

Variety in Lockdown Teaching



Anna Bokedal, a.bokedal@abdn.ac.uk, Lecturer (Scholarship) in Swedish, University of Aberdeen

Without the activities and buzz in class-room teaching, lockdown learning can be quite monotonous. Here are some ideas which we used in Swedish language this year in order to create variation.

CULTURE We couldn't go there, but each week Swedish music, short videos with glimpses from Swedish culture and perhaps a link to a Swedish news article were included on the MyAberdeen course site, such as a video on the importance of week numbers in Sweden (in English) <https://youtu.be/DyAgZDIWYaw>

VOCABULARY Students wrote vocabulary words using everyday items/foods and shared a photo, e.g. "sås" = sauce, written in sauce (see picture below).

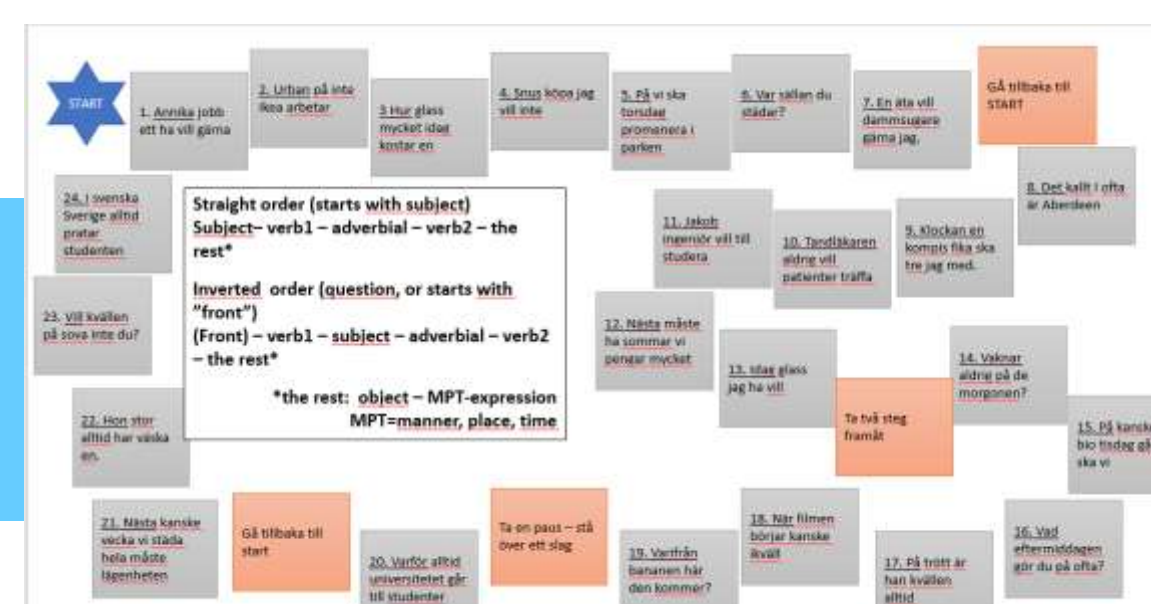
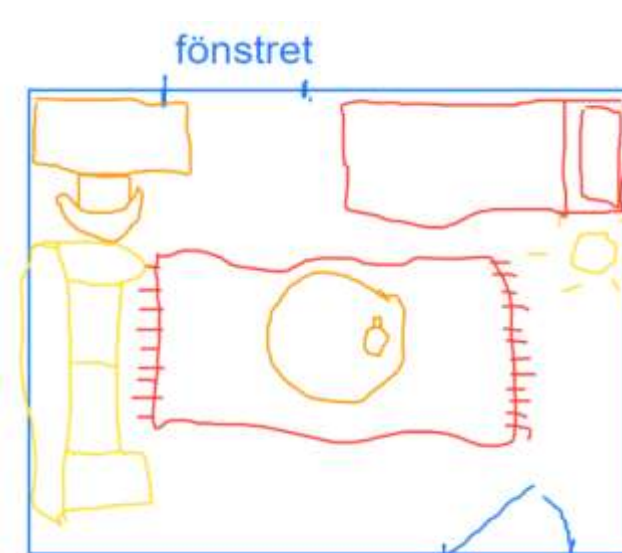
One student described their room, using prepositions and vocabulary for furniture. The other student drew it on the whiteboard (or typed text in boxes; see picture below).

Each student was assigned a set of words and prepared and demonstrated actions for each word, for everyone to repeat for learning (like charades, but with the answer given).

READING WEEK Some (optional) non-reading activities were suggested, such as joining [Swedish TV work-out sessions](#), or cooking with a [Swedish recipe](#), with meatballs, a fish dish, vegan soup and rye flake cookies highlighted.

SINGING AND RHYMING Singing and [reading rhymes](#) was still possible in full cohort – with mics off. Students were also given the challenge of [singing a round](#) with themselves and the Panopto at home, almost as if they were actually not alone.

GUESTS from Sweden were invited to talk with us, and were interviewed for homework.



Images: a creative word, a whiteboard "room", and a word order game
*Correct answer: Iceland (it is per capita).

WRITING Students were given links to shared documents (Word online) in the chat and then worked together to write a text in the document numbered the same as their breakout group, while the tutor could easily monitor progress in all documents.

GRAMMAR Using superlatives in Swedish, students prepared MCQs, which were collated in a Kahoot quiz and played in class. For instance, which country has the largest number of Nobel Prize winners per capita: Britain, Russia, Norway or Iceland?*

BOARD-GAMES IN BLACKBOARD

Play a game for short discussions, content questions or drilling exercises.

- Share the board as a pdf to the breakout group (such as the word order game below).
- Each student clicks on the "T" tool to type their name on the board, then clicks the arrow tool, then clicks their name and enlargens it in order to be able to drag it around on the board as their marker.
- Take turns to use a [digital dice](#), move on the board and answer the questions.
- Correct answers in a document on the course website, for double-checking.

POLLS, of course. Learning vocabulary for clothing, my AFTERNOON class was asked if they were wearing pyjama bottoms right then – and 75% of them did!

DISCLAIMER Some of these activities are best conducted on a laptop/computer. Students should not be forced to turn on their camera or do things they are uncomfortable with.

EVALUATION

- Uptake by students varied.
- Everything takes a lot of time to do online.
- Without reference to a specific activity, one student wrote on their SCEF: "Teaching a language class fully online is difficult, so I was rather impressed by how included I felt in discussions and how participatory tutorials were."