedish education, while sub-study five (in addition to the above) explores how new technology might support anti-racist strategies in classroom settings.

For further clarification summaries are provided in the next section of the papers that make up Part 2 of this thesis.

**Summary of Papers**

*Paper I: ‘Eurokid’: an Innovative Pedagogical Approach to Developing Intercultural and Anti-racist Education on the Web*

This paper offers a general overview of the Eurokid project. The approach taken is exploratory and descriptive in providing a contextual background for each country involved (Spain, Britain and Sweden). The main aim of the Eurokid project was to address intercultural and anti-racist issues in education through the collaborative development of websites for classroom use following the example of the British-based ‘Britkid’. The websites were to be developed as learning and teaching materials which actively counter stereotypes and challenge inaccurate generalisations, using transnational perspectives. It is argued that even if attitudinal change is hard to measure, let alone to predict, the hope is that the sites would at the very least have an impact on mutual understanding and dialogue and on the confidence of teachers and students in discussing these issues from an informed perspective.
This paper aims to situate the project in Sweden. It offers a brief introduction to the Swedkid project and its role in both engaging and disrupting Swedish youth cultures and values. It examines the high level of attention that the project attracted (at least in relation to the other Eurokid project members) and identifies the Swedkid website as an exemplar of new patterns of governance, in relation to historical and cultural specificity on the one hand and global relations on the other. Thus, it illuminates recent shifts in Swedish discourses surrounding immigration, information technology, schooling and welfare to show how global, state and educational policies, economies and shift in patterns of governance impact on locally situated practices. In seeking to understand why the Internet, anti-racism and education are seen as a potent combination in Sweden it offers a three-fold analysis, focusing on: why Swedish institutions have been so favourably disposed to Swedkid, its exemplification and value as a pedagogical innovation, and its implications for the future of anti-racism in Sweden. The support of Swedkid is seen as an example of a discursively organized reform that seeks to address the uncertainties of the network society in an era of globalisation, at the same time as it deals with national concerns regarding global competition and the need for a stable society. It is further suggested that the support of a project such as Swedkid, which combines the Web, anti-racism and education, could be seen as a recognition of the wider dilemma facing Sweden; as one of the most prosperous, most networked societies internationally, which nevertheless continues to segregate and exclude many of its citizens. In an era of performativity a project such as Swedkid is a means by which the national and local state can show that each is actively addressing Sweden’s current problems.

Paper III: Discursive Discrimination: a short History and Overview of Education
This paper aims to map research and government reports on multicultural and anti-racist issues connected to Sweden’s increasingly ethnically diverse classrooms with the aim of highlighting factors and issues facing teachers and schools. The themes of the study derive from a dialogue with teachers, municipalities, and teacher educators about which areas are of most
value in relation to work on multicultural and anti-racist issues in schools. Factors highlighted include: educational policies and steering documents; attempts to raise achievement especially for ethnic minority students; experiences of, and strategies for challenging, racism; second-language teaching; and impact of increased diversity on Swedish classrooms. Significantly, the study shows that research in Sweden has concentrated mostly on Swedish as a second language, which has appeared to act as a filter for, and barrier to, in-depth analysis of other, perhaps more contentious, issues around racism and prejudice.

**Paper IV: Working harder to be the same**: Everyday Racism Among Young Men and Women in Sweden

This explores the perceptions of young men and women in Sweden from minority ethnic backgrounds. It first discusses interviewing as a means of gaining insights into day-to-day experiences. The main focus, however, is on how young people’s everyday lives are affected, inside and outside school by their being regarded as the ‘other’ because of their minority ethnic background. What for instance makes them believe that they need to work much harder than other young people to become ‘full members’ of the Swedish society? The interviews were undertaken primarily to inform the content of the Swedkid website. The theoretical framework builds on perceptions of everyday racism, power, the ‘other’ in the racist discourse, domains of conflicts and critical multiculturalism. The study shows that racism is multi-faceted and complex both in its characteristics and process. Evidence is presented of overt forms of racist confrontation and also of routine racism, as a more and less expected part of everyday life. Power relations play an important role in the sense that they create domains of conflict, although the specific forms they take are locally determined (Essed, 1991). Conflicts over norms and values are evident, for instance, in experiences of having to respond to norm-related questions suggesting difference and ‘otherness’ such as ‘where do you really come from?’ or ‘why do you do things like that?’ The study further shows a variety of ways in which young people actively challenge everyday racism. Overall it is suggested that everyday racism is a reality for many young people in Sweden, despite Sweden’s international reputation as a country with a strong commitment to eradicating inequalities and injustices. Thus ‘even in Sweden’ racism needs to be addressed (Pred, 2000). Escape routes and denial of
Racism are also identified as ways to prevent the success of strategies aimed at eradicating racism (de Los Reyes & Molina, 2002). The hope is that by communicating and discussing experiences of racism, the level of consciousness of ‘ordinary’ Swedes will be raised, about their own behaviour, and about the impact of the small daily occurrences that make the difference between social and cultural inclusion and exclusion.

**Paper V: ‘Nobody and everybody has the responsibility’ - Responses to the Swedish Anti-racist Website Swedkid**

This paper offers an evaluation of the Swedkid website with the aim of exploring how the website was used, and how it was able to mediate anti-racist work in the classroom. The case study is adopted as research strategy and data were gathered through classroom observations, questionnaires, web-logs and interviews. A critical multicultural perspective is used here to explore the outcomes of the evaluation as are a number of theoretical frameworks concerning evaluation. It is recognised that internal evaluations may be associated with certain problems, e.g. the risk of giving prominence to more positive aspects and the complex role of the researcher/evaluator. The outcomes of the evaluation are aimed at illumination and can thus only claim to represent the case, not the world. The study reveals both possibilities and obstacles in terms of using the Web for challenging and intervening in the process of the racialisation of Swedish society and culture. Using the computer was something that the students looked forward to and this also seemed to provide ‘a free ride’ into introducing anti-racist issues in the classroom. Interactions with the website indicated the potential of using ICT as a tool for raise awareness about and offered a starting point for further discussion. A common criticism from students was the absence of games, quizzes, opportunities to chat and lack of interactive possibilities. The students were overall positive towards the website’s graphics and design. There was evidence of empathy with the characters and their dialogues at the same time as there was a rejection by some of recognition of racism as part of Swedish life. Thus, parts of the website were considered to misrepresent ‘ordinary’ Swedes. Students from ‘Swedish’ majority ethnic backgrounds tended to be more critical of reported experiences of racism while students from ethnic minority backgrounds appreciated more the existence of a public language for their own experiences. Regarding the overall anti-racist message of the website, however, the responses were
largely positive. The most successful aspect of the website was the provision of content that is non-threatening yet provides a possibility to react, relate to, identify with, and talk about complicated issues in an alternative way. Less positive, though, was the uncertainty of teachers, not only in using the computer as a means of challenging racism in the classroom but in terms of positioning the content in the school curriculum and taking overall responsibility for the topic.

Appendix 1 Developing the Swedkid Website

Appendix 1 recounts the developmental part of the project, such as how the website was developed, its core logic and what is on the website and why. It builds on personal experience of being involved in the project, written documentation such as personal records, evaluation notes, project meeting notes, e-mails as well as contributions to the book written by the members in the Eurokid project (Gaine & Weiner, 2005). It starts with a description of the multi-agency nature of the project, and how it became a dynamic process where the demanding workload and necessity to meet deadlines entailed close cooperation with a number of groups. The Appendix continues with consideration of debates within the Eurokid group and how different aspects of the website came to be developed, such as the core logic of the site, the use of an imaginary town and the creation of characters. The process shows differences as well as similarities with the other Eurokid websites and partners.

Using characterisation as a vehicle for exploring racism and diversity derived from the idea that personalising abstract issues is likely to enhance motivation for exploration, this approach was also associated with a number of dilemmas, for instance, concerning who has the right to define other people’s issues and problem, what ethnicities should be represented on the website, how should they be portrayed and how stereotyping can be avoided. One way of addressing the complexity of representation and selectivity was to build the content on material gathered in interviews with young people living in Sweden and the Appendix thus reflects on how interviewees’ experiences were transformed into interactive web content. References to particular drawings are made to illustrate how they were developed in collaboration with the local web designer. However, while conscious measures were taken to avoid stereotyping, problems arose while developing the graphics.
Another aspect of stereotyping was the critical response to the website initially, when it was seen by some as placing too much emphasising the 'non-typical'.

2. Methodology and Methods

As discussed earlier, the core logic of the overall study became the case study, an approach also used for the evaluation (see Paper V). The case study was useful as it enabled the inclusion both of the development and the research aspects of the Swedkid project. It also allowed the perception of Swedkid as a unique instance of anti-racist educational resource development and learning opportunity, occurring in particular circumstances, with a history, agency and specific context. Within the case study a variety of methods of data collection were employed.

Methods of Data Collection

A range of data collection methods such as systematic literature searches, a project logbook, interviews, and a variety of evaluation methods have been employed. These methods are described briefly below but are further addressed in Papers I-V which are presented in full in Part 2 of this thesis.

Literature Searches

A comprehensive literature review was an important part of the research, and particularly relevant to the survey on which Paper III builds on. The review included government, authority and research reports, journal papers, dissertations and other sources of information with a focus on multicultural and anti-racist issues in the Swedish compulsory and upper secondary school. Information was gathered through a variety of searches, for example, using the databases LIBRIS and ERIC. At the stage of reading and sorting the material, categories used were developed and discussed with local teachers and administrators. The categorization of the material was adopted as follows: historical perspective – population and migration, Policies and steering documents, Second-language teaching, Raising achievement, especially of students with ethnically diverse

**Project Logbook**

A variety of documents were analysed in connection to the research on and development of the Swedkid website, including protocols from Eurokid, advisory group and web-design meetings, extension proposals, contracts, interim report of the Swedkid project and the final report of the Eurokid project, e-mails and general correspondence. These documents were sorted synchronically, stored electronically and printed when considered. They were used to keep record of project proceedings and as a basis for giving accounts of project activity to sponsors and interested parties (in particular on how the website was developed, and decisions made along the way). These documents also constituted a form of logbook for the case study, the adoption of a case study approach was, however, a later decision.

**Interviews**

Interviews were conducted which formed the basis for the website content, as well as for the study presented in Paper IV. The interview sample consisted of thirty people overall. Each interview lasted between one and two hours and was recorded on audio-tape. Most interviews were fully transcribed but for some, it was decided to transcribe key passages only. Interviewees contributing to the core content on the website were asked to check the manuscript for any errors of misrepresentation. All interviewees were offered the opportunity to check over their interview transcript but few took up the offer. A full discussion of interviewing as a method can be found in Paper IV. See also Appendix 1 for a discussion of how interview accounts were incorporated into the website. One concern was that though interviews were useful in providing access to the experiences of the interviewees, the data reported was necessarily second hand, observed and recorded through the perceptions of the researcher. Therefore it was considered important to preserve the interview discussion verbatim, for any further investigations. Also, contacting potential interviewees, e.g. approaching potential interviewees in the street, in shops and on the way to work, in the sampling process, led to the danger of perpetuating the discourse of ‘othering’ in seeking to gain access,
through interviews, to the experiences of young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

**Evaluation Methods**

A variety of methods were used for the evaluation. For the main evaluation study of the Swedkid website it was decided to focus on activities in the classroom (see Paper V). Purposeful/convenient sampling was used to choose the school and the twenty four students selected, aged thirteen to fourteen, were informed about the research (including the aim of tracking their activities on the website) and asked if they would like to participate. The evaluation data were collected from interviews with the teacher, participatory observation, written input form the students using the website and a student questionnaire (See Appendix 2). The questionnaire was an adaptation of the evaluation form used by the Eurokid project, but certain extensions and questions was added to adapt it to the Swedish context. For example, questions were asked about parts of the website unique to Swedkid, for instance, the digital portfolio (The backpack). The questionnaire included questions requiring descriptive answers as well as pre-given alternative answers. Students were also given written instructions on activities during the lessons (See Appendix 3). Written records were kept from the observations made during the planning sessions with the teacher, in the computer laboratory as well as during final discussions in the classroom. Downloads were made from the website to gain an overview of student inputs (in the forum, backpack and dialogues). The teacher was consulted about the process and outcomes as well as the final report (see also Paper V).

The overall design of the Swedkid website was further evaluated by students on a web design course. Thirty students were asked to choose three websites (out of eight) for evaluation assignment for the course using the following headings: overall impression, target group, aims, download time, navigation, pictures, text and overall lay-out, access for people with disabilities, access to website contacts, and possible improvements. Twenty-five of the thirty students chose to evaluate Swedkid.

A variety of other lesser measures were employed to collect data for the developmental and evaluative stages of the project. See Appendix 1 and Paper V for further details.
The Swedkid Case Study

Case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of object to be studied. (Stake, 1994:236)

The overall study can be described as a single exploratory case study from which multiple embedded units for analysis or sub-studies are generated. The event of creating, launching and using an anti-racist website (Swedkid) aimed at students and teachers in Swedish schools, constitutes the overall bounding system of the case. This instance of educational resource development was chosen as a prism of opportunity for learning about ‘race’, ethnicity and experience of racism, and the role of ICT in supporting anti-racist work in the classroom (Stake, 1994; Yin, 2003). The case study embraces a number of sub-studies (Papers I-V and Appendix 1) which explore independently and in combination, how the website was developed and received, the Swedish national context, intercultural and antiracist work in education, racist experiences of young people, and ICT as part of anti-racist work in the classroom.

The studies are not presented chronologically, but rather in a form most suited to the unfolding of the argument of the thesis i.e. development and background, policy setting, overview of literature, interview study and evaluation (see Table 1).

Table 1: Elements of the Case Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case-Section</th>
<th>1 Web development</th>
<th>2 National policy context and reception of Swedkid</th>
<th>3 Interculturality and anti-racism in Swedish education</th>
<th>4 Experiences of racism</th>
<th>5 Mediation of anti-racist work in the classroom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>About</td>
<td>Background to 'Eurokid' project and description on website development</td>
<td>Specific to Swedkid: Situating the project in Swedish anti-racist policy context</td>
<td>Literature and Research overview: Background to intercultural and anti-racist education in Sweden</td>
<td>Perceptions of racism: Consideration of methodology (interview) plus used to inform content of the website</td>
<td>Evaluation of how the website works in classroom settings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of Sub-studies</td>
<td>'Eurokid': an innovative pedagogical approach to developing intercultural and anti-racist education on the Web (Paper I) Appendix 1: Developing the Swedkid website.</td>
<td>The web, anti-racism, education and the state in Sweden. Why here? Why now? (Paper II)</td>
<td>Discursive discrimination: A short history and overview of education (Paper III)</td>
<td>'Working harder to be the same': everyday racism among young men and women in Sweden (Paper IV)</td>
<td>Nobody and Everybody has the responsibility: responses to the Swedish anti-racist website (Paper V)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Stake (1995) uses the metaphor ‘palette of methods’ to characterize the case study. Hence, its strength lies in the ability to deal with a variety of evidence, documents, artefacts and observations, and also, quantitative as well as qualitative data (Yin, 2003; Hays, 2004). Furthermore, it allows for a more holistic perspective, in its understanding of the research object (the case) as a complex system where context (historical, political etc) is important for an understanding of what is observed (Patton, 1990). Thus, the purpose of a case study is ‘not to represent the world, but to represent the case, and … the utility of case research to practitioners and policymakers is in its extensions of experience’ (Stake, 1994:245). In focusing on a unique case and bounded system, it is recognised that the case study lacks the quantifiable power, for instance, of the statistical survey. The aim of the case study is to develop analytical rather than statistical generalisation (Yin, 2003). It is further argued that the case study offers the possibility of presenting a ‘naturalistic’ generalisation which, Stake (1995) argues, is arrived through the process of comparison by the reader of his or her own experiences to others (as perhaps vicarious experiences) within the case. A case study can, furthermore, draw on converging, multiple sources of evidence in the form of triangulation (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). This is exemplified in Swedkid, where a variety of measures were employed to collect data on an instance, e.g. project meeting notes, pre-tests, number of ‘hits’ and user tracking, press coverage, responses from teachers, formal interest from school bodies and education authorities, unsolicited emails, data from observations of young people using the site, questionnaires to classes using the site, and interviews with young people and their teachers. The general aims of a case study are summarised by Yin (2003) as follows:

- To explain presumed casual links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies
- To describe an intervention and the real life context in which it occurred
- To illustrate certain topics within an evaluation (again descriptive)
- To explore those situations in which the intervention is being evaluated.

Additionally, the case study is defined as an ‘inquiry’ into contemporary phenomena within its real-life context, particularly useful when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being asked about
contemporary events. MacDonald and Walker (1977) suggest that it is particularly useful when questions are directed at the experience of participants and transactions in the ‘learning milieu’, because it allows prospective users (i.e. of a programme) the possibility of drawing on their personal experiences and preferences (MacDonald & Walker, 1977:181).

The Swedkid case study can thus be seen as a study of an instance (in action) unfolding over a period of time (MacDonald & Walker, 1977); i.e. developing and using an web-based, anti-racist, educational resource. This instance was also guided by a certain agenda - the wish to challenge and intervene in the process of racialisation in Swedish society and culture. Therefore, the case may also be understood in terms of agency, with intentions and a history, and with certain activities and achievements to be accomplished (Abbot, 1992). Thus, Swedkid is not only a case of an instance, but also a case of an intervention.

The Swedkid case study may also be seen as permeated by intrinsic and as well as instrumental research interests. The intrinsic rationale is evident in that the case itself is of interest in its particularity and originality. The aim is to understand this particular case - the story of Swedkid. This intrinsic interest, furthermore, is associated with a ‘foreshadowed problem’ (Smith, 1978:331), indicated by increased reports of racist incidents in Sweden, governmental identification of schools as key agents, and reports suggesting that teachers feel insecure about how to work with these issues in their classrooms. Furthermore, the foreshadowed problem is interlaced with a discourse of idealism about new technologies, especially among politicians, who promote ICT as the means of fundamental transformation of Swedish education (see Papers II and III). The Swedkid case is thus additionally seen as able to provide an insight into a specific state of affairs or circumstances. Consequently the case study offers a possibility of facilitating the understanding of something else, for example, issues of ‘race’ and ethnicity in Sweden or how ICT may be used to support teachers’ work in the classroom (Stake, 1994).

Data analysis was carried out throughout the project, at several levels and to different extents; for example, following data-gathering during the development process and when trialling the
website, and to inform website content, as well as when seeking patterns in order to respond to key research questions. As Stake puts it: ‘There is no particular moment when data analysis begins’ (1995:71). The logic for the analysis was inductive, meaning that ‘categories, themes and patterns come from data’ and were not, therefore, constructed prior to data collection (Janesick, 1994:215). There was a continuing analysis, critique and re-interpretation, as suggested by Patton (1990), this critical and creative process is necessary in order to understand how data fit together, which regularities reoccur and what themes emerge. Through this discovery-oriented approach of the case study, the instance may be taken apart (by questions such as ‘what is this?’) and then put together in a more meaningful way (by questions such as ‘what does it mean?’), guided by different theories enabling exploration, understanding and illumination. Thus, a combination of theory and my own reading of material produced the themes in the Kappa as well as in Paper IV and V. Or as Denzin and Lincoln (1994) puts it: analysis is the construction of a researcher, trying to make sense of what can be learnt from the data.

**Ethics**

The research included interviews with young people for the purpose of exploring their experiences of racism, and in order to shape the construction of website content, as we have seen. Additionally, other forms of data collection were carried out in schools, in trialling and evaluating the website and its pedagogical use. Research participants received information about the project concerning, i.e. the voluntary nature of their involvement, research aims and methodology, proposed use of interview data on the website and dissemination of findings. Contact details (telephone, email) of the researchers were made available for those wishing to further discuss their participation in the project. Parents (or those having custody) were asked for consent in cases where participants were under the age of 15. Research participants were informed that information gained from the interviews and other forms of data collection would remain exclusive to the project, and thus available only to project personnel. Assurance was also given that information would be kept and presented in ways that guaranteed individual confidentiality.
3. Theoretical Perspectives

Three theoretical clusters have been particularly helpful to this thesis; globalisation, racism and ICT. The concept of *globalisation* is used, for example, to explore shifts towards increased inequality, nationalism and racism, adherence to new technology, relationship of global, national, local and individual events and experiences, and racism as located at meta as well as micro levels. Further, concepts of *everyday racism* are especially used in the study, to illuminate the individual level, seen more than as just part of structural and ideological nature of the social order, and as endemic and persistent. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and other theories provide a framework for understanding that different values - historical, political and ethnic – not only shape structures but influence lives and identities at the everyday level. Further more CRT contributes to understanding the case study and its outcomes, where, it is argued, the case shows the possibility of agency in intervening and possibly transforming discrimination and racism. CRT also illuminates the aim of giving voice and providing a counter-story. Discussion of identity, mainly drawn from May (1999), is used to explore an emergent theme of the study; the complexity of young people’s challenge to single ethnic identification. Finally, perspectives on *technology* offer insights into the approach to ICT adopted in the Swedkid project, and in what ways the Web might support future anti-racist strategies at classroom level.

**Globalisation**

The habitat for Swedkid is cyberspace; the global electronic net for information interchange. As such, the concept of globalisation has been important to the project. Generally, the term ‘global’ refers to trends toward worldwide rather than national or local economic and cultural settings. As Castells (2000) points out, however, globalisation encompasses a number of factors including the collapse of the old, post–World War II order, the loss of power of the nation state to the transnational corporation; and the use of communication technology to transact business (and process knowledge) across national and continental boundaries. Globalisation is seen by some as a new freedom but by others as the ‘new world disorder’ where ‘no one seems now to be in control’
Globalisation is thought to blur boundaries and, it is argued imposes one-for-all ideologies:

For everybody . . . ‘globalization’ is the intractable fate of the world, an irreversible process; it is also a process which affects us all in the same measure and in the same way. We are all being ‘globalized’—and being ‘globalized’ means much the same to all who ‘globalized’ are. (Bauman, 1998:vii).

However, as argued by Jansson (2004), there have been doubts expressed about the validity of the concept and whether globalisation is a meaningful term, except in terms of certain phenomena such as environmental and epidemic problems and diseases. The Internet, for instance, involves specific regions rather than the whole world. Moreover, globalisation is not equalising (Jansson, 2004), and in fact, the experience and impact of globalisation take different forms in different contexts. For this thesis, therefore, globalisation is seen as not outside of, or exclusionary to, nationhood, local events or individual identities. Rather globalisation insinuates itself in various ways at national and local levels, which in turn respond in specific situated ways.

Castells (2000) further argues that economic globalisation and the technological revolution are but two elements among many that are transforming consciousness, identity and being. He does not attempt to simplify what is clearly a complex picture but rather offers a bricolage (or map or collage) of the defining features of our times. These include, for example: economic globalisation and interdependence; reworking of the relationship between the economy, state and society; use of new technology to satisfy hitherto unachievable (including illicit and taboo) desires; tendency of social movements towards fragmentation; crisis of individual and collective; search for new identities and resurgence of older identities and fundamentalisms; resurgence of nationalism, racism and xenophobia; and social fragmentation and social exclusion (Castells, 2000).

Thus Castells points to the emergence simultaneously of the Network Society and worldwide shifts towards increased inequality, nationalism, racism and xenophobia. He notes that while offering
the promise of limitless opportunities, global networks also operate to exclude:

… global networks of instrumental exchanges selectively switch on and off individuals, groups, regions and even countries according to their relevance in fulfilling the goals processed in the network, in a relentless flow of strategic decisions. There follows a fundamental split between abstract, universal instrumentalism, and historically rooted, particularistic identities. *Our societies are increasingly structured around a bipolar opposition between the Net and the Self.* (Castells, 2000:3, Castells’ emphasis)

Thus, Castells’ work is important in this study because it offers both an understanding of the relationship between the Net and the Self, and a global picture which helps contextualise and illuminate the project and its outcomes. Castells further offers a space for human action and agency where Bauman (1998) sees little possibility for intervention.

**Racism, Sweden and Globalisation**

As a complement to Castells’ work, an analysis of the impact of globalisation at the level of the nation is provided by Pred (2000) who links global pressures to local situated practices in Sweden (see also Papers II and IV). During the 1990 he particularly identifies the intensification of cultural racism, proliferation of negative racial stereotypes and continuing spatial segregation of the ‘non-Swedish’. Global economic restructuring, Pred argues, has generated experiences which have lent themselves to cultural reworkings as distinctive expressions of racism – even in such previously enlightened and liberal countries as Sweden (the point of the title of Pred’s book). Pred captures the zeitgeist in his introduction:

[Writing] Even in Sweden has been anything but easy … I have borne the intense discomfort of bearing witness to an immense tragedy, of observing good intentions coming completely apart, of seeing what was once arguably the world’s most generous refugee policy, what was once a remarkably humane and altruistic response to cruelties committed abroad, become translated at home into the cruelties of pronounced housing segregation, extreme labour-market discrimination, almost total (de facto) social
apartheid, and frequently encountered bureaucratic paternalism. (Pred, 2000:xii)

‘Racisms’ are defined by Pred (2000:xiv) as ‘a constellation of relations, practices and discourses …, a constellation of becoming phenomena …’ and are seen as unavoidable in present-day Sweden. Like Castells and others, Pred argues that racism, although shaped and intensified by globalisation processes, is produced locally and involves ordinary people. Thus, he writes that it is:

… through participation in particular locally situated practices -
that individuals and groups become racialized
that migrants, refugees and minorities
have their racialization again and again reinforced,
regardless of the differences in their biographical background
or the diversity of their previous social experiences
and subjective positions. (Pred, 2000:18-19, original format)

Essed and Goldberg (2004) similarly suggest that ‘race’ and racism cannot be seen as located only within one local or national frame. Its existence anywhere is linked more or less directly to everywhere. It is acted out at meta as well as micro levels and between individuals, in events occurring during the ordinary day; for example, not being recognised or acknowledged in the street, nor receiving a smile. Sometimes, such acts can be explained away as rudeness, yet sometimes ‘race’ seems to play a part, as ‘small acts of racism’ or ‘like water dripping on a sandstone’ (Delgado & Stefancic, 2000:2). Such acts are shaped by conscious or unconscious racist assumptions, learnt mostly from cultural heritage, whether in USA, Sweden or elsewhere (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). These racist assumptions also, in many cases, influence public civic institutions, government, schools, churches, as well as private, personal and corporate lives (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

Concepts of Racism and Identity

If racism is acted out at meta levels, that is, shaped and intensified by global processes, it is also present at micro levels and produced locally, involving ordinary people. So, how can these actions, such as between individuals, be understood? The most common form of racism reported in the interview study (see Paper IV) is routine, more or less expected and part of everyday life. Thus, the concept
of ‘everyday racism’ provided by Essed (1991) was helpful as a means of illuminating what the interviewees were describing. Everyday racism is defined as involving repetitive, recurrent and familiar practices; ‘racism is racism’ but not all racism is everyday racism’ (Essed, 1991:3). It transcends structure and ideology, and is embedded in the culture and social order of everyday life. The everyday world is thus conceptualised by Essed as sub-structured by ‘race’, ethnicity, class and gender with ‘everyday racism’ integrated into daily situations (see Figure 1, Paper IV) which connect structural racism to routine situations. The focus on practices rather than individual attitudes, counters the view that racism is exclusively about ‘being a racist’. Essed argues that it is wrong to assume that all ‘Whites are agents of racism and all Blacks’ are the victims’ (Essed, 1991:43), but that everyday life should be a starting point for any analysis. In linking ideological dimensions of racism to individual attitudes, everyday racism becomes part of the expected, unquestioned, and normal.

Concepts of power and dominance were also important however, in particular when examining the racist incidents reported by the interviewees. Racism here may be seen not just as a matter of bias and prejudice, but influenced by power relations which create certain domains of conflict (Bhavnani, 2000; Pred, 2000; Essed, 1991). Three such domains are identified by Essed (1991): (1) norms and values, for instance in the presumption that dominant values are the correct values, (2) material and non-material sources, e.g. difficulties with housing, non-acknowledgement of qualifications, avoidance of social contact, ethnic minority individuals being regarded only as belonging to the majority when achieving outstanding (sporting) success; and (3) definitions of the social world, e.g. antiracists being accused of being biased against Whites. Thus, the dominant group is likely to contest claims that racism is present and pervasive in everyday life, and identify more with the perpetrators of racism than with people from ethnic minority backgrounds. This can result in accusations of oversensitivity and exaggeration of the problems of racism or become part of a denial of responsibility - ‘others probably didn’t mean it that way’, (Essed, 1991:7) with escape routes or utilisation of a ‘terminology of disappearance’ providing a foundation for (everyday) racism. Essed (1991) argues that denial of racism is present in many societies and educational systems, explained away by the perspective of ‘no problem here’ (Gaine, 1995). Not having a
problem ‘here’, largely the consequence of proportionally few ethnic minorities in a local population, is one of many (36) ‘conceptual dances’ of denial identified by Jones (1999:137-142). Interestingly, denial of racism is acknowledged as a key problem by a recent Swedish government investigation (SOU 2005:41).

Critical multiculturalism was another concept that was useful to the analysis due to its emphasis on linking theory to policy and practice (see Papers IV and V). However, while critical multiculturalism engages in the complexity of ethnic and cultural identity and how it is situated in wider frameworks of power etc. as well as promoting the importance of engaging in a critical dialogue and being open to controversial issues, it touches only briefly on the wider complexities of racism. Critical Race Theory became more preferred as offering a more comprehensive and in-depth perspective.

Briefly, Critical Race Theory (CRT) promotes a view of the world as shaped by historical, social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender values, which shape structures and have an influence on everyday lives and identity. The core notion of CRT is to explore with the aim of transforming ‘the relationship among race, racism, and power’ (Delgado and Stefancic, 2001:2) and thus, to be critical. As Essed and Goldberg similarly argue, theories about ‘race’ ‘cannot help but be, in a normative sense, critical’ (Essed & Goldberg 2004:4).

Critical Race Theory was introduced during the mid-1970s as a subspecialty within law in the USA, but has now expanded into the fields of Education, Cultural Studies, English, Sociology, Comparative Literature, Political Science, History, Anthropology and to countries such as Canada, Australia, UK, India, and Spain (Delgado & Stefancic 2001). Critical Race Theory entered Education through the work of Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995:60) who argue that there is a need for this perspective ‘to cast a new gaze on the persistent problems of racism in schooling’.

Some elements of CRT were particularly relevant to the Swedkid case study in terms of counter-story telling, acknowledgment of ‘race’ as socially constructed, the permeation of racism, and intersectionality.
Counter-storytelling aims to give voice to marginalized groups and challenge privileged discourses by questioning the validity of accepted worldviews or tacit agreements mediated by images, pictures, stories and scripts, which produce racial stereotypes, in particular from the majority. Stories are encourage which see the world from different perspectives. Drawing on shared experience of oppression, counter story-telling can also include integration of experiential knowledge, where the researcher integrates his/her own experience of racism as well as sexism (Ladson-Billings, 2003). Thus, ‘voice’ is particularly important (DeCuir & Dixson 2004; Delgado & Stefancic 2001). For example Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) assert that the ‘voice of people of colour is required for a complete analysis of the educational system’ (Ladson-Billings & Tate 1995:58). However, as Dixson and Rousseau (2005) point out, there is more than one voice and stories will differ between individuals. The use of personal stories and ‘other’ peoples’ stories are seen as particularly important for the field of education, and indeed, were used to provide an alternative view of the world for the Swedkid project.

Another argument of CRT suggests ‘race’ as socially constructed and the permeation of racism, building on the notion that though categorisation of human ‘races’ is currently seen as scientifically inaccurate, ‘race’ still continues to be understood in ‘biological’ ways. CRT suggests that ‘race’ and ‘races’ survive in the production of thought and relations, and that they are social constructions. ‘Not objective, inherent, or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather ‘races’ are categories that society invents, manipulates, or retires when convenient.’ (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001:7-8). CRT also acknowledges that racism is endemic, persistent and viewed as ‘ordinary’. It is embedded in political, economic and social structures, including education, as well as being part of everyday life. Consequently, one important strategy suggested for challenging racism and social injustice is to unmask the existence of racism in all its forms (Ladson-Billings, 2003), an aim also of the Swedkid project in the form of researching and making available experiences of racism among young people.

Intersectionality has recently become of much interest among researchers in Sweden (and elsewhere) as they have come to realise that factors shaping identity and experience are multiple rather than distinctive. For example Solorzano and Yosso (2001) argue that
‘race’ and racism intersect with other forms of subordination such as social class and gender in the formation of identity and experience. Thus, intersectionality becomes a useful concept for understanding this complex interplay. Intersectionality refers to how ‘race’, gender, class, nationality and sexual orientation interact with each other, and how their combination can play out in various settings. These factors generate intersectional individuals. As argued by de los Reyes and Mulinari (2005) an intersectional perspective asks questions about how power and inequality are interlaced with preconceptions about whiteness, masculinity, gender, heterosexuality and social class etc. through a process of constantly (re)creating new signifiers for the difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’, transformed into new social codes. This perspective can, for instance, usefully be applied to an analysis of the dialogue between two girls, Nasrin and Emma, on Swedkid, where Nasrin constructs her identity around gender and ethnicity. Nasrin argues against the supposition that as a Muslim girl, her friendships and relationships are more closely monitored by her parents. Furthermore, from the interview study (reported in Paper IV), there is evidence that young ethnic minority men, rather than women, are frequently associated with criminality.

Colour-blindness and multiculturalism are also concepts questioned by CRT. Colour blindness i.e. ‘the belief that one should treat all persons the same with no regard to their race’ might at first seem attractive but, in practice, fails to address the construction of people from ethnic minority backgrounds as the ‘other’ and the normalising of (majority) whiteness. (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It is argued that by insisting on the same treatment for all, only the most obvious forms of discrimination will be affected and leave the racism persisting in the everyday experiences unaffected. Thus pretending not to see colour of skin makes little sense unless colour is deemed as shameful (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005). Multiculturalism is also criticised for not focusing on the influence on those constituted as ‘the other’ in racist discourses (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).
Identity and ‘Othering’

At its core, identity can be understood as a ‘person’s understanding of who they are, of their fundamental defining characteristics as a human being’, and that recognition, absence of recognition or even misrecognition can play a part in the formation of identity (Taylor 1994:75). Critical multiculturalism’s interpretation of identity includes a recognition of ethnic, cultural and other social identities as ‘differing in salience among individuals and across given historical and social contexts and [explores] how these are situated in a wider framework of power’ (May 1999:33). Acknowledging both the limits of identity and hybridity between cultures, critical multiculturalism emphasises avoidance of stereotyped conceptions of culture, ethnicity or identity. Rather, stand-points are recognized and supported with regard to individual rights to define identity and experience. Choices however are not available to all individuals and groups, and in-built contradictions exist between a non-essentialist conception of culture and acknowledgement of group-based differences of power and status (May, 1999). As pointed out by Rattansi (1999), ethnicity, ‘race’ and racism are all terms permanently ‘in-between, caught in the impossibility of fixation and essentialization’ (Rattansi, 1999:79–80).

…our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others, and so a person or group of people can suffer real damage, real distortion, if the people or society around them mirror back to them a confining or demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves. Nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression, imprisoning someone in a false, distorted and reduced mode of being. (Taylor, 1994:75)

The notion of the ‘other’ and the process of ‘othering’ have also been noticeable features of the research. Within racist discourses, the ‘other’ and ‘othering’ can be seen as located in the intersection of identity and everyday racism. Viewing someone as the ‘other’, it is argued, is a fundamental part of the process of creating self-awareness and ideas of identity (Griffiths, 1999). At the same time, the process of differentiating oneself from the ‘other’ is shaped by biological, cultural, religious, linguistic or territorial boundaries, for example, when defining ethnic minorities and immigrants as not
one of ‘us’. When used as basis for legitimizing exclusion and/or subordination and/or exploitation of subordinated ethnic groups, the dialectic process between ‘self’ and ‘other’ becomes part of a racist discourse (van Dijk, 2004; Yuval-Davis, 1999). Two main forms of racist discourse involving the different ‘other’ are identified by van Dijk (2004), first, being about, and second, being directed at, the ethnically different ‘other’.

**Information and Communications Technologies (ICT): Technocratic, Reformist and Holistic**

What is the role of, and approach to, ICT taken in the Swedkid project? Aviram and Tami (2004) identify different technological approaches (administrative, curricular, didactic, organizational, systemic, cultural and ideological) and attitudes (agnostic, conservative, moderate, radical and extreme radical) which are sometimes overlapping. Building on these approaches and attitudes and their inherent suppositions about ICT and Education, Aviram and Tami (2004) identify three emerging paradigms or ‘clusters of perspectives’ which they entitle Technocrat, Reformist and Holistic (Aviram & Tami, 2004:27). The *Technocrat* paradigm omits consideration of the possibilities and risks inherent in ICT. Technocrats are (unconsciously) conservative, having an agnostic view on ICT, in the sense of not knowing or caring about its impact – technological development is their driving rationale. *Reformist* paradigms, on the other hand, see ICT as enabling new forms of teaching, with the associated buzzwords of ‘interdisciplinary’ and ‘collaborative learning’ (Aviram & Tami, 2004). Examples from Sweden include ICT seen by many (politicians) as the key to change the way schools and teachers work, and thus, as a means to ensure ‘higher quality’ teaching and learning (see Paper II). Similarly, in an investigation of the impact of information technology on Swedish schools over the last decade, Riis (2000) found a high level of confidence in the potential of ICT despite the gap between the expectations of what ICT can achieve educationally, and the reality of how it works in the classroom.

*Holistic* paradigms, are more centred on culture in their focus on social situations and impacts that ICT might have. They are also more ideological in the sense of emphasising viewpoints and values
that need to guide ICT in educational decision-making. For example, a holistic perspective on ICT stresses the importance of resisting the often utopian claims of web enthusiasts and taking into account critics as well as advocates of the educational value of web approaches. Thus while Street (1998) argues that we have entered a ‘new communicative order’ associated with new literacy practices and screen-based technologies; and Snyder (2002:3), that the conventional book and other paper-based forms have been joined by ‘written, oral and audiovisual modalities of communication...integrated into multimodal hypertext systems made accessible via the Internet and World Wide Web’. Cuban (2002), on the other hand, argues that there is no substantial evidence of increased achievement as result of using information technologies. A similar point is made by Hult et. Al. (2004), who assert that it is an error to assume that technologies automatically generate educational change. A critical perspective on technology (as well as on social inequalities) was taken by both the Eurokid and Swedkid projects, indicating that they can provide a working example of the holistic paradigm in practice.

ICT has provided education with a range of new tools but not necessarily contributed to a new pedagogy. New technology provides better access to information but not necessarily to knowledge, defined as information that has been interpreted, valued and situated (Gärdenfors, 2005). Computers, Gärdenfors argues, seldom contribute to the latter, for example, in providing understanding (the ‘aha’-reaction) as related to patterns of discovery, concrete as well as abstract. Thus, if understanding means discovering patterns, it is important to offer guidance also on how patterns may be recognised. Thus, in order to make sense of the theoretical, students need to be able to relate to the concrete and visual. In other words, theory needs a base of experience to be meaningful. However, as Gärdenfors (2005) also points out, providing experience within education is time-consuming, resource-demanding and sometimes even dangerous. Following his arguments, ICT is best understood as a tool for visualisation and simulation, able to provide a shortcut to experience of complex phenomena (and, in the case of Swedkid, a shortcut to [virtual] experiences of racism and exclusion). However, the user has also to comprehend the preconditions for what is being visualised. For instance, it is not enough for pilots to learn flying skills in a simulator, they also need theoretical reasoning (Gärdenfors, 2005).
This also applies to understanding issues of racism; it is not enough just to share the experience but also to develop theoretical understanding. New technology may thus be seen mainly as a tool for enhancing interaction between theory and (virtual) experience, in which the role of the computer is less important than the process. Furthermore, this process needs a theoretical grounding and also an instructor/coach/teacher who is able provide guidance and help with interpretation.

4. Findings and Discussion

As mentioned earlier, the Swedkid case was perceived as a prism of opportunity for learning more about racism, ‘race’ and ethnicity as well as of using ICT to support anti-racist work in classroom settings. I argue here, also, that the case study approach adopted, offers an insight into the condition of racism in Sweden, the complexity of young people's identity and the use of ICT in classroom settings, that has not been available elsewhere in curriculum development or research studies. The Swedkid case study also provides a ‘real’ context for a range of conceptual discussions and illuminates the combination of factors surrounding the web, racism and education in Sweden. It has also generated three key themes; on the existence of racism in Sweden, on identity as a complex phenomenon and on the Swedkid website as an anti-racist intervention. Here different levels e.g. global, European, national, local and individual, are identified as locations where the Swedkid project could operate in different ways. These three themes, moreover, illuminate the research questions posed at the beginning of the Kappa concerning how ‘race’ and ethnicity can be understood, the role of ICT in supporting anti-racist strategies in classroom settings, and the overall usefulness of the approaches and the methods used.

Theme 1: Racism in Sweden

The countries involved in the Eurokid project could all be described to some extent as ethnically diverse, but with different characteristics, preconditions and histories. During the 1980s, Spain transformed from a country of emigration into a country of immigration but has historically been a diverse country due to its
three community language groups; Catalan, Basque and Galician and their cultures. Britain can probably be described as the most established multicultural country in Europe with a developed awareness of racism and a history, though limited, of developing anti-racist strategies (see Paper I). Sweden has most recently come to see itself as ethnically and culturally diverse, though historically has also been ‘multicultural’ in the sense of having substantial proportions of the population with a foreign background as well as home-born national minorities.

Sweden has also an international reputation as a progressive, social democratic society and a model of social justice and equality (see Paper II). This picture has however been challenged with reports of accounts of racist attitudes and behaviour from Swedish citizens (See Papers II, III and IV). For example, a number of reports during the 1990s and post-2000 recount how students with a foreign background experience racism and discrimination both from students and teachers (See Paper III). This corresponds to Pred’s (2000) perception of intensification during the 1990s, of racism and negative racial stereotyping of the ‘non-Swedish’. This can be seen as an example of what Castells (2000) terms ‘features of our times’ (pp 1-3) which include resurgences of nationalism, racism and xenophobia. In Sweden, being labelled ‘non-typically Swedish’ can put individuals in the racist box of the ‘other’, constituting those who do not and cannot belong (Paper IV). Furthermore, the immediate response from extremist racist and nationalist organisations and individuals to the launch of Swedkid (see Paper V and Appendix 1) indicates the persistence of racism in Sweden, as suggested by CRT. The immediately hostile response of some can also be interpreted as expressions of one of the domains of conflict, identified by Essed (1991), concerning definitions of the social world.

Recognition of racism has been relatively recent within Swedish public and educational discourse (see Paper III and IV), even though racism has been a reality for individuals historically. The Swedkid case study thus coincided with, and benefited from, a rise in concern and awareness about racism as a presence in Sweden, expressed in policy documents for education and integration of ethnic minorities, reports of racist incidents and public statements and from politicians (outlined in Paper II). Meanwhile, debates on racism in its different forms, including everyday racism, have also
entered public debate. According to Pred (2000) the concept of everyday racism came into public discourse and ‘antiracist proclamation’ only in 1997 (Pred, 2000:83). The new face of racism in Sweden is hatred against Muslims (Integrationsverket, 2005a), parallel to ‘Islamophobia’ which has been noted in other countries (EUMC, 2003). Amina’s experience as reported in Paper IV, and the website dialogue between Emma and Nasrin take up this point. Amina’s account offers an example of the links between global and local phenomena and, in this case, how a young ethnic minority woman was forced, in the public space of a school corridor, to confront and challenge name-calling and misconceptions about Muslims post 9/11 (The attack on World Trade Centre in New York, US, 2001). Links between the global and local are also evident in the narrative concerning the offensive remarks made to Amina’s parents in a down-town café, about their potential role as terrorists. These incidents demonstrate that the interface between global, national and local is both fluid and interactive with local events intertwined with national and international events, as argued by Kaplan (2001).

Several alternative explanations are available for this recent public awakening to racism in Sweden (Paper II). Racism became a national concern when immigration patterns changed during the 1980s. This resulted in the greater visibility of racist and extremist right-wing political groups opposed to the rights of ‘new Swedes’ to become citizens (Lange, Lööw, Bruchfeld & Hedlund; SOU 2001:5). Racism in Sweden has also been associated with Nazism and Anti-Semitism in the 1930s and World War II period or as located in another time and place and the responsibility of others or as the non-rational response of disturbed individuals (Lindström, 2002; Sawyer, 2002). Sawyer (2002) sees this limited perception of racism as a discursive ‘strategy to protect the national story of Sweden and Swedes as moral, solidaristic, and antiracist’ (Sawyer, 2002:17). Pred (2000) also notes Sweden’s self image as the ‘champion of the elsewhere oppressed’ and the difficulties Swedes have in accepting that they are capable of racism (Pred, 2000:83). Significantly, recent research suggests that this self image is held by two thirds of Swedes who continue to believe that there is no racism in Sweden (Integrationsverket, 2005a).

Denial is another factor in Sweden, as in other countries (see for instance Essed, 1991). Gaine (1995) identifies ‘no problem here’ as
a perception commonly held where ethnic minorities are not particularly visible, while Jones (1999) suggests no problem ‘here’ as one of the many ‘conceptual dances’ of denial (Jones, 1999:137-142). Research in Sweden indicates a parallel picture (Lange & Hedlund, 1998; Parszyk, 1999; Norberg, 1999), and that denial is a common strategy to avoid confronting and recognising racism in the immediate vicinity (Integrationsverket 2002, 2005b; SOU 2005:41). From Paper IV, we can see one of the interviewees, Eric (Polish-Jewish), who says how difficult he finds it to confront racist jokes, due to, for example, the risk of not being taken seriously, or being told that ‘it is only a joke’. Challenging such discourses of denial was one reason for using interviews as a basis for the content of the Swedkid website (see Appendix 1) – to convey that this is really happening in Sweden. However, as evident in responses during the evaluation of the Swedkid website, some students continue to deny the negative effects of racism on Swedish society (Paper V).

As already mentioned, the development of Swedkid coincided with a move in Swedish integration and education policy-making towards an expressed awareness of the importance of acknowledging work against racism (see Paper II and III). During the 1950s, immigration policies had been interpreted as policies for ‘foreigners’ (Utlänningspolitik) with the prevailing aim of assimilation of newcomers, mainly labour-market immigrants. Later, during the 1970s, emphasis was placed on immigrants (Invandrarpolitik) and on cultural pluralism, while the 1990s, the political agenda was reworked towards integration, with the aim of including immigrants as well as ‘ethnic’ Swedes in the integration process, all sharing the same rights and responsibilities. By the beginning of 2000, however, a more overtly anti-racist position was adopted with, for instance, a national action plan against racism (Skr. 2000/01:59) and tougher laws against discrimination (Prop. 2005/06:38) was proposed. In 2005, an enquiry was initiated into power, integration and structural discrimination, and was yet another indication of the seriousness of government to target racism and investigate its mechanisms (Dir. 2004:54). Similarly, the inclusion of education in this investigation suggests a greater acknowledgement and awareness of the impact of racism and discrimination on education specifically, and also the importance of working against it where possible.
The same tendencies can be seen within educational policy-making. During the 1960s, the children of immigrants were referred to as a complication and dilemma (SOU 1966:55), while during the 1970s, language training for immigrant or ethnic minority students was seen as an increasingly important target area for educational policymakers (Prop.1975/76:118). By the early 1980s, interculturalism was introduced as an official interpretive perspective, while the first school policy document clearly acknowledging multiculturalism in education appeared in 1994 (SOU 1983:57; Hedin, 2000). At the end of the twentieth century, language issues remained important though concern about discrimination was more prominent, as was awareness of the importance of giving space to students and their perception of cultural identity (Integrationsverket, 2004; SOU 2004:50; Myndigheten för skolutveckling, 2003; 2004). The focus on challenging discrimination (racism and other forms) was further strengthened by a government bill in October 2005 to extend the law against discrimination to cover schools and education more widely (Prop. 2005/06:38).

The values-base of school policy also changed alongside the policy shifts as above (see also Paper III) - from expressions of solidarity at a distance as a global concern, to acknowledging issues of diversity and interculturalism within Sweden. In parallel, the focus shifted from mainly concern expressed at the international level to national and local solidarity and the promotion of tolerance (Hedin & Lahdenperä, 2000). Values (Värdegrund) have also gained a central position in school policy documents to such an extent that 1999 was termed the Year of Values. Schools are currently viewed by the state as key actors in delivering Swedish integration and carrying out work against racism (see again Paper III). There seems, however, to be a need for guidance on how this should be achieved (again see Papers III and V); hence, the development of the Swedkid website as an attempt to offer aspects of such guidance. As can be see from mapping of research on multicultural and anti-racist issues in education and in particular, teachers’ strategies against racism, it is clear that much more needs to be done (see Paper III)17. This is not to say that nothing is happening in Swedish schools. Rather, this work seems to be largely dependent on individual teachers’ priorities and skills (Paper III and V). Also, a number of international, national and local projects have contributed to an expanded information base on ethnic diversity, and anti-racist strategies in the classroom (also outlined in Paper...
III). However, project evaluations of Swedkid and other initiatives indicate problems with applying and integrating anti-racist strategies at the everyday level of schools (see evaluation, Paper V). Short term ‘fire-policing’ initiatives seem to have little or no impact compared with longer-term actions. However, over the last few years, guidelines have appeared concerning how schools can challenge discrimination, offering a range of methodological approaches though relatively few specifically on racism (Myndigheten för skolutveckling, 2003).

Thus, an uneven picture emerges of ‘race’, ethnicity and experiences of racism in Sweden generally, and among Swedish young people. There are reports of conscious and planned strategies to eliminate racism and discrimination in Sweden. There is evidence also of high ambitions and good intentions among policy-makers and teachers in terms of recognising the inequalities of schooling and countering racist, particularly from the late 1990s onwards when the dangers of racism and discrimination were increasingly recognised. On the other hand, research studies and government reports provide a continuing picture of hostility, difficulty, denial and insecurity within education and more generally in Sweden, in relation to these questions. Racism is present at micro as well as meta levels, reported as overt but also as ‘hidden’, ‘routine’ and ‘everyday’. Building on research undertaken for the Swedkid case study, the condition of racism in Sweden is situated within specific histories of immigration, integration policy, school policy, steering documents and expressions about values over different periods, as well as demographic preconditions, which in turn, influence the preconditions for work in schools, individuals’ identity and everyday experiences.

Theme 2: Identity as a Complex Phenomenon

In reflecting on what has been learnt from the case study, the complexity of identity emerged as an unanticipated theme. Within Swedkid, issues concerning identity have proliferated, associated with ethnic minority experience of racism and being labelled as ‘the other’ in public discourse. For example, notes from project meetings show that concepts of hybridity in terms of identity emerged early. Indeed, the complexities of identity were inherent in the core idea of using characterisation as the main Web approach
and in striving to avoid stereotyped representation. As recognised by May (1999), the dilemma of holding on to a non-essentialist conception of culture, and at the same time, acknowledging group-based differences (see Appendix 1). Thus, the aim was to emphasis the rights of individuals to define their own identity, recognise that identities differ among individuals and historical and social contexts, and avoid stereotyped, essentialist conceptions of identity (May, 1999). Also, ideas on recognition, absence of recognition or misrecognition as part of shaping identity were important to the overall project (Taylor, 1994). However, while a clear aim was to avoid gender and other forms of stereotyping, ethnicity remained the dominant aspect of identity (see Appendix 1).

Creating characters from interview data was one way of achieving accuracy in representing/presenting individual perceptions of identity, recognize ethnic minority identity and avoid misrecognition (Taylor, 1994; May, 1999). The decision taken in the Eurokid project not to share characters between the different national websites and the decision by the Swedkid team not to emphasise typicality visually or textually, e.g. the ‘typical’ Sami or Muslim young person, and not to draw on ‘traditional’ cultural attributes – when not mentioned by the interviewees (see Appendix 1) – were other attempts at avoiding stereotyped essentialist conceptions of minority ethnic identity. The resolve to redraw some characters can also be seen as an example of how graphic portrayals of identity need to be sensitive to specific historical and cultural contexts (see Appendix 1). The experience of Maria portrayed on the Swedkid website offers the possibility of debating such issues, for example, how identity is shaped by history, place and social context.

As discussed in Paper IV, free choice of identity is not available to individuals and groups constrained by the categories available at a certain time or place. For example, the Sami character Ella argues that she can make the choice ‘in the blink of an eye’ on whether or not to reveal her ethnicity, generally on the basis of whether she feels safe. While an interviewee, Stefan (born in and adopted from Thailand), maintains that he tries to disassociate himself from those he identifies as ‘immigrants’ in order to avoid being linked to a group with such little power. These strategies are examples of what Pred (2000) describes as competent navigation among ‘islands of possibilities’ (Pred, 2000:229).
Concepts of multiple ethnic identity or ‘hybridity’ (May, 1999) are also explored by the Swedkid website, taking the question ‘where do you come from?’ as a starting point, and encouraging the user to reflect on the possibility of belonging to several ethnic identities simultaneously, and what it means to be ‘truly’ Swedish.

The Swedkid evaluation indicated that interacting with and sharing identities was an attractive feature of the website for young people (see Paper V). Users seemed to enjoy the possibility of engaging with the characters as well as thinking through their own identity through use of the backpack (digital portfolio) and forum. For example, by referring to the characters as though they were real, users seemed to be able to empathise both with the characters and the content. Building on the notion that the relationship between self and other is essential to creating self-awareness and ideas of identity (Griffiths, 1999), the relationship between the users and the ‘virtual others’ (the characters) can be seen as part of an expanding self-awareness of self and ideas of identity, expressed for instance in comments from users explaining that they now understands that it is possible to ‘come from Sweden’ even if ‘you look like an immigrant’ and that certain jokes are not OK (Paper V).

Thus, we can see a conscious playing with identity, an expressed awareness about the rules of the game of ‘doing’ identity, and an understanding of identity as situated, historically, culturally and in specific settings. Swedkid’s youthful website users and interviewees, it seems, are clearly aware of and able to work with what Castells calls the crisis of individual and collective identity, in particular social, cultural, religious and ethnic identities and the search for new identities (Castells, 2000). However fluidity of identity is also clearly limited, and not available to all, but rather, constrained by categories available at certain times or/and places and during certain circumstances. Unfortunately, the formation of identity as a process involving viewing someone as ‘the other’ (Griffiths, 1999) can be transferred into a racist discourse and as such, used as a basis for legitimizing exclusion (evident for instance in Paper IV). But from responses to the website we can also see that communication with other identities (the characters) can provide a possibility of intervention in stereotyped preconceptions and to an expansion of ideas of identity.
For the project, the Web provided the possibility for the exposure and dissemination of individual, local and personal experiences as an entry into more general debates on racism, starting with individual experience and then, through the Internet, reaching out to the global (Castells, 2001). Also, as the website began to disseminate locally-situated stories of racism, a counter-story of Sweden was created at the level of the global arena; not only as egalitarian and united (solidariskt), but as a nation that is seriously concerned with actively intervening in and eliminating inequalities and discrimination where they occur.

Theme 3: The Swedkid Website as an Anti-racist Intervention

The Swedkid project aimed to intervene in different ways at a number of levels; global, European, national, local and individual. As we have seen, the website was developed in collaboration with other European countries, and its aims and outcomes discussed and disseminated at a range of national and European conferences and meetings. The website was also recognised nationally and at the European level through the award and short-listing for various prizes. As mentioned earlier, it was a project that glittered. Significantly, the Swedkid website attracted a higher level of interest, support and publicity than the other countries involved in the Eurokid project (see Paper II). It is suggested that the Swedkid project was appreciated for both symbolic and pragmatic reasons. In an era of globalisation, it seemed to address national concerns of succeeding against global competition and of maintaining Sweden’s image as a united nation, as well as meeting the pragmatic need to achieve a stable society at a time of decentralisation and fragmentation (see Paper II). The support of the Swedkid website may also be interpreted, as suggested in Paper II, as recognition of a wider dilemma facing Sweden, as one of the most prosperous networked societies internationally, which nevertheless continues to segregate and exclude many of its citizens.

While collaboration at the European level was important for shaping Swedkid’s early ideas and website structure, the most significant work in the development process took place at the local level, particularly regarding of research of content and graphics connected to the website (see Appendix 1). In seeking to
understand the influence of the local level, resistances as well as positive factors are evident and inherent in the dualities of introducing anti-racism in combination with ICT as well as in seeking both to engage and challenge users (Paper V). The importance of the individual is also identified, by focusing on and giving voice to, individual experiences of racism, and in working with individual identity for the website characterisations.

It also seemed possible that the website was able to encourage discussion of complex issues in different, alternative ways. Thus, the computer as a medium in the classroom was able to provide a ‘free ride’ into greater awareness of anti-racist issues among young people. Building on the evaluation (see Paper V) and arguments of Gärdenfors (2005) the strength of using ICT and in this case, the Swedkid website, seems to lie in the possibility for visualisation, and to some extent simulation (of experiences) as a shortcut to experiences of more complex phenomena. But, on the other hand, the role of the computer is minimal in terms of the theoretical reasoning needed to interpret complex phenomena. Here the teacher’s role is more important in guidance and interpretation (Gärdenfors, 2005). Students’ use of Swedkid and their subsequent responses suggest that they would not have gained the same benefits, had they not been able to interact and ask questions of a knowledgeable teacher.

While students were generally positive towards using the website, evident in comments like ‘can’t we work with Swedkid again?’ for teachers, it was less of a ‘free-ride’ and more of a difficulty and thus much more dependent on their own skills and interests (Halloway & Valentine, 2003; Cuban, 2002). Lack of access to networked computers and risk of technical failure were obstacles cited. Parallel to this, though working with values was mentioned as important by teachers, individual skills and prioritisation was also important to the realisation of anti-racist strategies in the classroom. As mentioned earlier, this work seemed surrounded with insecurity (see Papers III and V).

The computer has symbolic value and commands high levels of expectation about its ability to transform schools and maintain Sweden as a highly-developed and networked Information Society. This perspective is technocrat in relation to ICT and education, according to Aviram and Tami (2004). The development of the
website coincided with the largest state investment ever in the professional training of teachers in ICT (the ITiS project), financially as well as in the numbers of teachers involved (see Paper II). A recent government proposition entitled *From IT-policy for society to a policy for an IT-society* (Prop. 2004/05:175) suggests that information technology remains important to the political agenda.

> “Through the new technology people, countries and markets are brought closer together. It is necessary to meet the challenges that today's global society brings … Sweden shall be a sustainable information society. (Statement by Messing, Minister for Communications and Regional Policy, 2005).

High expectations for the Eurokid websites were also expressed by all team members. However, the approach to the website development (technology) was holistic rather than technocrat or reformist (Aviram & Tami, 2004) in that it was realised that the websites could not offer utopian solutions, but were rather a means of encouraging meaningful social action and intervention (See for instance Paper I and Appendix 1). While teachers were undoubtedly important to the Eurokid websites, emphasis was placed more on how to make the websites attractive to young people. Teachers’ involvement was to some extent, taken for granted. As argued by Weiner (2005, see also Paper V), teachers’ insecurity towards computers at a time of heightened work-intensification should have been taken more seriously. This might have included seeking teacher involvement in early discussions about website design and content, to the same extent as students and people from ethnic minority backgrounds. One key outcome of the entire study, therefore is the central role of teachers in promoting anti-racist work in schools, which is also true for other subjects in school.

This thesis shows that ICT can be successfully used in supporting anti-racist work in classroom settings. However, the core content of Swedkid plus the utilisation of ICT, created a particular dynamic. For the project team in Sweden, the combination of the Web, racism, education and research was mainly a potent combination. The website was positively received and supported at the national level, as an example of a new communicative order (Street, 1998) in pioneering the use of the Internet to teach about racism and values. It had a high symbolic value but was also seen as a pragmatic means for meeting social needs at a high point of globalisation. At the
same time, Swedkid’s message disturbed and drew hostility from racist and extremist organisations. At local and individual levels and in the classroom, the website proved attractive and popular with young people, the main target group, who were mainly positive both to message and design. From the teachers’ point of view, however, both the medium and the subject were surrounded by anxiety and insecurity, as in other countries. The advantages of using ICT for Swedkid lay in the possibility of visualisation and simulation, hence, providing virtual experience of complex phenomena. Thus the website worked both as a short cut and springboard into informed rather than common-sense or everyday discourses involving racism and anti-racism, with virtuality forming a sound base for classroom discussion led by the teacher. The website was successful in illuminating and challenging discriminatory practices and behaviours as well as a successful intervention at European, national, local and individual levels. Overall, studies presented in this thesis illustrate how a combination of ICT and anti-racism can offer opportunities for challenging commonsense views of racism and ethnicity, provide counter-stories as evidence that racism exists, and thus offer alternative perceptions and viewpoints on this topic in education and elsewhere.

Reflections on the Overall Research

In reflecting on the research and developments processes of Swedkid, the impression is of the centrality of various dualities; first, in the symbiotic relation between development and research in the Swedkid project, and second, in the two main foci - anti-racism in education and ICT - a combination which proved potent as well as offering some difficulties. A further duality can be seen in the role of the website, in seeking both to challenge and attract, or engage and disrupt, commonsense views of racism and ethnicity; and also in the complexity of identity represented by ‘us and them’, and how ‘othering’ is part of shaping identity and racist discourses. Duality is also present in the research approach adopted; involving both the process of development (of the website) and researching that process, likewise, in the main researcher being member of the ethnic majority group researching ethnic minority experience and perspectives. These dualities offer complexity and difficulty, but also richness and depth.
It was also important that the research design allowed a focus both on the development of an educational resource and the use of that instance as a learning opportunity. Consequently, identification of a case study with intrinsic and instrumental foci allowed a research interest to be developed in the case itself as well as in the use of the case as an instrument for understanding something else. As has been suggested, the case study design provided a framework for approaching the event of creating and using an anti-racist educational resource on the Web in Sweden at a particular time and in particular circumstances, as something unique, with an agency, a history, a certain agenda and within a particular context. The case study was thus useful, but also to some extent problematic. The case study approach is highly dependent on the individual researcher, and as a result, it also becomes a subjective offering among a selection of ‘true’ constructions of the findings. ‘There are no ways of perfectly replicating the researcher’s analytical thought processes’ (Patton, 1990:372). Also, its aim is of exploring, illuminating and understanding rather than making statistic generalizations, testing hypotheses and predicting the future, may also be seen as somewhat limited. As a discovery-oriented research approach, it allows for an openness to whatever patterns emerge, yet at the same time, it lacks predetermined constraints on outcomes, and thus might be seen as too labour-intensive, and data-complex given the non-generalisability of its outcomes. Therefore, the demands on the researcher to find the essence or unifying principles of the case can be particularly demanding. In the end, what is illuminated is something about this particular case, not necessarily about the rest of the world, interpreted according to certain theories, and by an individual researcher.

The case study contained a range of different sub-studies and diversions and several theories were chosen to illuminate the overall analysis. Thus, as the presentations and written articles and papers emerged, the theoretical framework also developed and changed - which becomes more visible and problematic when the thesis is in the form of a collection of papers rather than a monograph, where more adjustments and revisions are possible. For this thesis, concepts of globalisation were used to understand how local events become intertwined with national and international developments and also to explore the hyperbolic power of new technology. However, ideas of globalisation were not as helpful in illuminating the experiences of racism of individuals, where theories on everyday
racism, domains of conflict, the ‘other’ in racist discourses and denial were preferred (Essed, Bhavanani, Gain, Pred, Sawyer, Molina and de los Reyes and van Dijk). Critical multiculturalism (May, 1999) was seen as helpful in the interview study, research overview and evaluation study, principally because it allows the combining of multiculturalism and anti-racism. Critical multiculturalism also proved useful in analyses of culture and identity, in acknowledging both the limits and hybridity of identity and culture and how they differ among individuals, depending on historical contexts and frameworks of power (May, 1999). Nevertheless, Critical Race Theory was at the end of this study, most preferred as a more comprehensive and in-depth perspective which is present in the final study to be included in the thesis (Paper III), and is also incorporated into this Kappa. The overview of Aviram and Tami (2004) of different perspectives on ICT within education was particularly useful for gaining an insight into the ICT approach adopted by the Swedkid and Eurokid projects; furthermore, ideas from Gärdnforfs (2005) helped to illuminate the impact that Swedkid and other such initiatives could have in the classroom.

Role of the Researcher

One of the main concerns of the study has been my multiple positioning; as developer of content and design of the website, academic researcher, evaluator and doctoral student. The role of researcher offered some anxiety, particularly important since ‘the researcher is the instrument’ particularly in case study and other qualitative data inquiry (Patton, 1990:14). There is thus a necessary relationship between the researcher and what is studied, shaped by situational constraints (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). A critical research perspective encourages the process of self-reflection and recognition of power relations as well as the deconstruction of cultural taken-for-grantedness (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000). Similarly, Fine (1994) suggests that researchers should ‘work the hyphen’, that is ‘probe how we are in relation with the context we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations’ (Fine, 1994:72).

Considering the above, it is clear that I could not be a neutral observer. Rather I chose to adopt an evaluative, critical and analytical role. Accordingly, what needed to be considered was my own ethnicity and gender – as a so-called ‘typical’ Swedish woman,
with two Swedish-born parents and few connections (as far as I know) to a National Minority. I was also aware of appearance and my embodiment of the attributes associated with the Swedish stereotype – blond hair, blue eyes etc. As such, I was compelled to consider to what extent this embodiment and ethnicity impacted on the data gathered. As a member of the dominant group, but also wanting to confront racism, I aimed to challenge the conscious and unconscious sense of group power and group consensus, evident in questions from others about what I was really doing in this ‘messy area’? This parallels Essed's observation that ‘group power exists as long as the group stays together against the ‘others” (Essed 1991:41). My aim was to disrupt this dominant group power but I also needed to be aware that my (perceived) ethnicity was likely to influence what interviewees, students and teachers allowed themselves to say.

As evaluator of Swedkid I needed to be aware that my involvement in the development of the website was likely to steer my interpretation of responses to the more positive. Also, knowledge that I was responsible for the anti-racist message on the website was likely to act as a filter of in relation to any responses – this was something I recognised also in more informal situations, outside my work as researcher. In terms of any analysis, I was aware of the risk of presenting a victory narrative, and the necessity of seeking some sort of distance between myself and the project. What I have taken from the project is that listening to the interviewees made a deep impact on me, and my view as an ‘ethnic’ Swede.
Final Comments
The Swedkid website is still active and has got 28,530 hits between October 2002 and January 2005, although it is difficult to know how it is used and to what extent. One major interest is whether it is being used in a structured and planned way in schools.
What has been learnt? This can be summarised as follows:
- The Swedkid website illuminates and challenges commonsense views of racism and ethnicity in Sweden, and there is evidence of success in its role as an intervention at European, national, local and individual levels.
- The Swedkid case study explored and provided information, in particular, about the condition of racism in Sweden, the formation of identity and ethnicity and the use of ICT in supporting anti-racist work in classroom settings.
- The research undertaken for Swedkid has led to greater understanding about the expectations of ICT generally, and its possibilities to support anti-racist work in the classroom. It has also illuminated the complexity of identity and shown how knowledge transfer occurs, between locally-situated individuals and global, European, national, local levels. The support of Swedkid within Sweden may be interpreted as recognition of a wider dilemma facing Sweden, and the need to eliminate racism at every level in Swedish society.
- The theoretical insights gained from the project indicate that it is not sufficient to focus just on multiculturalism and ‘how other people do things’. We need rather to explore what happens in the interface between us and them and how the ‘other’ is created.
- Methodological gains from the project suggest that while no methodology (or method) is without problems, the case study approach used was largely appropriate, in particular, in shaping the analysis.
Furthermore, the Swedkid and Eurokid projects also provide a good example of international, national and local collaboration, and the importance of exchanging ideas and strategies. While the project work was mainly collaborative, this thesis is the work of an individual. Collaboration in the project and in co-writing articles and papers, however, was extraordinarily beneficial to my academic development, and has offered an important model (and experiences) of how knowledge can be developed in a dialogue between researchers, students, and teachers as well as in the practice of collaboration itself.
5. Swedish Summary

Denna avhandling tar sin utgångspunkt i det svenska forsknings- och utvecklingsprojektet Swedkid som också var en del i det europeiska projektet Eurokid. Inom projektet Swedkid utvecklades en webbplats (www.swedkid.nu) som behandlar frågor om rasism och främlingsfientlighet bland unga människor i Sverige. Webbplatsen riktar sig främst till elever och lärare. En fallstudieansats har använts för det vetenskapliga arbetet i avhandlingen. Swedkid projektet betraktades som ett fall av läromedelsutveckling och nyttjades som en möjlighet och utgångspunkt för att undersöka olika aspekter av ”ras”, etnicitet och erfarenheter av rasism, samt hur informations- och kommunikationsteknik (IKT) kan vara en del i klassrumsmaterialet. Fallstudien omfattar ett antal delstudier (Artiklarna I-V samt Appendix 1). Dessa delstudier behandlar enskilt och sammantaget hur webbplatsen utvecklades och togs emot, den svenska kontexten för projektet, interkulturella och antirasistiska frågor inom utbildning, erfarenheter av rasism bland unga människor samt hur IKT kan vara ett stöd i klassrummet då frågor om rasism behandlas. Tre övergripande forskningsfrågor ställs i avhandlingen:

1. Hur kan ”ras”, etnicitet och erfarenheter av rasism i Sverige och i synnerhet i skolan och bland unga människor förstås?
2. Hur kan IKT vara ett stöd för att arbeta med antirasistiska frågor i klassrummet?
3. Hur användbara var de angreppssätt och metoder som användes i projektet?

Studiens teoretiska ramverk inkluderar områden som relaterar till globalisering, rasism och IKT. De tre teman som framträder i studiens resultat rör förekomsten av rasism i Sverige, unga människors komplexa erfarenhet och förhållande till identitet samt Swedkid som en antirasistisk intervention. Studien visar en delad bild av såväl erfarenheter som strategier mot rasism. Å ena sidan omges arbetet med att motverka rasism av höga ambitioner och goda intentioner, å andra sidan, visar studiens översikt av rapporter och forskning att området omges av svårigheter och osäkerhet samt att erfarenheter av rasism fortsätter att vara en del av unga människors liv och skolans vardag. I studien framträder också komplexa aspekter av identitet och kunskapsöverföring mellan lokalt situerade individer och globala, europeiska, nationella och
lokala nivåer. Studien visar också att Swedkid har belyst och utmanat aspekter av diskriminering, att projektet fungerade som en intervention på såväl europeisk, nationell, lokal som individuell nivå och att IKT kan utgöra ett stöd i arbetet med antirasistiska frågor i klassrummet. I studien framträder också resultat som visar att ämnesområdena i fokus för Swedkid, rasism och IKT, skapade en speciell dynamik. Swedkid erhöll positiv uppmärksamhet både lokalt, nationellt och internationellt i form av exempelvis ett Europeiskt pris för interkulturell undervisning, kombinationen av IKT och rasism framhölls som ett exempel på nyskapande. Samtidigt möttes webbplatsen, och dess budskap om alla människors lika värde, ett visst mått av fientlighet från individer och rasistiska organisationer. Vidare visar studien att webbplatsen blev väl mottagen av elever som generellt var positivt inställda till dess design och innehåll samtidigt som det från lärarhåll uttrycktes en viss osäkerhet både gentemot ämnet i sig och gentemot användningen av datorer. Resultaten indikerar att fördelarna med att använda IKT ligger i möjligheterna till visualisering och att därigenom kunna skapa förutsättningar för virtuella erfarenheter av ett komplext fenomen. Tillsammans med en vägledande lärare kan webbplatsen Swedkid fungera som en genväg till synliggörande av olika aspekter av rasism och utgöra en värdefull utgångspunkt för vidare diskussioner och kunskapsutveckling. Sammantaget visar studierna i denna avhandling hur kombinationen av IKT och antirasism kan erbjuda möjligheter till att utmana allmänna och för givet tagna föreställningar om ”ras”, etnicitet och rasism, tillhandahålla motberättelser som exempel på förekomsten av rasism, och således erbjuda alternativa uppfattningar om och synpunkter på detta ämne, såväl i som utanför skolan.
References


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Endnotes

1 For an overview of the concept ‘race’ see this Kappa in section 3 and in Paper III. Brackets are used to denote the social constructive understanding of the concept. See also Mulini & Neergard (2004).
2 For an overview of concepts of racism see for instance this Kappa and Paper IV p. 321.
3 Paregos, Helena Johansson (overall illustrations), Anders Öhlund, Niklas Forslund, Magnus Nyberg, Joakim Lindström, Anna Arvidsson, David Marklund, Oscar Kylberg, Erika Sundström.
5 The Swedkid team was composed of a project leader (Gaby Weiner), researcher and doctoral student (Camilla Hälgren) and administrators (at different times; Lars Björnerbäck, Maria Lindh, Eva Linerud, Ove Schedin, and Anders Westberg). However, other people became involved over the duration of the project, for example, Aino Dahl who helped translate the website into English.
6 Staff from IML involved in the project included Bengt-Erik Johansson, Orjan Johansson, Johan Forsman and Mikael Karlsson. In 2003 the website was incorporated into Centre for Values in Education (Värdegrundscentrum) with Gun-Marie Frånberg as Director of the Centre (based at the Faculty of Teacher Education, Umeå University).
7 From Spain; Servando Pérez Domínguez and Joana Salazar Nougera, Britain; Pam Carroll, Chris Gaine and Melanie Stevens, Sweden; Gaby Weiner and Camilla Hälgren and from Italy; Francesca Gobbo, however only involved initially.
8 See press release at: http://www.info.umu.se/Nyheter/Pressmeddelande.aspx?id=608
9 See press release at: http://www.info.umu.se/Nyheter/Pressmeddelande.aspx?id=1207
10 See press release at: http://www.info.umu.se/Nyheter/Pressmeddelande.aspx?id=1394
11 The survey Överallt och ingenstans: Mångkulturella och antirasistiska frågor i Svensk skola; en kunskapsöversikt was co-authored with Lena Granstedt and Gaby Weiner and aimed at mapping and examining multicultural and antiracist issues in the ethnically and culturally diverse Swedish classroom. It was part of the project Mapping and disseminating research on multicultural and antiracist issues for ethnically diverse classrooms with Gaby Weiner as project leader. The project consisted of two parts, a national conference that was held in March 2003, Sharp situations in everyday life at school and six months work with the survey.
12 With Lena Granstedt, Aino Dahl and Gaby Weiner.
13 Because of limits of time and resources, areas such as mother tongue and home language provision, nursery school, adult education, and teaching materials, resources and aids were not included.
14 Parents (or those having custody) were also informed and their permission requested (see information letter 20040203, Appendix 4)
15 Essed uses capital letters when writing ‘White’ and ‘Black’.
16 Sweden has historically been a multicultural society and is a country which is characterised by immigration as well as emigration. People from almost the whole world (203 nations) are represented in today’s Sweden. It is ‘a fact that Sweden now is a country with ethnic and cultural diversity’ (Skr. 2001/02:129 p 118). It is
not only ethnical and cultural diversity but also religious diversity which has resulted in a turn of the secularisation for the first time since 1960s (Skr 2001/02:129). For demographic overview see for instance Paper IV.

17 The Ministry of Justice reports in their knowledge and research overview that research on racism and discrimination generally has not been carried out until the 1980s and that this kind of research has been of low priority in Sweden (Ju 2003:09).