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på Vestlandet

MASTER'S THESIS

A study on how “Other” in English-speaking countries is presented in the Norwegian school system

En studie om hvordan de «Andre» i engelskspråklige land blir presentert i det norske skolesystemet

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I confirm that the work is self-prepared and that references/source references to all sources used in the work are provided, cf. Regulation relating to academic studies and examinations at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences (HVL), § 12-1.

Abstract

This thesis explores how the Norwegian school system discusses cultures in their curricula and how a selection of teacher's guides for year five presents the "Other" as a response. During a student exchange semester in South Africa, I learned that the country and its cultures differ from what I was taught in school. I recognize a bias in Norwegian schools regarding the "Other". This thesis aims to uncover what the Norwegian school system teaches learners about "Other" cultures through teaching material.

The teaching material used in my thesis is teacher's guides from both LK06 and LK20. These teacher's guides are *Explore 5* (Edwards et al., 2015; 2020), *Link 5* (Mezzetti et al., 2021), *Stairs 5* (Solberg & Unnerud, 2006), and *Engelsk 5* (Solberg & Unnerud, 2020). To investigate this topic, I will perform critical discourse analyses of the mentioning of "Other" in the teacher's guides and discuss these findings in light of relevant theories and the curricula's aims for the EFL subject.

Based on my research, I argue that teachers should add authentic sources to their lessons about "Other" cultures. For the learners to develop their intercultural competence, they need exposure to the "Other". It is not sufficient to only learn about the Anglo-American culture. However, the government and the authors of teaching and learning materials are responsible for providing the teachers with quality material and guidance that can lead the teachers in the right direction. This cannot solely be the teacher's responsibility because the responsibility is too big for just the teachers. It must be shared to give the learners the best possible education.

Sammendrag

Denne oppgaven utforsker hvordan det norske skolesystemet diskuterer kulturer i læreplanene sine, samt hvordan et utvalg av lærerguider for år fem presenterer den «Andre» som svar. Jeg kjenner igjen en skjevhet av presentasjoner av den «Andre» i den norske skolen. Under et studentutvekslingssemester til Sør-Afrika lærte jeg at landet og dets kulturer skiller seg fra det som undervises på skolen. Med denne oppgaven tar jeg sikte på å avdekke hva det norske skolesystemet lærer elevene om «Andre» kulturer gjennom undervisningsmateriell.

Undervisningsmateriellet som brukes i avhandlingen min er lærerguider fra både LK06 og LK20. Disse lærerguidene er *Explore 5* (Edwards et al., 2015; 2020), *Link 5* (Mezzetti et al., 2021), *Stairs 5* (Solberg &Unnerud, 2006) og *Engelsk 5* (Solberg &Unnerud, 2020). For å undersøke dette temaet vil jeg gjennomføre kritiske diskursanalyser av «Andre» kulturers fremstillinger i lærerens veiledere, og diskutere disse funnene i lys av relevante teorier og læreplanenes mål for engelskfaget.

Basert på min forskning argumenterer jeg for at lærere bør legge til autentiske kilder til sine undervisningsøker om «Andre» kulturer. For at elevene skal kunne utvikle sin interkulturelle kompetanse, trenger de eksponering for den «Andre». Det er ikke tilstrekkelig å bare lære om angloamerikansk kultur. Regjeringen og forfatterne av undervisnings- og læringsmateriell har imidlertid et ansvar for å gi lærerne kvalitetsmateriale og veiledning som kan lede lærerne i riktig retning. Dette kan ikke bare være lærerens ansvar. Dette er et ansvar som er for stort for bare lærerne å bære, og det må deles for å gi elevene best mulig utdanning.

Acknowledgments

During my third year of studies, I seized the opportunity to go on a student exchange program in South Africa. Before leaving, I had certain expectations of what I would experience. I had been taught about Africa, that the entire continent was poor and a challenging place to live, but when I arrived, I realized my teachers had left out how beautiful and diverse the country actually is. There was so much more to this continent than I was led to believe. When I got back to Norway, I discovered that most of the people I discussed this topic with had the same biases. I wanted to investigate where such biases come from and reflect on what to do about them. This is the reason why I chose this topic for my thesis. The journey of researching and finding plausible explanations for my questions has been enriching. I have gained a newfound understanding of how complex, though easy, the development of intercultural competence is and the significance of attaining it.

Thank you so much to my supervisor Hege Emma Rimmereide. You gave me a push when I needed it – and we both know I needed it. You have given me great advice and support, and you always believed in me. Your encouragement really made a difference. Thank you!

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1 Introduction

This thesis investigates a selection of textbooks in the English as a foreign language subject (EFL) and how the “Other” in English-speaking countries is presented in them. After doing a cultural exchange program in South Africa, I recognized a bias in the Norwegian school system. When learning about Africa as a continent during my own education, I remember a focus on poverty, lack of clean water, and desert landscape. When I arrived in Durban, the city where I would live for the following months, I was amazed at the beautiful scenery. It was unlike anything I had been taught. In a world where people become increasingly more aware of how powerful words can be, it astonishes me that at the age of 32, I had no idea that South Africa is both multicultural and beautiful. It left me wondering, why are children taught that the African continent is a poor and challenging place to live, and how do the EFL textbooks present countries and cultures like this? As South Africa is an English-speaking country, EFL teachers are required to teach pupils about its people and their cultures. In my experience from the EFL subject regarding teaching about English-speaking countries, the focus is on teaching about the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States of America. My research will explore and discuss how South Africa and various other English-speaking countries that are not mentioned above are presented in selected EFL textbooks for fifth graders in Norway.

1.1 My experiences and thoughts after South Africa

After my exchange semester in South Africa, my view of Africa as a continent completely changed. It forced me to investigate my own prejudices because I was sure that I would experience a country with a dry landscape and more poverty than what I saw was true. Although I researched the country online before I arrived, I still imagined the people living in sheds wearing worn-out clothes. I did witness the side of South Africa that I was taught about in school, but there was so much more to the culture than that; I could not fathom that we had not been shown the other sides as well. The fact that there was such beautiful scenery and rich nature took me by surprise. I was also surprised by the number of houses of a good standard and seemingly wealthy people (most of them were white, some Indian African, and a few

black-African – as they referred to themselves in conversation). What shocked me most was the contrast between what I had been taught about South Africa – which is still being taught to Norwegian students – to how I experienced the culture in person.

After arriving in Norway after the exchange program, I began telling friends and family about my experiences. It became evident that I was not the only one with the same biases regarding Africa. Almost everyone I talked to could relate to my initial perspective on Africa based on what we have been taught. This made me curious about what other countries we have unconsciously assumed a sense of superiority toward and from where this prejudice comes. For me, the obvious place to seek knowledge about this was in teaching practice. Essential information about the African continent and its cultures was missing from the EFL classroom, and most countries in Africa were viewed as 'developing countries'. According to Silver (2021), the terms "third world countries" or "developing countries" are offensive and degrading. There is a lack of a good reference/expression to describe countries without placing industrialized countries as superior, creating unbalanced power relations. A sense of superiority does not benefit anyone.

Although Norway focuses on equality and equity, it is not enough to simply verbally express that everyone is equal. There should be a consensus on what we say and how we show it. As an example, if a teacher tells her learners that everyone is equal and then teaches them that the people in Africa live poorly, cannot read or write, and must walk several hours per day for water, this may contribute to prejudices and the feeling of superiority of our country. Africa includes more than suffering and poverty, and the teachers should focus as much on that as the other English-speaking countries mentioned above.

The African continent offers vast natural resources, historically interesting events, rich philosophy, mythology, and different cultures. Young people should also know how the African economy affects the global economy. These are a few examples of things that are not given enough focus in our education. Here in Norway, we are greatly influenced by the United States, which might be an expected consequence of the amount of American news stories, TV series and movies, and social media spokespeople we experience in our daily life. When observing the United States, we see that there has been a significant shift in their society during the past decade. Some of what we have seen, we have also, in a sense, "adopted" into our society. We have recently seen the Black Lives Matter movement and the

LGBTQ+ movement – including trans rights, gender identity, and sexual orientation questions and discussions – influencing Norway and Europe. People often embrace what they see in the news and social media as their truth, and the influence of the United States has had a significant impact on the way we communicate today.

1.1.1 The power of words

How we express ourselves verbally matters to the people around us, whether they realize it or not. Josephine Lee had a memorable encounter with one of her students that supports this. In a TedTalk, she explains (TedTalk, 2018, 7:19) how words hold power. When Josephine was teaching a class in a juvenile prison for boys, the lack of respect toward authority figures was noticeable. She approached one of the boys, who tended to act out and be disrespectful. One day, she had a breakthrough with the boy and realized that he was acting out because he was terrified. This made her change her attitude toward the boys. Josephine changed one word in how she greeted the boys. She began addressing the boys as ‘gentlemen’, and by expressing that she considers them to be gentlemen, she indicates that they have the potential to do better. This one word changed the boys’ behavior for the better.

Freedom of speech is pivotal in a democracy, but we also need to consider how we express ourselves and our attitudes. For example, if we constantly talk about specific countries or people as less valuable than other countries or people, we might believe it true. Fazio and Sherry (2020) conducted a study on how impressionable people are, and they experienced that when both children and adults hear a statement repeated more than once, they are more inclined to believe it to be the truth. This was the case even though the participants had prior knowledge about the subject that contradicted the statement they heard. This is something teachers should be aware of. Especially in the EFL classroom when teaching culture to young children. According to Stolt-Nielsen (2018), Norway has the highest number of people of all the countries in western Europe who feel like their culture is superior to others. With that in mind, teachers should be mindful of how they express themselves about cultures different from the traditional Norwegian culture.

1.2 Culture

Culture is more than great art pieces and fantastic books. Munden (2021) explains how there are two ways to view culture: Culture with a big "C" and culture with a small "c." Culture with a big "C" is considered the "big" things, e.g., incredible art like paintings by Edward Munch, Novels by Jane Austin's musicals on Broadway. Culture with a small "c" is defined as traditions, religion, food, ways of life, worldviews, expressing oneself, and more. Even though this is defined as a culture with a small "c," this is what people's lives are primarily about. Most people consider themselves part of several cultures, e.g., school culture, religious culture, friend group culture, etc. This knowledge about what a culture is, proves to be essential for teachers to understand in order to develop cultural awareness in pupils. For example, it is of little help to know about the works of Shakespeare if one does not know how to behave to avoid offending people or get in trouble with the law.

Another important aspect that both Munden (2021) and Fenner (2017) point out is that culture is not a "static thing". Culture is dynamic and ever-shifting, and learners can be affected by and affect their culture in return. Thus, learners should be made aware of this fact, that they can alter their own culture. Furthermore, as Fenner (2017) explains, people can only see their surroundings from a subjective perspective. This perspective is based on the culture they have grown up in and their experiences. This means that even though many different cultures are equally as good as one's own culture, one might not be able or open to seeing it that way. It is not a given that everyone understands that *different* does not automatically mean *worse*. There are many advantages to learning about other cultures, and the potential to grow as a human is almost endless. One can learn to be more adaptable and conscious of others and be more aware of how others perceive themselves and the world based on how they communicate. These are good qualities for any human being to inhabit. The potential to enrich our lives by learning about new and different cultures is great.

There has been a tendency to focus mainly on Great Britain and The United States of America in the English foreign language classroom, and as Rindal, Bieler & Listen (2020, p. 203) point out, learners do not necessarily want to "become" American or British. The teachers should be aware of this so that they can help the learners find their own way of meaningful expression. The fact that there is a focus

on these countries also makes it challenging for the learners to learn about cultures different from their own.

There was a shift in the curriculum from LK06 to LK20. Whereas in LK06, specific reference was made to US and UK, otherwise the generic "other English speaking" countries, LK20 only mentions English speaking countries, which opens to a broader approach. This can include authentic text and information from and about other English-speaking countries. The limits we put on ourselves and our children by only learning and teaching about cultures "similar" to ours are pretty restrictive for understanding and communicating with other people. Therefore, learning Intercultural competence from a young age in school may be of great value to the individual and the collective.

1.3 Biases

A cognitive bias is a way in which our brain draws conclusions and makes opinions based on our prior experiences and personal perceptions of the world. Ruhl defines cognitive bias as "a subconscious error in thinking that leads you to misinterpret information from the world around you and affects the rational accuracy of decisions and judgements" (2021). She explains that this unconscious and automatic process makes decision-making quicker and more efficient.

Psychology Today (2009) explains that a bias can be helpful in a positive way as it can help make healthy choices in different aspects of life. Further, they explain that biases are often stereotype-based, which is often considered negative. Instead of having actual knowledge about an individual or circumstances, the mind draws conclusions based on previous experience and knowledge. Psychology Today claims that a bias "is a tendency, inclination, or prejudice towards or against something or someone" (2009). Moreover, Ruhl explains that "Cognitive biases can be caused by several different things, such as heuristics (mental shortcuts), social pressures, and emotions." (2021)

Something to be aware of is that whether the bias is considered positive or negative, "such cognitive shortcuts can result in prejudgments that lead to rash decisions or discriminatory practices." (Psychology Today, 2009)

Haeny et al. (2021), Sangriogli and De Shonen (2004), and Kinzler and Spelke (2011) claim that infants already at the age of three months show that they prefer

people with a “familiar” skin color, which indicates that biases are created quite early in life. Therefore, if a child is only exposed to people with similar features as their parents, they will naturally prefer other adults that look similar. This does not have to be a negative thing. Having this knowledge can contribute to understanding children more, and it might be suitable for people who work with children to be aware of this so that they can work to highlight the positive parts of different cultures and not reinforce the negative ones. Moreover, Heany et al. (2021, p. 886-892) state that research going back decades shows that racial biases are acquired through our environment and are not something we are born with. Children are shaped by their surroundings, and the prejudices they seemingly have stem from their community.

Changing a child's perception is probably not an easy task, and parents might not even think about doing this. Even if they do, they might not see this as a problem. Most likely, it is not a problem by itself that their children are surrounded by and drawn to people who look like them and their families; it is only natural that children would be drawn to people who look like themselves and the people they are surrounded by. However, as Heany et al. (2021, p. 886-892) highlights, once children reach preschool, they already have preconceived notions of others, even children they have yet to meet, solely based on beliefs and attitudes and expectations they have grown up with at home. To change this, people have to be aware of language use – both verbal and nonverbal, concerning race and culture. "Moreover, because 5-year-olds, like adults, are more likely to believe something they have seen or heard repeatedly than something they have heard only once, repeated exposure to negative racial biases can facilitate the spread of negative racial stereotypes." (Fazio & Sherry, 2020)

1.4 Aim of the study

This thesis aims to investigate how intercultural competence and awareness are taught in the EFL subject based on the curricula and teaching material and discuss the potential ramifications of this. I will research this topic by exploring the presentations of “Other” cultures in teachers’ guides for selected EFL textbooks for the fifth grade. A renewed curriculum (LK20) has recently been introduced, and the people within our education system have not yet been able to explore the developments in this curriculum. Because of this, I have decided to examine both the

former curriculum, LK06, and LK20, and their teachers' guides to determine the potential benefits or disadvantages of the reform. I will address this in the discussion part of the thesis. Then, based on relevant theories, my textbook analysis, and the subsequent discussions, I aim to answer the following research question and sub-questions:

How do governing documents and learning materials expect, encourage, and guide teachers to teach about the "Other" in English-speaking countries? Are there any obvious cultural biases that are portrayed?

1. How do the positive aspects of these cultures get emphasized?
2. Are there any typical cultural biases portrayed in the teacher's guides?
3. If any, what were the missed opportunities to learn about the Other?
4. In which ways are disparate cultures portrayed in teachers' guides published in response to LK06 and LK20?

1.5 Outline of thesis

Following this introductory chapter, I will present relevant theories and previous research that will support my analysis and discussion.

For the theoretical chapter, I will begin by defining the concept of *Bildung* and determine its relevance to my thesis. Subsequently, I will describe the historical development of the EFL subject in order to create a foundation for my comparison of LK06 and LK20. Then, I will present a study on Norwegian indigenous cultures and how they are presented in EFL textbooks. After that, I will discuss theories about communicative competence and intercultural competence to create a base for my discussion about *why* it is important to include authentic information about the "Other" in the EFL subject. Lastly, in the theoretical chapter, I will present a study by Hild Hoff about how the use of an authentic show challenged the young viewers to expand their perspectives.

In the third chapter, I explain my research methods and present the material used in my analysis.

I present and discuss my findings in the fourth chapter. In sub-chapter 4.1, I will focus on the positive presentations of "Other" in the teachers' guides. Here, the

findings are divided into specific themes that I individually present and discuss before moving on to the next theme. The themes are *Characters and children*, *AnOther way of living*, and *International food*. Next, in sub-chapter 4.2, I will discuss the limitations of the inaccurate presentations I have found. Then, sub-chapter 4.3 will discuss some missed opportunities found in the teachers' guides. These concern places in the teachers' guide where the teacher is encouraged to discuss the topic a certain way, but a different approach would benefit the learners' learning potential. To end the fourth chapter, I will comparatively discuss LK06 and LK20 in regard to the teachers' guides.

Lastly, I will conclude my thesis based on the theoretical foundation and my discussion of the analyses I have conducted.

2 Background and Theory

This chapter will provide a theoretical foundation for the thesis. The first sub-chapter looks at what *Bildung* is, how *Bildung* is relevant in LK20 and the correlation between *Bildung* and interculturality. The second sub-chapter is about the historical development of EFL as a school subject. The third sub-chapter contains a brief summary of a study done by Habegger-Conti and Waallann on the visual representation of indigenous cultures in textbooks. In the fourth sub-chapter, there is a summary of Communicative competence. In the fifth sub-chapter, I examine Intercultural competence, followed by Byram's intercultural model and a critique of Byram's essentialist view. Finally, the sixth sub-chapter consists of a summary of a study by Hild Hoff on "Self" and "Other".

2.1 Bildung

Bildung is a concept that, according to Sjöström & Eilks (2020), is central to the educational system in Scandinavia (as well as other places in the world). *Bildung* has a long history and connects to both the Enlightenment and Romanticism (Sjöström & Eilks, 2020). Furthermore, Sjöström & Eilks (2020) states that the way we see *Bildung* today has a lot to do with how Klafki and others defined it back in the 1950s-1970s and that in the past, they linked it to "developing the capacity for self-determination, participation, and solidarity within society." (Sjöström & Eilks, 2020).

Moreover, Sjöström & Eilks (2020) highlight that this concept was not seen as something that one could be taught directly but that education based on *Bildung* was intended to help learners to develop *Bildung* on their own by “achieving capacity and skills” rather than learning theories, and facts on how to be.

They mean that through the learner’s education, they can achieve competence and knowledge through internal skillset and values. More specifically, as Sjöström & Eilks (2020) put it, “In other words, *Bildung* consists of autonomous self-formation and reflective and responsible action in, and in interaction with, society.” The autonomous self-formation view makes the learners, to a degree, responsible for their own development, while the teachers are there to guide and assist them in the process.

2.1.1 The concepts of formal, material, and categorical *Bildung* by Klafki

Klafki’s view on *Bildung* in education was that there were two main concepts of *Bildung* = material *Bildung* and formal *Bildung*. However, he claimed that another concept included aspects of both the material *Bildung* and the formal *Bildung*; this is known as the categorical *Bildung*.

Material *Bildung* is explained as a specific kind of knowledge (“content knowledge”) that learners should acquire, a knowledge that is based more on the objective way of learning things. Sjöström and Eilks (2020) states that there are two subgroups of the material *Bildung*. The first is scientific *Bildung* which is “based on a belief in the objectivity of knowledge, that is epistemological positivism.” Furthermore, the second is humanistic *Bildung*, which “focuses on cultural quality. Which is about learning about human traditions.” (Sjöström & Eilks, 2020). This type of *Bildung* aims to teach key facts and information about the culture but does not give the learner an authentic perspective.

Formal *Bildung* is explained as competence the learners are supposed to acquire. This speaks more to the subjective way of learning. Sjöström & Eilks states that there are also two sub-groups: “functional *Bildung* and method-based *Bildung*, respectively. Functional *Bildung* places the focus on human powers and potential. Method-based *Bildung* focuses on the processes of learning methods and ways of thinking to “master life.” This line of thinking is connected to ideas of meta-learning and learning strategies.” (2020). Meaning that the teachers encourage the learners to

reflect on their own learning, which could be associated with critical thinking. There is also the aspect of teaching the learners based on “them” (the learners), making it a more subjective way of teaching.

Finally, categorical *Bildung* is explained as a material and formal Bildung combination. Where Sjöström and Eilks (2020) state that Klafki “suggested that any learning activity should contribute to material and formal gains in the learner. He suggested selecting content that is elementary and basic for the discipline; that is fundamental for essential experiences of and insights into the world, and that has exemplary significance to offer a structure for understanding the field of study.” Meaning that the teacher could present “objective facts” about a given subject and encourage the learners to think critically about what they were presented with. This should be the preferred way of teaching.

2.1.2 Bildung in the Norwegian educational system and LK20

“Danning”, better known as *Bildung* in English, has a central part in the Norwegian educational system. At university, teaching students are taught that by law, they are required to not only teach the learner's school subjects. They are also required to participate in developing each of the learners' personalities. In the Education Act (1998, § 1-1), it is stated that “Education [...] must provide insight into cultural diversity and show respect for the individual's convictions. They are to promote democracy, equality, and scientific thinking.”

Furthermore, it states that “The pupils [...] must learn to think critically and act ethically and with environmental awareness. They must have joint responsibility and the right to participate.” Moreover, it states that “Schools [...] must meet the pupils [...] with trust, respect, and demands, and give them challenges that promote formation and the desire to learn. All forms of discrimination must be combated.” (The Education Act, 1998, § 1-1) Meaning that as a teacher, one must develop the learners' critical thinking, empathy for self and others, self-awareness, tolerance, and respect for others.

In LK20 (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017), a section is dedicated to learners' education and overall development (*Bildung*). Furthermore, The Ministry of Education and Research explains that the overall development and education of the learners are “interlinked and mutually dependent.” (2017, p. 12) This

means that alongside teaching the learners about subjects such as mathematics, Norwegian, English, and more, the teacher is also expected to guide the learners when it comes to morality, independence, compassion for others, responsibility, and intellectual freedom so that the learners are better equipped to understand themselves, others and the world as well as make the right choices for their highest best.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education and Research states that the process of allowing each learner to “develop the all-round person” and to “learn and develop their skills and abilities” occurs when the learners “acquire knowledge about and insight into nature and the environment, language and history, society and working life, art and culture, and religion and worldviews.” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 12) Furthermore, they explain that there is more to the process, and that experiences, as well as practical challenges, play a role in the achievements of this general education. The learners benefit and develop through “failure,” meaning they must reflect, assess and re-address the theoretical or social challenge, which ultimately gives a better or more profound understanding of the problem at hand (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017). There is also potential for the development of learners through interaction with others (their peers and their teachers), which can be attained by both the more “academic” education as well as the more playful and fun type of activities. These things combined will give the learners a “wealth of experience.” (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 12)

2.1.3 *Bildung* and interculturality

Throughout the descriptions of *Bildung* above, it should be clear that *Bildung* and the meeting of “Others” correlate in a potentially fruitful way. According to Bohlin (2013), through “confrontation” with different perspectives, there is an opportunity to understand oneself better based on taking a critical and reflective look at one’s own perspective. For that reason, *Bildung* and interculturality is something that is closely related. There is, however, an aspect that teachers might not be conscious of in the day-to-day routines, which is that the authority the teachers hold is significant. In a discussion where Bohlin (2013) looks at how *Bildung* and higher education correlates, he highlights some valid point about elementary schools. Firstly, he states

that “Schools can claim authority over children and youth much like parents can.” (Bohlin 2013, p. 394).

Furthermore, he states, “To put it drastically and simplistically, school teachers can tell their pupils what to think... Consequently, schools can make credible claims to cultivate their pupils’ personalities or at least to strive for it – try to foster a sense of justice, generosity of spirit, tolerance and responsibility, respect for human life and so on” (Bohlin 2013, p. 394). This highlights the responsibility teachers have and that when introducing a new culture, they should be very aware of the power they hold regarding how the learners perceive the culture.

Biesta (2002) argues that there is an increasing awareness of the concept of plurality in the world. Even though there has always been plurality, now (some) people try to make sense of what that entails. Furthermore, he claims that a way to understand plurality may be to look at the concepts of diversity and differences. Because, according to Biesta (2002), the concept of diversity can be seen as something that is seemingly different but has the same background, he gives the following example: “thinking about plurality in terms of cultural variations of human nature. In this case, nature provides a common (back)ground against which plurality can be seen as a collection of (cultural) variations of nature. What is suggested in this way of thinking is that we are all basically “the same” and that our differences are “merely cultural” (Biesta, 2002, p. 346). While the concept of difference is explained as plurality that we “experience [...] as it confronts us” (Biesta, 2002, p. 347) or as it comes. A more in-depth explanation by Biesta; “What is implied in the latter approach is the recognition that any attempt to place the different positions in an overarching framework can only be done from one of the positions “within” that framework (which already means that such a position is never simply “within”)” (2002, p. 347). Meaning that there is no intrinsic understanding of the “Other,” so in the meeting with the “Other,” one should be accepting and aware that the “Other” is not an aspect of “Self.”

Moreover, Biesta (2020) states that we need others in order to make sense of it all and that the future of *Bildung* is that of learning from each other, not with the intention to become like the “Other” but to learn and gain an understanding of what was once foreign. “*Bildung* should actually make such an encounter with what is other, with what is different possible. Being in such a situation can put a challenge to

our own “certainties,” which in turn can lead us to reconsider our own “position.””
(Biesta, 2020, p. 349)

Finally, Biesta (2020) addresses one of the significant issues regarding how to connect with the “Other.” For the purpose of this thesis, connecting with the “other” is problematic. One cannot merely take a field trip to countries like South Africa or India. However, Biesta (2020) argues that we now have access to the internet. Furthermore, there are almost a limitless number of possibilities on the internet in the form of authentic sources to provide a deeper outlook on cultures like South Africa, India, and more.

2.2 The historical development of the EFL subject with a focus on primary school

In this part of the thesis, I will provide brief background information on how English as a school subject has changed and developed since World War II in Norway. Since *Bildung* has been a fundamental part of Norwegian education since the 18th century, it has, alongside the curriculum, also developed and changed during these years (Fenner, 2018). The different approaches of teaching I will talk about in this chapter are the “audiolingual method”, “communicative language teaching”, and “Curricula in the 21st century.” The reason for including these in the thesis is that this background information provides an understanding of the development of teaching throughout the years, which explains how society’s view on subjects like *Bildung* and culture have changed/developed during the years.

2.2.1 Audiolingual method

Since the Second World War, there have been a few approaches to foreign language teaching. First, there was the Audiolingual Method, which according to Richard & Rogers (2001, p. 59), consists of four skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These skills are listed according to how they were supposed to be learned. First, the learners would learn orally, and then they would learn to read and write what they had previously learned to verbalize (Richard & Rogers, 2001, p. 59). Also, according to Richard & Rogers (2001, p. 59), there was a structured approach when working with the language to avoid mistakes, e.g., dialogues and drills. “Dialogues are used for repetition and memorization. Correct pronunciation, stress, rhythm, and intonation

are emphasized. After dialogue has been presented and memorized, specific grammatical patterns in the dialogue are selected and become the focus of various kinds of drill and pattern-practice exercises." (Richard & Rogers, 2001, p. 59).

Richard & Rogers (2001, p. 59) explains that dialogue and drills were an essential part of learning in the audiolingual classroom. According to Fenner (2018, p. 27), Culture was not an essential aspect of this language learning approach. The main focus was on learning how to speak correctly, which means that the teachers were strictly "guiding" the learners on how to articulate and use grammar in the right way.

When looking at *Bildung* in the context of the audiolingual method, Fenner (2018, p. 28) claims that the *Bildung* involved in the lower levels of education was the formal kind, meaning that there was a primary focus on "developing personality through the ability to acquire knowledge" (Fenner, 2018, p. 28) and not as much on what the learners were learning. The curriculum created in 1974 for primary school was called "Mønsterplan for grunnskolen 1974" (M74). In this curriculum, there is no mention of culture. However, the main goal was to learn how to communicate without the communication becoming "mechanic and lifeless". There was importance on keeping the communication "meaningful and stimulating" (Mønsterplan for grunnskolen av 1974, p. 147). In relation to textbooks created based on M74, Fenner (2018) states that the authors of these textbooks only created a text that reflected the stereotypical family dynamic of two parents and two children. There was no authentic text, just the standard constructed texts, and there was no inclination of the multicultural society of England. In other words, the author has stayed true to the literal interpretation of the curriculum and focused mainly on the constructed dialogue between self and self.

2.2.2 Communicative Language Teaching

Not long after the Audiolingual method and the curricula of 1974, a change occurred regarding how and why language should be taught, according to Fenner (2018) and van Ek (1975). Further, they go on to tell that the term *Communicative competence* (which will be defined and explained later in this chapter) was invented and that it is based on "Chomsky's theories of language as an expression of meaning" (Fenner, 2018, p.29). Moreover, Fenner (2018) claims that Hymes (1971) and Halliday (1975) evolved the term further in a way that ensured that the context for language use was

appropriate and meaningful. This included authentic text for meaningful communicative learning, the interaction between learners, and between learners and teachers (Fenner, 2018). A change in the curriculum was that grammatical structures were not what defined the progression of learning. However, there was more of a focus on each learner's abilities, and learners were now expected/encouraged to take responsibility for their learning. (Fenner, 2018)

When the new guidelines for teaching English came, new textbooks were also introduced. However, according to Fenner (2018), there were still "empty" dialogues and drill exercises in the textbooks. Regarding tasks, learners were expected to produce language more independently than before, and there was also a requirement to learn about the target culture (Anglo-American culture) on a superficial level at least (Fenner, 2018, p.32). In the mid-1990s, something new occurred due to the new reform, and the core curriculum was introduced (Fenner, 2018). According to Fenner (2018), *Bildung* was a central part of every subject. Material *Bildung* "in the form of suggested authentic literary text to be listened to and read each school year" (Fenner, 2018, p.32) was now, for the first time, a part of the education for the younger learners. For primary school, the English curriculum learning aims consist of four main aims, summarized as learners using the language (Fenner, 2018). There was also a new approach to cultural learning. The learners were no longer supposed to simply learn about the target culture. They would also learn through cultural expressions, according to Fenner (2018). Process writing in the English classroom was introduced, where the learners were encouraged to reflect on both their own and other learners' language production. Moreover, the learners were "required to 'publish' the texts they produce both orally and in writing" (Fenner, 2018, p. 33). According to Fenner (2018), the aspects above indicate a dialogic approach to texts, other learners, and the teacher.

2.2.3 Curricula in the 21st century

In 2006, *Kunnskapsløftet* was published. Translated to English, this means *Knowledge Promotion*, and it was the third set of curricula based on communicative approaches. The Knowledge Promotion was revised in 2010 and 2013 (Fenner, 2018). In the new curricula, competence aims replaced learning aims from the previous curricula (Fenner, 2018). "These competence aims are divided into the

following main subject areas: language learning, oral communication, written communication, and culture, society and literature" (Fenner, 2018, p.34). Culture and English as a global language also have a more significant role in this curriculum, according to Fenner (2018, p. 34). A new and perhaps challenging part of the new curriculum was the freedom to interpret what learning materials to use (Fenner, 2018, p.34). This would have been a dream come true for some, but for others, maybe the less experienced and not as creative teachers, it could have the opposite effect. As Fenner (2018, p.34) points out, this might make them more insecure, leading them to become more dependent on textbooks. The same can also be seen in LK20 (The Ministry of Education and Research, 2019); there is no specification on "how-to," it is more up to the interpretation of the individual teachers and schools.

The curricula after 1987 all paved "the way for the development of so-called local curricula" (Fenner, 2018, p.35). This means that because of the development of the curriculum throughout the years, there is now a responsibility on each school to create their own interpretation of how to teach each subject in a way that their learners can benefit the most from, both individually and as a class.

Digital competence has since LK06 been a part of the curriculum. At that time, most learners had access to a personal computer or laptop, which according to Fenner (2018, p.34-35), in many ways was a "game-changer" since information (learning platforms, authentic communication, and more.) suddenly became more accessible through the internet.

The new core curriculum was published in 2017, and according to Fenner (2018, p. 36), the core curriculum published 2017 was less idealistic and philosophical than the previous *Core Curriculum* of 1993. However, the fundamental values of education were still more or less the same. Cultural diversity, democracy, historical and cultural insight, stance, and the development of critical thinking are in the new core curriculum emphasized as purposes of education (Fenner, 2018, p. 36). Moreover, *Bildung* is also something that has been given more attention in the new core curriculum (see the sub-chapter on *Bildung* in LK20) compared to the previous one. Moreover, Fenner (2018, p. 36) explains that the basic skills are the same in LK20 as in LK06/13. The basic skills listed in the published order are: "being able to read, being able to write, numeracy, oral skills, and digital skills" (Fenner, 2018, p. 37), while the "core elements of English are as follows: communication and interaction,

encountering English-language texts, cultural and diversity competence, and language learning." (Fenner, 2018, p. 36).

2.3 Visual representation of indigenous cultures in Norwegian EFL textbooks by Jena Habegger-Conti and Cecilie Waallann Brown

Textbooks in the EFL classroom do more than just teach the English language. They can teach about culture and send out subliminal messages that affect how one views a specific subject, in this case, culture. Alternatively, as Habegger-Conti and Brown (2017, p. 16) claim, textbooks have the opportunity to give the learners insight into a given culture with an open and curious mind. However, they can also reinforce stereotypes.

2.3.1 Methods and findings

The article, *Visual representation of indigenous cultures in Norwegian EFL textbooks* (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017) discusses how indigenous and "white" people are portrayed in visual representation in twelve different textbooks. They have used both quantitative and qualitative methods in their research. To keep count of and classify the data, a quantitative method. The quantitative method is based on "who" and "what" regarding the research question: "To what extent do the images that are presented as representing indigenous cultures reinforce cultural stereotyping?" (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017, p. 21) While the qualitative method is based on "how" to look at how the indigenous culture is portrayed compared to the "white" culture concerning power and identity.

The qualitative method focuses on two photomontages, one of the "white" cultures and one of the indigenous cultures. Critical visual literacy and elements from semiotic image analysis were used in the qualitative method (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017).

In the findings of the study, several things stood out. To summarize, in the quantitative section, it was clear that the indigenous people were often portrayed stereotypically. The findings showed that they often wore their traditional clothing outside of the modern world, making it seem like they are primitive and on the outside

of society. The qualitative section found that the indigenous photomontage showed similar aspects as the quantitative section. For the most part, the indigenous people were not shown in a modern context (with one exception). The pictures were, for the most part, pictures of "passive, grown-ups [...] in the traditional clothing." (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017, p. 23).

On the other hand, there were more active young people having fun in the other photomontage of the "white" culture. There was also a comparison between two selected pictures from a six-picture photomontage. The two pictures selected were one is of a seemingly white Australian girl, and the other is of an Aboriginal boy. The picture of the boy shows that someone (we can only see a hand) is painting white dots on his face, and the picture is dark, while the girl seems to be talking to someone through a radio transmitter, and the picture of her is colorful and light (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017). Brown and Habegger-Conti (2017) state that these two pictures further confirm previous stereotypical findings.

2.3.2 Implications and concluding marks

This study found that stereotypy in textbooks is something that is still found in our modern society. Brown and Habegger-Conti (2017, p. 30) claim that the textbooks in question carry ideologies that contradict the general cultural aims of EFL education in Norway at that time. Further, they highlight that they are concerned with the knowledge or lack thereof within the teaching community regarding visual stereotypy and the effect it can have. Moreover, Brown and Habegger-Conti (2017) state that teachers should introduce more photos and images that contradict the stereotypy found in the textbooks. Furthermore, the teachers should discuss the images in the textbooks and encourage their learners to reflect on how the indigenous people are portrayed in the textbooks. Authors of textbooks have the opportunity to be considerate of how they portray certain cultures/people, they can choose to go the stereotypical route, or they can do something new and show more of the culture, perhaps in a more modern and realistic context. As Brown and Habegger-Conti (2017) claim, the stereotypical way of portraying indigenous people creates more of a distance between "us" and "them." While showing the indigenous people in a day-to-day context as well as their traditional routines might create more of a bridge to understanding and appreciation for the "Other." The images that were analyzed in

this study did not challenge the stereotype. They did, however, contradict the general cultural aims (Brown & Habegger-Conti, 2017).

2.4 Communicative Competence

It is well-known that communication is essential for the world to go round. Every interaction with another person includes communication of some sort, which means that *communicative competence* is relevant for everyone. Skulstad (2018) claims that communicative competence regarding foreign/second language learning is the most important concept. Moreover, she explains that communicative competence in the western world has been the most important goal in second/foreign language courses since the 1970s.

There has, according to Skulstad, been some confusion related to the subcompetences of the concept over the years. The explanation for this is that there have been “several different subcompetences over the years” (2018, p. 43) which is “a result of the technical nature of the specifications.” Therefore, Skulstad highlights the importance for both “present and future teachers to acquire an understanding of this central concept.” (2018, p. 43) This chapter on communicative competence is included in the thesis so that the reader understands the important factors of communication and can better understand Byram’s model on intercultural communicative competence.

2.4.1 Historical overview

According to Skulstad (2018, p. 44), Noam Chomsky is an essential factor in the development of the concept of communicative competence. Furthermore, she states that Chomsky believed that children can understand language to a degree from birth. Chomsky agreed that at an early stage of first language acquisition, imitation is essential, but that after a while, children will generate sentences they had not heard before. Therefore, he rejected the notion that “language acquisition can be accounted for in terms of stimulus-response” (Skulstad, 2018, p. 44). As a basis for the term *competence*, Chomsky believed that the speaker-listeners’ knowledge of their language equals competence. Moreover, the “actual use of language in concrete situations” (Skulstad, 2018, p. 44) equals *performance*. “[Dell] Hymes coined the term communicative competence as a reaction against Chomsky’s idea of competence.”

(Skulstad, 2018, p. 44). Hymes was not as concerned as Chomsky was with the idea that the ideal speaker's competence was to produce well-formed grammatical sentences, but rather with the real language users. Moreover, like most language teachers, Hymes knew that context and circumstances make a difference. Being tired, nervous, stressed, disadvantaged, and more would affect communication somehow (Skulstad, 2018, p. 45).

Hymes specified aspects of communicative competence in the following way:

- Whether (and to what degree) something is formally possible;
- Whether (and to what degree) something is *feasible* in virtue of the means of implementation available;
- Whether (and to what degree) something is *appropriate* (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated;
- Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually *performed*, and what its doing entails.

(Hymes, 1972, p. 218)

Skulstad (2018) explains that Hymes meant that grammatical rules were valid by these specifications. However, how words are used is equally as important.

According to Skulstad (2018, p. 46-47), Researchers sought to specify subcompetences for the concept of communicative competence. First, Canale and Swain (1980) described the three subcompetences, grammatical competence, sociolinguistic competence, and strategic competence. Secondly, Canale (1983) formally added the fourth subcompetence, discourse competence. Thirdly, van Ek (1986) added another two subcompetences, the sociocultural competence, and social competence

A short description of the subcompetences below:

- *Grammatical competence*: which speaks to the knowledge of lexical items and the rules related to morphology, syntax, semantics, and phonology.
- *Sociolinguistic competence*: This speaks to the knowledge of use and discourse rules, as well as awareness of the important difference between use and usage.
- *Strategic competence*: which speaks to verbal and non-verbal communication strategies.

- *Discourse competence*: which speaks to the ability to combine grammatical forms and meaning to achieve a unified spoken or written text in a specific genre (cohesion and coherence).”
- “*Sociocultural competence* speaks to the appropriateness of production and interpretation of utterance according to contextual aspects.
- *Social competence (will and skill)* is when the learners know how to, and also want to speak the foreign language.”

(Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980; Skulstad, 2018, p. 46-47; van Ek, 1986, p.8)

Finally, the Council of Europe made specifications for what they call “the user/learner’s competencies”. The user/learner’s competence is the Council of Europe’s version of communicative competence, and they published the specifications in 2001 in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Language Learning* (CEFR) (Skulstad, 2018, p.47). The document is separated into *general competence* and *communicative language competencies*.

- “General competences include declarative knowledge (knowledge of the world, sociocultural knowledge, and intercultural awareness), skills and know-how (practical skills and know-how, intercultural skills and know-how), “existential” competence (attitudes, motivations, values, cognitive styles, personality factors etc.) and ability to learn.”
- Communicative language competence has more in common with the “traditional specifications of the term communicative competence.” Communicative language competence is split into three subcategories: “*linguistic competences*, *sociolinguistic competences* and *pragmatic competences*.”
 - *Linguistic competence* consists of the six following subcategories: lexical competence, grammatical competence, semantic competence, phonological competence, orthographic competence and orthoepic competence.
 - *Sociolinguistic competence*, as mentioned earlier, speaks to the knowledge of use and discourse rules, as well as awareness of the important difference between use and usage.
 - *Pragmatic competence* is divided into two parts, *discourse competence* which is like what Canal (1983) defined as competence of cohesion and coherence. and *functional competence* “is that authentic communication is used for a purpose or to fulfil a specific function.”

(Skulstad, 2018, p.47-48)

2.4.2 Theoretical perspectives

According to Skulstad (2018, p. 49), M. A. K Halliday is the single most influential scholar to specify sub-elements of communicative competence. Moreover, his language view reflects it as a social behavior. Following are his seven descriptions of the basic functions of language:

1. “The instrumental function: using language to get things done.
2. The regulatory function: using language to control the behavior of others.
3. The international function: using language to create interaction with others.
4. The personal function: using language to express personal feelings and meanings
5. The heuristic function: using language to learn and to discover.
6. The imaginative function: using language to create a world of the imagination.
7. The representational function: using language to communicate information.

(Halliday, 1975, p. 11-17)

Skulstad (2018), Searle (1989;1969), and Austin (1975;1962) explain that words are not necessarily mere words. They can also be something we do, for example, when we offer to help someone, we do not just say words. We initiate action as well. Searle (1989;1969) explains that such “speech acts”, which we do when speaking a language, are rule-governed, which means that there are rules to how we articulate to achieve something. Skulstad (2018) states that real communication, which has both purpose and function, is a central aspect of communicative language teaching (CLT).

2.4.2.1 Texture of text

Discourse can be seen as language in use. Moreover, according to Skulstad (2018), in order to communicate successfully, both spoken and written texts need to be cohesive and coherent. While Halliday and Hasan (1976) state that “relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as text,” (p. 4), Canale explains coherence as “how utterance are linked structurally and facilitates interpretation of a text.” The term *texture* was introduced by Halliday and Hasan (1976) to give an understanding of what cohesion is. Skulstad (2018, p. 51) states that language has the resources to create texture as a “set of cohesive ties.” Moreover, she explains that this means that “different sentences, or parts of sentences are linked together”, which ultimately leads to comprehension and easier interpretation.

2.4.2.2 Aspects of pragmatic competences

The short way of explaining pragmatics is that it is the intersection between language and context. Skulstad (2018) explains that pragmatic competence creates meaningful communication and that within communication, one must understand that there is a “push-pull” dynamic to language exchange. An example can be: Where one seeks advice, advice must be given. There is also an aspect of “how-to” within pragmatics competence, in the sense of how to ask for advice and how to give advice. This can be a complicated landscape to navigate regarding culture learning since different cultures have different views on politeness, irony, body language, and more.

2.4.2.3 Learning theories

At the time of the audiolingual method, an essential factor of new pedagogical development was when teachers became aware of the fact that, even though the learners were able to produce sentences correctly, that did not mean that they were able to use the sentences in a real situation (Skulstad, 2018, p. 54). Moreover, since there had been little information about the learning theory regarding communicative approaches, Richards and Rodgers (2014) specified the three following aspects that seemingly formed underlying learning theories of CLT:

1. The communication principle: activities that involve real communication promote learning. Real communication often means a non-linguistic purpose to language use.
2. The task principle: activities in which language is used for carrying out meaningful tasks promote learning. “problem-solving activities aim to engage both the cognitive and affective resources of the learners.”
3. The meaningfulness principle: language that is meaningful to the learner supports the learning process. Which involves engaging in authentic language use.

(Rodgers & Rodgers, 2014, p. 90)

Skulstad (2018) points out that the main aim of L2 teaching is to be able to communicate successfully. Moreover, she explains that learners learn according to their personal development (intellectual, ability to autonomy, and motivation) and understanding (repertoire of learning strategies) of the teachings. Therefore, even though one has planned a good lesson, it does not mean that it is apt for the learners.

2.5 Intercultural Competence

In this subchapter, I will present aspects of intercultural competence, Byram`s model, Hoff`s critique of Byram`s view on interculturality, as well as look at how culture is presented in LK06 and LK20

2.5.1 Aspects of intercultural competence

Intercultural Competence is not easily defined. Barrett et al. (2014, p. 13) state that one would benefit from understanding the concept of “identity”, “culture”, “intercultural encounter”, and “competence” to understand what intercultural competence is.

Teachers in foreign language classrooms should understand these concepts to help the learner develop intercultural competence. Below is a summarized description of how Barrett et al. (2014) explain the following four terms, identity, culture, intercultural encounter, and competence:

Identity: Whom, a person, believes he, she, or they is/are. There are layers to how human beings view themselves. However, it usually correlates in some way with their core values. Core values are often seen as a person's inner compass and how they navigate the world from their view of right and wrong (TEDx Talks, 2016, 0:00-14:31) (TEDx Talks, 2021, 0:00-16:52). So, if asked, who one is, people will often answer in some aspect of their core values, whether they are fully aware of them.

Culture: There are several aspects of the concept of culture. These aspects are material culture, social culture, and subjective culture. Material culture is recognized as "physical artifacts commonly used."(Barrett et al., 2014, 13-16) There are also the aspects of social culture in the form of "social institutions," e.g., the language, religion, laws, rules of social conduct, folklore, cultural icons, and more. Moreover, there is the aspect of subjective culture which consists of "beliefs, norms, collective memories, attitudes, values, discourses and practices which group members commonly used as a frame of reference for thinking about, making sense of and relating to the world" (, p. 13-16). Dervin (2016) explains that culture is fluid and challenging to define or explain but that it can also lead to barriers by defining all the characteristics of a culture as a static thing. This makes sense when considering the aspects explained by Barrett et al. above. Most of these aspects are interchangeable and influenced by the development and influence of society and the visitors of that society.

Intercultural encounter: This is an encounter with anyone who is unlike oneself, in the sense that the “Other” comes from a different culture and lives their life in a foreign way. A foreign way does not necessarily mean someone from a different continent, and it can just as well be someone with a different religion that lives next door and that one has not previously been acquainted with. For the purpose of the thesis, the “Other” is considered someone from English-speaking “developing” countries.

Competence: which in this context means a combination of knowledge, "attitudes and skills applied through action in any relevant situation" (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 16). "Competence is the capacity to respond successfully to types of situations which present tasks, difficulties, or challenges for the individual, either singly or together with others. Intercultural encounters are one such type of situation." (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 16)

The terms above can be seen as pieces to a puzzle, the puzzle being Intercultural competence, meaning that one would benefit from having this combination of pieces to "complete the puzzle," also known as having intercultural competence. Barrett et al. (2014) further explain how combining understanding, knowledge, attitudes, and skills through action can be of help in the meetings with new and other cultures. It can help in understanding how and when to respond respectfully, and it can increase the ability to understand others more deeply, which potentially may lead to a heightened sense of respect for the differences and similarities. The goal is to connect with people more significantly and better understand both the “Other” and the “Self”.

According to Hoff (2018, p. 67), there has been an increased focus on politics and the media for the past twenty years, and the need for intercultural understanding and communication has been highlighted. Barrett et al. (2014, p. 23) explain that a significant aspect of intercultural competence is to keep an open and curious mind about other people's beliefs, religion, values, and way of living. It is not necessarily about forcing a change of beliefs or trying to become someone else. However, there is an opportunity for growth and personal development by reflecting on one's own beliefs, way of living, and more. (Barrett et al., 2014). The goal of intercultural competence is not to take away from oneself but to gain more knowledge, acceptance, tolerance, and understanding of both the self and others. The idea of intercultural competence might seem foreign to many people, and some people may

think that they inhabit this competence just by hearing or reading the words "intercultural competence." The fact that the world seems to get smaller because of globalization, technology, and migration does not take away from the fact that intercultural competence is a complex concept (Hoff, 2018).

2.5.2 Theoretical Perspectives

Michael Byram is seen as somewhat of a pioneer concerning foreign language didactics in intercultural (communicative) competence (Hoff, 2018). Byram developed a model that explains the qualities needed to be a competent intercultural speaker. These components can also be used as guidelines to develop intercultural competence in the classroom. Byram et al. (2002) explain that there is a goal to the development of the "intercultural dimension," which is that the learners are encouraged to see past the stereotypical, single-sighted perceptions of identity and instead "engage with complexity and multiple identities." Moreover, the goal is to develop the ability to meet people with a curiosity about who they are as a person and not assume to know whom they are based on their looks, ethnicity, skin color, and so forth. Respect and equality are essential factors for intercultural interaction" (Byram et al., 2002, p. 9).

Byram's model on how to develop intercultural competence consists of the five following components (with a brief elaboration):

1. *Savoir être*; (attitudes)- relativizing self, valuing others and:
This relates to "curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and beliefs about one's own" culture (Byram et al. 2002, p. 12). In other words, for the learners to obtain this "mindset," they should be aware that other people's values, thoughts, beliefs/opinions, and feelings are equally, if not more, valid than their own. Therefore, they should be willing to reflect on other people's perspectives, even though it might go against their own, to understand and learn, and not necessarily to change their minds. Of course, doing this can be a challenge at any age, as we are often set in our way. However, the value of being able to look past oneself to understand another can and should be considered priceless.
2. *Savoir s'engager*; (education)- political education, critical cultural awareness:
This relates to an "ability to evaluate, critically and based on explicit criteria, perspectives, practices, and products in one's own and other cultures and

countries " (Byram et al., 2002, p. 13). In other words, for this concept, the learners are asked to critically think and reflect on their own and other cultures. In order to achieve this, one has to be able to look beyond what "seems" normal, maybe even expected, and reflect on why it might seem normal. It would also be beneficial to take on the role of the superior one but to meet the given topic with a sense of curiosity

3. *Savoir*; (knowledge)- of self and other, of interaction; individual and societal. This is the knowledge "of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction" (Byram et al., 2002, p. 12). The meaning of knowledge does not refer to the ability "to know all" about other cultures. It refers to the awareness of others. To have some understanding of the other or the others world. It would be pretty impossible to know all about every culture in existence. There is, however, a possibility of knowing something about a culture/country/social group, especially today, when we have so much information accessible through the internet.
4. *Savoir comprendre*; (skills)- interpret and relate. This relates to the "ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, explain it, and relate it to documents from one's own" (Byram et al., 2002, p. 13). This can also be seen as an explanation for what one could use knowledge (*savoirs*) and Intercultural attitudes (*savoir être*) for. Because, to interpret and relate anything, the learners would need to have knowledge of it, and when they have the knowledge, they would need to approach the matter curiously and openly to avoid being single-minded.
5. *Savoir apprendre/faire* (skills)- discover and/or interact. This is the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes, and skills under the constraints of real-time communication and interaction." (Byram et al., 2002, p.13). This means that the learners need to know how to use their knowledge in real-time when interacting with others.

(Byram, 1997, p.34, 50-54; Byram et al., 2002, p. 9-13)

Even though Byram (and others) have influenced the view of intercultural competence, Byram was criticized for his somewhat simple and naive worldview, which does not live up to the complex nature of human beings (Hoff, 2018). Furthermore, Hoff (2018) explains that a reason for this is that Byram (and others)

portray an essentialist understanding of culture, meaning that they view culture as something fixed, indicating that a country equals a culture, and that is it. While the reality is somewhat more complex, there can be many cultures within a country, and both cultures and humans can change; this is more of a non-essentialist understanding (Hoff, 2018). Furthermore, Hoff (2018) explains how culture and language interact and that language and culture constantly disconnect and reconnect with each other. For example, language *is* connected to the group that speaks it, but it is also influenced by "outsiders" who learn the language but have different cultures (Hoff, 2018).

Moreover, Hoff (2018) points out an essential part of the intercultural exchange: two people from different cultures interacting with each other might have completely different stances. For example, one might have cultural awareness and be willing to reflect on their own opinions and biases, while the other might be in denial regarding anything that does not suit their worldview. Hoff (2018) highlights how the foreign language classroom might not be the place that encounters such challenges because most of the interaction the learners have is with texts. However, a classroom is a "multi- and intercultural sphere" where learners will encounter and interact with differences (Hoff, 2018). According to Byram (1997), this is the case even though disagreements and conflicts are a part of intercultural encounters. Hoff (2018) argues that an overarching goal presented by both CoE (2010, p. 3) and CoE (2016, p. 35) seems to be a utopian way of interacting with one another. The focus is on eliminating/fighting violence, xenophobia, discrimination, intolerance, and racism by implementing these core values in education: the rule of law, democracy, and human rights. To implement these core values, all subjects should work on respect, responsibility, and valuing cultural diversity (CoE (2016, p. 35). However, Hoff (2014; 2018) argues that there is a potential danger that "intercultural learning becomes a superficial and passive process" if the traits of disagreeing and being critical of others are frowned upon. Therefore, Hoff (2014) points out that disagreement and conflict can be seen as necessary to achieve genuine involvement and honesty.

2.5.3 Curricula

According to Hoff (2018, p. 77), aspects of interculturality have been a part of the Norwegian curriculum since the 1990s. When looking at the English subject in LK20 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 1-14), which is the current curriculum

that was introduced in 2020, there has been an upgrade from the LK06 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 1-12) curriculum. Hoff (2018, p. 77) states that there is no direct mention of the term intercultural competence in LK06. However, the intercultural dimension is a central aspect of learning English. While in both the “working with text” in the core elements and in the “relevance and central values” part of the current curriculum (LK20), the concept of interculturality is specifically mentioned (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019).

In LK06 (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 2), it is stated that “Development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between persons with different cultural backgrounds. Thus, language and cultural competence promote the general education perspective and strengthen democratic involvement and co-citizenship.” Hoff states that in LK06, “the intercultural dimension of the subject is linked to “the general education perspective”, i.e. the overarching *Bildung* projects of school.” Meaning that there were no specific guidelines in the English subject on attaining intercultural competence. Moreover, Hoff’s (2018) view on this is that the description above might not be enough, that the learners will not learn to reflect and critically observe/think about the “Self” and “Other” in a way that develops that deep understanding that is needed.

However, in the core elements in LK20, the concept of developing intercultural competence is directly mentioned. Leading up to what that entails, it states that working with English texts will help the learners to develop “knowledge and experience of linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as [...] insight into ways of living, ways of thinking and traditions of indigenous peoples” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 3). Moreover, the Ministry of Education and Research (2019, p. 3) states that the learners will develop intercultural competence “by reflecting on, interpreting and critically assessing different types of text in English”. That the learners will then “acquire language and knowledge of culture and society” this development of intercultural competence will enable the learners to “deal with different ways of living, ways of thinking and communications patterns” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 3). Which, in return, will be a part of how the learners “build the foundation for seeing their own identity and others’ identities in a multilingual and multicultural context.” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 3)

In the relevance and central values part of the new curriculum (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 2), it is stated that the English subject will help the learners to “develop an intercultural understanding of different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns.” Moreover, the English subject “shall give the pupils the foundation for communicating with others, both locally and globally, regardless of cultural or linguistic background.” Achieving this can lead to “Knowledge of and an exploratory approach to language, communication patterns, lifestyles, ways of thinking and social conditions open for new perspectives on the world and ourselves.” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 2) This means that by learning about the other, the learners will also gain an understanding of themselves. Moreover, by understanding themselves better, they hopefully develop an “understanding that their views of the world are culture-dependent.” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 2). According to the Ministry of Education and Research, “This can open for new ways to interpret the world, promote curiosity and engagement and help to prevent prejudice.” (2019, p. 2) Furthermore, there is one competence aim regarding culture that the learners are expected to be able to do after year 7, which is to “investigate ways of living and traditions in different societies in the English-speaking world and in Norway and reflect on identity and cultural belonging” (2019, p. 8). To be able to do this, the learners need exposure to different cultures.

2.6 “Self” and “Other” by Hild Hoff

In the EFL classroom, learners need to be challenged to develop their knowledge regarding intercultural awareness and competence. One way to do this would be for the learners to engage in challenging texts. Hoff (2013) explains that learners should engage with challenging texts to learn that even though they initially find it challenging to read the text, they will be intellectually rewarded if they break it down and try to understand. Also, as Hoff (2013) points out, “misunderstanding and conflict are inherent aspects of any intercultural communication process.” (Hoff, 2013). The process of failing to understand, reflecting on the conflict with the foreign text, and trying to understand again are parts of the way to interact with other cultures successfully. The reward for finally understanding is, in fact, just that, a newfound understanding of others. In the process, one will also be learning about oneself.

Because when one can learn and reflect on the "Other," you can also learn and reflect about yourself regarding the other. In the EFL classroom, teachers have a responsibility for the learners' learning process, and as Hoff (2013) points out, it is the teachers' job to make sure that their learners reach their potential.

2.6.1 Method and findings

This study done by Hild Hoff on using fiction to develop intercultural competence in the English classroom is conducted by showing an episode of the series *The Wire* to a class in an upper secondary English class. After the show, the learners were asked questions and made to reflect on what they had seen to understand a complicated and very different culture from what the learners knew. (Hoff, 2013)

This interaction between learner and learner, and learner and teacher had some opposing opinions and thoughts. Hoff (2013) highlights the importance of open dialogue without judgment of the person/people who do not share the majority view; she continues to point out that for democracy and to have such conversations about sensitive subjects like race, culture, and more. Everyone needs to feel safe that even though they might disagree with the majority, their opinion is accepted as a valid opinion. In the study, learners had opposing and unpopular opinions, but they were listened to and respected. Although they were challenged, it was healthily and securely. In a classroom, this kind of interaction can be very enriching for the learners and potentially also the teacher. According to Hoff (2013), the learners in the study were able to draw lines between *The Wire* and their own lives. They recognized that the way language is used in the series is familiar because they have their own language and way of expressing themselves, which the adults cannot relate to. This indicates that as they learned about other people in a different culture, they could also learn about themselves and look at parts of their lives in a new and potentially enriching way.

2.6.2 Implications and concluding remarks

At the beginning of the study, Hoff realized that there were some apprehensions regarding the difficulty of the text. The learners did not think that they understood a lot, if any, of it. Therefore Hoff (2013) points out the importance of helping the learners to understand how much they can comprehend when it comes to

challenging text. The learners might not realize their own ability to comprehend and make sense of something that seems foreign to them, so the ability for scaffolding is needed. According to Hoff (2013), the teacher should guide the learners to benefit from what they have interpreted from the text.

Regarding the learner's knowledge about the specific subject, the teacher should be able to help the learner achieve a personal/emotional response to what they interpreted (Hoff, 2013). If achieved, the result may be that the learners gain more than just the knowledge of the given text. Hoff (2013) explains that a response to what the learners have understood from the given text lies a potential for a new way of relating to their environment and the world.

3 Methods and materials

This chapter will describe the method I deemed most suitable for the research. First, I will explain what a multimodal critical discourse analysis and qualitative exploratory research method are and how they are relevant to me. Secondly, I will present the data collection procedure. Finally, I will discuss the validity of the study.

3.1 Multimodal critical discourse analysis

As this study takes a critical view of teachers' guides and governing documents (the previous and the current curriculum) regarding intercultural awareness/competence, a multimodal critical discourse analysis seemed like the most suitable method. The method is a qualitative, exploratory research method that provides the tools to answer the research question.

According to Machin & Mayr (2012, p. 4, 24), Critical discourse analysis can be seen as a way to unravel the power dynamics in texts through the “linguistic character of social and cultural processes and structures.” The one in power is often seen as the privileged (the ones with “access to social resources such as education, knowledge, and wealth, which provide authority, status and influence to those who gain this access and enables them to dominate, coerce and control subordinate groups”) (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 24). Therefore, this type of analysis can be used to look at how foreign cultures (the “Other”) are portrayed in the Norwegian EFL textbooks and how teachers are encouraged to teach the specific cultures. Moreover,

a multimodal critical discourse analysis not only looks at the text but also at the visual presentation to see how the foreign culture is depicted in the textbooks.

Machin & Mayr (2012) explains that there is less of an interest “in attempting to describe a system of grammatical rules of communication” (p. 16) and more of an interest “in the way the communicator uses the semiotic resources available to them, either in language or in visual communication, to realize their interests.” (p. 16), which means that the underlying meaning of what is written and depicted is more interesting than grammatical rules. The words used to describe someone or the action of someone is important and also worth paying attention to. Furthermore, ‘discourse’, which is a central term in CDA, means “language in real contexts of use” (Machin & Mayr, 2012, p. 18-19). This means that there is an importance to how the words are put together to create meaning; this is considered an essential aspect of CDA (Machin & Mayr, 2012).

3.1.1 Qualitative exploratory research method

According to Høgheim (2020, p. 27), an exploratory method is a way to explore the thing one wants to research, where the goal would be to create a theory about the thing one is researching. Moreover, Høgheim (2020, p. 28) explains that an explanatory method process of working usually would be to collect information first, then analyze it to find a pattern to conclude which phenomena occur. To start with a set of specific data and, based on them, draw more general conclusions about the world or society would be called an inductive way to conclude something (Høgheim, 2020, p. 27-28). In this case, the data will be pictures and text from five different teacher guides (including the content of their textbooks) and the former LK06 and current LK20 curricula.

According to Høgheim (2020, p. 30), if the goal is to conduct exploratory research, qualitative methods are the better choice because, with qualitative methods, one can gather a lot and detailed information from the chosen people, places, or objects, find patterns, and draw conclusions. Krumsvik (2014, p. 15) explains that qualitative research aims to go beyond the numbers, explore social patterns, and look at how individuals comprehend and interpret their world and reality. In other words, a qualitative approach will “dive deep” into the data material and gather an understanding of what is really going on. According to Merriam (1998, p. 6-8), there are five different characteristics of the qualitative research:

1. There is a goal to understand the individual's perception of their life and their existence.
2. The researcher is often the primary instrument for data collection and analysis.
3. Qualitative research often consists of fieldwork.
4. It has an inductive approach to the analysis.
5. The findings are based on rich depictions/descriptions.

3.2 Data collection procedures

In this section, there will be an explanation of my process of collecting data. Furthermore, I will detail the process and discuss relevant information.

Firstly, I started to collect data from the five following teacher guides:

- *Explore 5* 2015, Edwards et al. (2015)
- *Explore 5* 2020, Edwards et al. (2020)
- *Link 5 + link 5 textbook*, Mezzetti et al. (2021a) & Mezzetti et al. (2021b)
- *Stairs 5 + Stairs 5 textbook*, Solberg and Unnerud (2006a) & Solberg & Unnerud (2006b)
- *Engelsk 5*, Solberg & Unnerud (2020)

Each of the teacher's guides contains a complete set of images of the content from the textbook (facsimile) except *Stairs 5* and *link 5*. Therefore, *link 5* and *Stairs 5* textbooks for learners were included in the data material. The guidance for how teachers should teach the specific theme is only described in the teacher's guide. In other words, researching only the learners' textbooks would not be sufficient. Since the study is about the teachers' guidance (or lack thereof) regarding how to teach the "Other" in the Norwegian school system in English-speaking countries to see if any pronounced cultural biases are being portrayed, the teacher's guides were the obvious choice for research. The teachers' guides selected are five different year five textbooks. One of the teacher's guides, *Stairs 5*, is from the LK06 curriculum, and one of the *Explore 5* teachers guides is from LK06/13, while *link 5*, the other *Explore 5*, and *Engelsk 5* are from LK20. The purpose of researching different year five books is to look at how and if the teacher's guide has changed from previous years and look at the potential learning outcome for the present books based on the findings. Both the language use and the images regarding the "Other" are considered when the data material is put into one or more categories based on four sub-questions for my

research question. The images in the findings will only be mentioned if they offer additional useful information.

Below are the four sub-questions, an explanation of what linguistic and/or semiotic properties were researched, and a brief outline of the data collection process.

How do the positive aspects of these cultures get emphasized?

For this question, I chose to look for contexts where the “Other” was either portrayed in a similar way to the “Self,” meaning, for example, that if the book(s) introduced children from different cultures, then the one(s) from the “foreign/exotic” countries would have a similar focus and exciting/fun facts as the “Self”. Alternatively, if an “Other” culture was presented in a non-stereotypical way (where poverty and hardship usually get highlighted and taken away from the content), meaning that something has a positive spin to it, either by seeming fun or interesting. The images can also be significant and should be coherent to the text for it to be positive.

Are there any typical cultural biases portrayed in the teacher's guides?

The stereotypical view of the “Other” was the focus of this question. Are there stories about impressive achievements and somehow aspects of poverty/hardship are included without being relevant to the story? Or was there a disproportional introduction between the similar and the foreign? These were questions asked when looking through the data material. Poverty and hardship are not subjects to be avoided, but the context for presenting them makes all the difference.

If any, what were the missed opportunities to learn about the Other?

This question might be the easiest to look for. Here, I will look for learning aims like “learn about English-speaking cultures/children,” while only the target culture is presented. This is an example of a missed opportunity to teach/learn about the “Other.” Alternatively, if there are any things or situations that could be seen as “belonging” to a specific culture but are presented in a “Self” culture, that would be seen as a missed opportunity.

The reason for categorizing the findings into sub-categories is to get a clearer picture of how the “Other” is portrayed. In addition, it will make it easier to work with and analyze the material.

Secondly, after placing the findings from the teacher's guides in one of the sub-questions, "categories," there will be a comparison of the data material and LK06 and LK20. The reason for this is to potentially spot a development, and if there is a development, see if it is for the positive or the negative.

In which ways are disparate cultures portrayed in teachers' guides published in response to LK06 and LK20?

Finally, there will be a discussion where the goal is to reflect on "*Bildung*" and interculturality as well as potential biases as a result of the findings in regard to LK06 and LK20

3.3 Validity

When conducting research, it is essential to critically reflect on one's ability to interpret the data material validly and reliably. Meaning that I will have to be aware of my own biases and try to look at the data material for what it is and not what I want it to be. The concept of validity in qualitative research is about the correlation between what one intends to research and what one has essentially researched (Krumsvik, 2014). Furthermore, Krumsvik (2014) states that within research, there is a distinction between internal and external validity. Internal validity is about the consistency between the findings and the background and theoretical framework, while external validity is whether the findings can be generalized or transferred to other phenomena. The goal is to accomplish both internal and external validity. There needs to be an extensive and thorough background and theoretical foundation, which I feel like ha have accomplished, and as mentioned above, I need to be aware of my own biases when conducting the research in order for the findings to be transferable and generalizable

4 Findings

In this section of my thesis, I will first present my findings and discuss them in relation to the theory and background information. I will present my findings individually through four separate sub-chapters: Sub-chapter 4.1 is about the positive aspects of the "Other's" culture found in the data material. This sub-chapter will discuss the findings individually divided into three categories: *Characters and children, AnOther*

way of living, and *International food*. Under each of these categories, I will begin by presenting my findings before discussing the findings in light of the relevant theories I introduced in the theoretical chapter. The second topic (4.2) is about how poverty and hardship are portrayed and highlighted and in which contexts. The third topic (4.3) is about missed opportunities for the learners to learn about the "Other". Finally, the fourth topic (4.4) is about the differences between LK06 and LK20 regarding the teachers' guides that have been analyzed.

Out of the five teachers' guides analyzed, three contained a complete set of images from the pages in the learners' textbooks (facsimile). Both the *Explore 5* editions (LK06 and LK20) of teacher's guides and the two *English 5* editions had all the information from the textbook and guidance for the teachers in their teacher's guides. *Link 5* had quite a lot of images from the learner's textbook. However, some were missing. Therefore, the *Link 5* textbook was used to gather the necessary information that was not found in my other data material. For the *Stairs 5* teacher's

guide, no images from the learner's textbook were incorporated, so the learner's textbook has been included in the research material. The picture to the left is from *Link 5* (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 56-57). In this picture, we can see that half of page 56 is from the learner's textbook, while the rest of page 56 and page 57 is devoted to guiding the teachers in how they can work with the teaching material.

Most of the teacher's guides had a section to describe culture. This will be further discussed in subchapter 4.4.

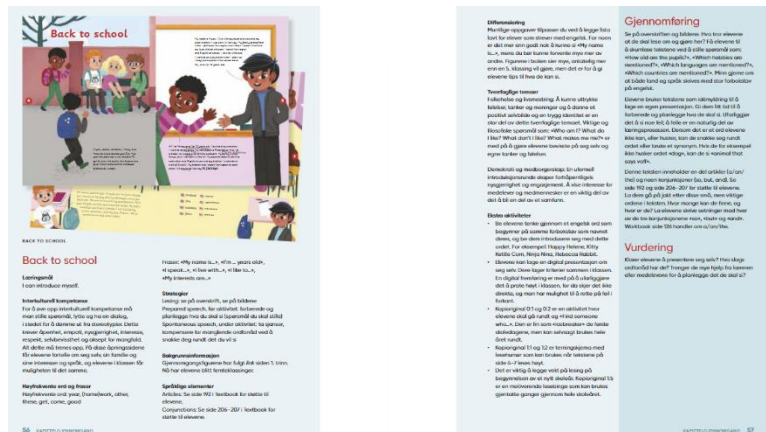


Figure 1, page-spread for teacher's guide. From Link 5. (p. 56-57), by Mezzetti et al. 2021a, Fagbokforlaget, Creative Commons-lisens

4.1 In different ways, a positive aspect of "Other" was portrayed

Of the teacher's guides and belonging textbooks, one of them stood out positively regarding how they portrayed the "Other." The book that stood out was the *Link teacher's guide*. In this book, several pages were dedicated to the importance of intercultural perspective and how interculturality plays a role in our everyday life. For each double-page spread (see figure 1), *Link 5* had a paragraph on intercultural competence related to what/how the learners were supposed to learn. Therefore, the expectations of the content of this book were high. *Link 5* introduces aspects of culture that are rarely seen in any of the other four teachers' guides compared to the other books. A few examples from *Link 5 and a positive upgrade from Explore 5 (2015) to Explore 5 (2020) and from Stairs 5 to Engelsk 5* will be presented and discussed below. Firstly, there will be a selection of examples of how fictional characters and children can be portrayed through the selected textbooks. Secondly, there will be a presentation of holidays and traditions. Finally, there will be an example of international food. Each of these sections will contain individual discussion parts.

4.1.1 Characters and children

In these textbooks, there are many depictions and descriptions of fictional and real characters, mostly children. To prevent stereotyping, enriching the learners' intercultural understanding of the content of the textbooks is essential. Equally important is how the teacher presents what is illustrated in the textbooks. Furthermore, it is pivotal that the teacher has an intercultural understanding and can reflect on the content of the learners' textbooks. This can ensure that fictional characters, children, and cultures will be portrayed rich culturally instead of stereotypical.

4.1.1.1 Presentations of people in *Link 5*

In *Link 5's* teacher's guide, the teachers are introduced to the characters that will follow the learners throughout the year(s). *Link 5* describes that the characters all have different backgrounds, stories, and cultures, even though they all live in Norway (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 14-15). They further explain that they have consciously avoided "exoticization and focus on religion" in their books so that each learner can

relate to the characters and their situations. The learners will follow the characters through different situations and get to know them better during the year(s) to come. Mezzetti et al. further explain in *Link 5* that the same characters follow the learners from first to seventh grade, which means that for the schools that have these textbooks/workbooks, the learners will follow the characters through many different aspects of life.

In *Link 5*'s teacher's guide, in the chapter called *Back to school*, the fictional student group "reintroduces" themselves to their new fifth-grade teacher Paul. Aryan, James, Jonathan, Mercy, and Thea tell their new teacher a little something about themselves so that Paul can get to know them. In other words, the learners are re-introduced to the five children and, for the first time, introduced to the new teacher Paul (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 56-57).

As guidance on how the teacher can approach the chapter, it is suggested, among other things, that the learners should be asked to look at the headline. After that, the teacher should ask what they believe the text to be about. Finally, the learners should then be asked questions to help them reflect on the age of the characters, the countries mentioned, the characters' interests and hobbies, and the languages mentioned. Mezzetti et al. (2021a, p. 57) encourage the teacher through the *Link 5* teacher's guide to remind the learners that countries and languages enquire capitalization in the written language. This is done to get the learners ready to introduce themselves. The introduction of the characters is brief and straightforward.

Aryan is ten years old and speaks three languages. He speaks Hindi (his local dialect) at home and English and Norwegian at school. He lives with his mother, father, and older brother. His parents are from India. He wants to be a journalist when he grows up because he loves to write. He also plays the trumpet in the school band.

Mercy, who is also ten years old, was born in the UK. However, her family is from Kenya. They moved to Norway six years ago. Her parents speak Swahili with each other, and they speak English to Mercy and her brother (Mercy does understand a bit of Swahili). Mercy and her brother speak Norwegian to each other. Mercy wants to be an artist, and she loves to sing and draw. Her role model is Frida Kahlo.

Thea is nine years old. She was born in England and moved to Norway when she was four years old. Thea speaks English with her parents and Norwegian with her three-year-old brother, who is both annoying and cute. She loves riding her bike and is now teaching her brother to ride a bike. She loves animals, her favorite animal are horses, and she also likes gaming and coding.

Jonathan is ten years old, and the reader is told that he is Norwegian. His parents are divorced, so he alternates between his mother and father every other week. He is a good soccer player, and he loves to read, especially mystery books and graphic novels.

James is a ten-year-old boy from Canada. His mother is Norwegian, and she and James moved to Norway four years ago. His father lives in Canada, and James visits him during school vacations. James's mother and James bought and moved into their apartment last winter; they used to live with James's grandparents. James likes to watch movies and online videos, and he also loves his dog, Charlie.

There is less information about the teacher. Paul is 34 years old; he lives with his husband and their two cats, Flurry and Mike. Paul plays video games and loves to sing and play guitar (Mezzetti et al., 2021b, p. 7).

The difference between this presentation of the characters and the presentation of characters in other books regarding interculturality is not necessarily what is shown in the textbook. What stands out is the section in the teacher's guide called "intercultural competence," which states that to develop intercultural competence, one needs to practice how to ask questions, listen, have a dialogue, and not judge based on stereotypes. To do this, one needs a certain set of qualities and abilities that inquire practice to "master". The abilities required are openness, empathy, curiosity, interest, respect, awareness of self, and acceptance of diversity. This aspect of the *Link 5 teachers' guide* is unique and can possibly make a difference in how the teachers approach the topic of interculturality.

4.1.1.2 Presentations of people in *Explore 5*

In *Explore 2020* (Edwards et al., 2020, p 50-51), a change was made to the subchapter "kids around the world" from the 2015 edition. In the subchapter further below on "missed opportunities," I present the findings from the 2015 edition and will therefore not elaborate on them here.

Both books do have the same learning aims: “Converse about different ways of living in English speaking countries”, “Read and understand texts about English speaking children and their interests,” and “Converse about own interests.” However, the change they made was to switch out one of the children from *Engelsk 5* from 2015 with a new child (Edwards et al., 2015, p 50-51). *Engelsk 5* from 2020 switched Brayden from Australia with Vijay from Australia (Edwards et al. 2020, p. 50-51). Vijay is a nine-year-old boy originally from India. His parents, his older brother Aseem, and Vijay moved to Australia when Vijay was three years old. Now they live in Gladstone. At home, Vijay speaks Hindi. At school, he speaks English, even with his Aseem. Next year the family will visit their extended family in India. Something Vijay is very excited about because he cannot remember much from his three years in India. His favorite pet is a tarantula, and he even has one in a terrarium in his room. He sometimes lets it out of its terrarium, but that is a secret because his mom does not like the spider. Vijay’s favorite subject at school is technology, and he is good at programming. Both Vijay and his best mate play cricket on the school team. He is a good cricket player.

Edward et al. (2020, p. 50-51) also encourage the teachers to let the learners talk about their own family or friends that live in another country before they start reading the text. The upgrade of the learning material makes it more of an intercultural learning opportunity. Here the learners get to meet someone with a very different background without the “stereotypical” aspect of poverty or hardship, which is why this is included in the positive aspect of the “Other.”

4.1.1.3 Presentations of people in *Engelsk 5*

In *Engelsk 5* (Solberg & Unnerud, 2020, p. 24-26) the learners are introduced to Sara. Sara is a twelve-year-old girl from South Africa. She is in Norway to play football at the Norway cup. The learners do not receive too much information about South Africa, and they are explained that South Africa is far away and that Norway is cold compared to what Sara is used to. The guidance for the teacher is to repeat the capitulation for proper nouns and look at similarities and differences between English, Norwegian and other languages the learners might know. Moreover, the teachers are guided to speak about which countries have English as one of their official languages and teach the learners a bit about early British colonies. The teacher is also

encouraged to look up *the commonwealth of nations* with the learners and find out what the organization is doing today.

4.1.1.4 Discussion

The information above clearly shows that the fictional classroom is the most multicultural (Mezzetti et al., 2021b, p.6-7). It would be safe to assume that the five children's home cultures probably differ considerably. Aryan's parents are from India, Mercy's parents are from Kenya, Thea's parents are from England, Jonathan's parents are from Norway, James' father is Canadian, and his mother is Norwegian. Even though all of them live in Norway, the information about each of the children's home cultures is sadly limited. From the information that is accessible, at least two of the children can be seen as representatives of the "Other" in this classroom, Aryan with Indian roots and Mercy with Kenyan roots.

Neither Aryan nor Mercy was born in the country their parents are from, so their primary source of knowledge of these cultures likely stems from their parents. Therefore, neither the teachers nor the learners get to know any specific traits of any of the children's cultures aside from what kind of language they speak with their families. In this case, as stated above, Aryan speaks his local dialect of Hindi with his parents, while Mercy speaks English (and understands a bit of Swahili) with her parents. As explained in my theoretical chapter by Byram et al. (2002), the goal of Intercultural development is for the learners to see past the stereotypical perceptions of identity and meet people with a curious mind (p. 9). By giving all the characters a common ground (speaking Norwegian, living in Norway, and attending the same class) and providing additional information about each of the characters, they have a solid foundation to build upon. The learners can now explore their curiosity and ask what language Hindi and Swahili are without it coming across as an assumption based on skin color/appearance. Not to say that this is the best way to learn to express curiosity about a different culture. However, it is a start.

The teacher's job is to guide the learners, not to draw conclusions based on how something/someone might appear. In the teacher's guidance from Mezzetti et al. (2021a, p. 56) on the "intercultural competence" section about what qualities are required to develop intercultural competence, there is a correlation to the previously mentioned (in the Background and theory chapter) Barrett et al.'s (2014) view on the importance of keeping an open and curious mind without forcing a change of beliefs

within oneself. This offers an opportunity for personal growth. Knowledge of what skills the learners would need to practice to gain cultural awareness and competence is essential for teachers. Therefore, *Link 5* stands out from the other teacher's guides. The fact that there is a small section about intercultural development (see figure 1) for each double spread page provides the teachers with tools to help prevent negative biases. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, humans are pretty impressionable. Just by hearing something more than once, our brain is adapted to believing it, even though we already have preliminary information on the topic.

One thing is to preach about how vital intercultural competence is, and another thing is to give guidance on how one can help the learners obtain these skills. The "how-to" (How to help the learners with their knowledge-Savoir of self and others, and to understand different cultures-Savoir Comprendre. How to guide the learners regarding their attitudes/mindset-Savoir Être and help them with their ability to critically reflect on self and other cultures-Savoir S'engager, and finally, how to help the learners acquire new knowledge-Savoir Apprendre/Faire. Byram's (1997;2002)) model should be a part of every teacher's guide, not as a demand, but as an option so the teacher can find inspiration and figure out their own personal approach based on the knowledge in the books. Since teachers have a lot to think about every day, it is easy to understand that some do precisely what the teacher guides and textbooks say to do. If the teacher's guide gets the teacher to reflect on their practice and help them become more aware of themselves, that could help the learners do the same. In other words, I would argue that by giving the teacher the tools to guide the learners, the teachers and the learners can develop their intercultural competence simultaneously, even though they would probably be on different levels.

Regarding the upgrade from *Explore 2015* to *Explore 2020*, where the readers are introduced to Vijay, the Indian boy from Australia. It is worth mentioning that even though much of the learning material stayed the same, *Explore 5 2020* had an upgrade to include more English-speaking "Others".

In the "kids around the world" subchapter, the teachers are told that the learning aims of the lesson are for the learners to talk about and understand English-speaking children's way of living as well as their interests and speak about their own interests. There is no "intercultural competence" section to guide the teacher in *Explore 5*. There are, however, the learning aims that give some guidance. The word "understand" is used in the context of "understand texts about English speaking

children and their interest” instead of “gaining an understanding of English-speaking children and their interest”. The learning outcome seems to be directed more towards the aspect of understanding the words in the text than understanding aspects of the English-speaking children, which can be seen as more of a material *bildung* approach. The aspect of intercultural competence would be to attain the ability to understand another and not just the words that describe them.

It is excellent that Sara from South Africa got included in *Engelsk 5*. There is, however, a focus in the teacher’s guide on the early British colonies that take away from the “Other”. The teacher can choose not to take this guidance, but the guidance is still there. The fact that none of the children/characters are actually in their respective countries seems peculiar. It might have something to do with the lack of authentic texts in the books. Maybe the authors thought it would be easier for the learners to relate to “Other” children if they lived in Norway or countries that are similar to “Self.”

4.1.2 Another way of living

When thinking about celebrations or holidays associated with fall in English-speaking countries, most people (in Norway) would probably immediately think about Thanksgiving in America. Therefore, it is refreshing when *Link 5* (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 120-121) takes a different approach.

On pages 120 and 121, they discuss harvesting and how harvesting is an ancient tradition for many different cultures worldwide. The tradition that is elaborated more than the others is the celebration within the Nigerian culture. In Nigeria, they celebrate by throwing a festival to give thanks to the yams (the first harvested vegetables), and they have been doing this for over seven hundred years. The fact that they chose to highlight the Nigerian culture over the traditional American thanksgiving is unexpected but positive because it shows that “Other” rich and exciting cultures celebrate this time of year. *Link 5* (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 121) also encourages the teacher to ask the learners if they know of any other harvest festivals that are celebrated around the world. They mention different festivals, like Pongal in India, the ‘Moon festival’ in China, ‘Thanksgiving’ in the US and Canada, ‘Høsttakkefest’ in Norway, and the ‘Rice harvest festival’ in Bali, and the ‘Yam festival’ in Ghana. Most of these harvesting celebrations are probably unknown to most learners. They have likely heard about thanksgiving and høsttakkefest since it is

American/Canadian and Norwegian. However, the others might be foreign. *Link 5* (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 121) encourages the learners to research the "Others" to get to know new and different cultures. This can potentially be enriching for the learners.

The teacher's guide under the "intercultural competence" section of the book gives a little context to how seasons are different in different cultures, that southern parts of Africa have winter while Europe has summer, that some places only have two seasons while, e.g., the Sami people have eight seasons in one year. The teacher's guide encourages the learners to reflect on how different people experience the seasons and highlights subjects like temperature and perception of temperature, plants, meals, and more. By having these kinds of conversations with the learners, they get to be curious and reflect without taking a stance as either superior or inferior to other cultures.

The illustrations of the harvest part of the textbook are a mixture of happy people celebrating, some people harvesting vegetables, and what looks like a family getting ready to serve Thanksgiving dinner. There is a mixture of cultures and contexts depicted. For example, the illustration and text on one of the double spread pages show and describe women throwing away the old, wrinkled yams at the night before the festivities begin. On the other side of the double-page spread, it is the next day where there are dancers dressed up in raffia skirts and masks who are offering new yams to their ancestors and God. The masks the dancers are wearing in the illustrations portray lizards, turtles, trees, the sun, and the moon, and they are symbolic of the cycle of nature. A question for the learners in the textbook is what kind of mask they would make if they made a harvesting mask in Norway.

4.1.2.1 Discussion

At first glance and without context, one might think that this is just another stereotypical picture of people in their traditional tribal garments, which can create a feeling of distance between "Self" and "Other," as concluded in Brown and Habegger-Conti's study. However, in this instance, the garment belongs to a tradition that takes place in this season every year, and for the learners to understand what a raffia skirt is and what kind of masks they use, they would need to see them. The goal of the illustration seems like it is meant to create understanding and insight. How else would a child know what a mask meant to portray the sun, moon, turtles, lizards,

and trees (in a way to celebrate the cycle of nature) look like? Context is essential. There is also a question in the textbook for the learners to make them reflect upon how this could be transferred to the Norwegian culture and what that would look like, which makes the context of the text, illustration, and question seem like an effort to build a bridge between the two cultures.

The teachers' job here would be to follow the guidance from the “intercultural competence” in the teacher’s guide and encourage deeper conversations on the subject and let the learners curiously explore their own as well as each other’s mindset without judgment.

4.1.3 International food

Link 5 (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 178-) includes several examples of how food can teach interculturality. I chose the intro picture to the chapter in the textbook. In this picture, we can see three different food trucks, one named "chop-chop," one named "true tacos," and one named "hurry curry." By the names alone, it can seem a bit “stereotypical”. However, there are a few surprises in the menus belonging to each truck. Chop chop has noodles, chop suey, spring rolls, barbeque, skewers, ramen, Thai salad, sushi, and a poke bowl. These dishes are related to Asia somehow; however, they are not limited to one specific country; sushi is Japanese; Thai salad is related to Thai, and Skewers are related to the middle east. The true tacos truck's menu consists of tacos, salads, burritos, and moose burgers. Tacos, burritos, and even salads would probably be expected from the Mexican kitchen; a moose burger, however, is something entirely unexpected and not something associated with Mexico.

Moreover, at Hurry Curry, the menu consists of curry, samosa, naan, veggie burger, hot dogs, and fish ‘n’ chips. Hot dogs and fish ‘n’ chips stand out from this menu. These are not what most people associate with Indian food. In the illustration, we see the fictional learners and their teacher from the beginning of the book, so a blend of cultures is represented. There are people with multiple shades of skin color, different hair colors, and more. The people in the illustration are either ordering food or eating food, and it does not seem to matter where they are from. They just eat what they want to eat. (Mezzetti et al., 2021a, p. 178-179)

In the “intercultural competence” section of the teacher’s guide, Mezzetti et al. (2021a) state that it is essential to know and understand different cultures' norms and rules. Moreover, they ask relevant questions to reflect on, among them; “what is the polite way to ask for food from someone across the table from you?”, “what the table manners are when eating out at a restaurant”, “what the mindset is regarding food in the given culture,” and more. There is also an emphasis on the fact that there can be regional differences as well as differences from one home to another. This might not be something the learners have reflected on before. Therefore, these questions are both excellent and interesting. There is a suggestion to have a “session of understanding/comprehension” before the introduction to the chapter, where the teacher makes sure that the learners are familiar with the terms “street food” and national dishes. As well as contain some knowledge of different international dishes (p. 179).

4.1.3.1 Discussion

Even though specific dishes do not necessarily "belong" to a country or culture, they all have their place of origin. This chapter allows the learners to reflect on food and culture in a new way. The fact that the authors chose to “mix it up” and leave the learners guessing in the illustration is a good thing because now they get the chance to reflect upon their own biases and not just accept the stereotypical status quo of what dish exists in which culture. When reflecting upon it, why would 'fish and chips' not be something they eat in India? In Hoff's study on “Self” and “Other”, she argues that the process of failing is an essential part of intercultural competence. Because when the learners misunderstand, they can reflect upon the misunderstanding and then try again to gain an understanding. This can ultimately lead to a better understanding of oneself and the other culture, for the example above of the 'fish and chips'. This can be something even the teacher needs to reflect upon, the notion of it being strange for an Indian food truck to serve 'fish and chips'. Because it is strange, but why does it have to be strange?

4.2 Limitations in inaccurate representations of the “Other”

In this subchapter, I was looking for the typical way of describing people from certain cultures as having or being less than the "Self" (Norwegian and similar cultures). A

negative association can be many different things. In this instance, fortunately, there were not many direct negative associations or descriptions of the "Other" in the teachers' guides or textbooks. There were only two instances in two of the five textbooks that would qualify, and it only qualifies because not all of the information is relevant for the learner's learning outcome. In both *Explore 5 2015* (Edwards et al., 2015) and *Explore 5 2020* (Edwards et al., 2020), there is a story about the youngest girl (at the time the book was written) to climb Mount Everest. This is a captivating story about a girl named Malavath Poorna who made it to Mount Everest at the age of 13 years and eleven months. A genuinely incredible accomplishment at any age, and somehow her family's socioeconomic status became an aspect of the story. Then there was the introduction to Thulani, a South African boy. He and three other children were presented to the learners in Edwards et al., (2020) *Explore 5*. In the textbook, the information written about Thulani had a different angle than the background information the teacher was guided to offer the learners. There was also something worth discussing about the visual presentation of these four children presented in that chapter that I will address in 4.2.2.

4.2.1 What does poverty have to do with it?

In both textbooks, there is a story about Malavath, the youngest girl to climb Mount Everest at the age of thirteen years. For some reason, there is a mention that this young girl from India comes from a low-income family, and poverty is somehow relevant to climbing Mount Everest.

In the 2015 edition of *Explore 5*, there is also a story about a guy named Kevin Jones. He was someone who also climbed Mount Everest, and the story about him is about how he loves climbing, that he had an accident and continued to love the mountains despite the accident. There is no mention of his family's socioeconomic situation or the unfortunate situation of the people in his community. While for Malavath, her community and their lack of means seem to be important to the story. The fact that just a few people can read and write in her village and that she wants to inspire poor people like herself is specified. While Kevin's story says nothing about what the people in his community can or cannot do regarding reading or writing, it also does not mention Kevin's parents' financial situation. The book focuses on his love for climbing, his accident, and that his accident does not change his love for

climbing. Malavath wants to be an inspiration to her peers, to show that anyone can accomplish something great. Maybe it would be sufficient to write that "She wants to inspire young people to follow their dreams." (Edwards et al., 2020, p. 145; Edwards et al., 2015, p. 143). The story is not about poverty in India, so why should that even be a subject in this case?

The learning aims for the same story differ from the 2015 and 2020 editions of the book. In the 2015 edition, the learning aims are: Read and understand text about children, retell facts from a text they have read, and use a mind map as a learning strategy. While in the 2020 edition, the learning aims are: Read and understand text about children from different places in the world, retell facts from a text they have read, use a mind map as a learning strategy, and reflect on their own identity and affiliation/belonging. There is also a difference in the "words to learn" section in the teacher's guide from the 2015 and 2020 editions of the book. In the 2015 edition, the words to learn are: the youngest, the highest, mountain, poor, give up, and difficult. While in the 2020 edition, the words to learn are: the youngest, mountain, poor, give up, seemed, lifted, I felt, and anything. In the 2020 edition, there has been a change of "the words to learn." They removed the words: the highest and difficult, and replaced them with: I felt, lifted, and anything.

4.2.1.1 Discussion

Concerning the learning aims, there are a few things to address. The first one is that even though there is an "upgrade" from the "Read and understand text about children" to include "from different places in the world," there is, as mentioned previously, a focus on reading and understanding the text and not the specific situation described in the text. This is clear in the following learning aim: Retell facts from a text they have read. To retell something, one has to remember words from the text, not just understand the meaning behind the words. This aspect of communicative competence relates more to communicative language competence than general competencies and will not efficiently develop intercultural competence. (see Background and theory 2.4.1) The final learning aim is for the learners to Reflect on their own identity and affiliation/belonging. To reflect on their own identity and belonging is, without a doubt, an essential part of any personal development. Without taking away from that, one can wonder why the learners are not asked to reflect upon

this in relation to what they just read about the “Other” to develop intercultural awareness.

This text about Malavath is initially a good story about an “Other”, at least until one notices the correlation between “Other” and *poor*. There is something off-putting about the fact that they used such a stereotypical way of describing the “Other” in this specific context. The word “poor” is both in the book's 2015 and 2020 editions. Why is *poor* a word to learn in a story about the youngest girl in history to climb Mount Everest? Would *poor* also be a word to learn if this were a girl from a poorer part of the United Kingdom to be the youngest girl to achieve this? This way of portraying an “Other” ultimately leads to cultural biases. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, when a child or adult hears something repeated more than once, they are more inclined to believe it to be true—in other words, constantly hearing/reading correlations between the “Other” and poverty would lead anyone to believe it to be the fact that “Others” equals poor, and this is a basis for a cognitive bias.

4.2.2 Hardship and poverty concerning the "Other"

There were few descriptions of the "Other" concerning poverty and hardship in the five books. Someone being portrayed in that way is not necessarily a bad thing; it all depends on the context and the message of the story. There was only one finding in the teacher's guide's background material. The story about Thulani was only found in the 2020 edition. The former edition had the same section with cultures more similar to the “Self”.

In Explore 5, 2015, on page 14, we are introduced to a boy named Thulani. Thulani is a South African boy who lives in Cape Town. In the textbook, Thulani is described as a boy who wears a gray, blue, and white school uniform. He walks to school every day. He speaks two languages, Xhosa (the language he speaks at home) and English (the primary language spoken at school). Thulani wants to be a blogger or an architect, just like his sister, when he grows up. His favorite subjects at school are arts and science. He is also excited that they have a vegetable garden at school, where the children get to learn how to grow vegetables themselves (Edwards et al., 2020, p. 14). This is a relatively good description of Thulani, and it does not differ a lot from the three other children presented in this chapter. There are two boys and two girls, the other boy is from England, and he is named Harry. The two girls

are from the US and New Zealand. The girl from the US is Madison, and the girl from New Zealand is Jessica.

Madison from the US lives with her mother, father, younger brother, and grandfather. They live in Jacksonville, Florida, on a farm. Madison is a 5th grader who takes the bus for approximately 20 minutes to school every day. Her favorite lunch is chicken and salad from the cafeteria at school. In Madison's school, they do not wear school uniforms, so she can choose what clothes to wear. English is her favorite subject, and she is considering becoming a journalist when she grows up (Edwards et al., 2020, p. 13). Contrary to the stories about Malavath and Kevin, both the children's presentations are neutral and pleasant to read. They focus on the children in the present and highlight what is important to them here and now.

In the teacher's guide, in the "background" section of the chapter, it says that these texts are about schools and the everyday school life of these four children. However, the background section offers background information for Thulani and Harry. For Thulani, the background information says that: Until the beginning of the 1990s, the school system in South Africa was greatly influenced by race policies. There has been a change in the country in general and in the school system as well. Efforts have been made to create equality. There has been a reform of the education system where the politicians have tried to decrease the vast differences between the "races." There are, however, still significant challenges to achieving the goal of equality and equity (Edwards et al., 2020, p. 14). The teacher's guide says that English and Xhosa are two of a total of eleven official languages. While for Harry, it briefly says that Harry goes to a private boarding school and that boarding schools have long traditions in England. There is no Background information provided for either Madison or Jessica.

4.2.2.1 Visual presentation

On the intro page for the chapter in *Explore 5*, the four children are depicted, and they all have a small textbox under their picture highlighting some of the information from their presentation in the upcoming pages. There is a clear difference between the sizes of the pictures. The largest picture is the one of Harry from the UK, the second-largest picture is of Maddison from the US, the third is the picture of Jessica from New Zealand, and the fourth and smallest is Thulani from South Africa. At first glance, this might not be something one would even notice. However, once one does, it is hard to accept. There would be enough space on the page for all four pictures to be the same size. However, for some reason, the UK child is the largest, the US child is the second largest, and both pictures are also on top of the pictures of the New Zealand child and South African child. The picture of Harry from the UK is even a bit higher than Maddison from the US. In contrast, Thulani's picture is not only the smallest but also the one furthest down the page.



Figure 2. *Difference in size.* (p. 12), from Edwards et al. 2020, Gyldendal, Creative Commons-lisens.

4.2.2.2 Discussion

Based on the layout of the pictures, and the background information about Thulani's difficult circumstances, there is an indication that Thulani is smaller, inferior, and someone for the "Self" to feel superior to and pity. This is probably not the author's conscious intention. Maybe the intention was that the UK and the US are "more important" to the learners somehow, perhaps because the learners are more influenced by the UK and the US. However, it does not take away from the obvious, subtle messages when noticed.

It seems strange that the background information is political for the "Other," while for Harry, which is more like the "Self," there is no political background story. Why is there no mention of England's role in what happened in South Africa if the political history is important enough to mention? In a child's presentation of their

everyday school life, how relevant is Apartheid? Since there was no mention of Thulani's concern for racial differences and equality, it seems peculiar that the teachers are encouraged to present this to the class. It is not something to mention as a small insignificant side-note. For the learners to be able to get an understanding of Apartheid, there should be set aside more than a couple of minutes to mention it.

The depiction and the background information can be perceived as saying that the learners should feel sorry for the boy from South Africa because his life is more complicated than that of the other three children. (After all, there have been and still are many challenges in South Africa regarding racism and lack of equality.) This is a dangerous signal to send because it supports the essentialist understanding of culture being static and unable to change (Hoff, 2018). There is no information about any of the four children that indicates that they live a hard life. There would need to be a lot more information about each of them to know whether or not their life is challenging and demanding. The policies of South Africa might not be something Thulani is even aware of at that point. He might live a sheltered life, but now his life is tainted and forever linked to the matter of policies, which does not seem fair.

There was no background information about the history of how enslaved people and the native Americans were educated or when and how education became accessible to all citizens in the US as background information for Maddison. Even though Apartheid is more recent than slavery in the US, it does not take away from the importance of this historical aspect in the US. From what has been shown in the media over the last few years from the Black Lives Matter movement, it would seem like there are still challenges with equality/equity in the public school system in the States, which makes it even more questionable why South Africa's history and not the US's history is mentioned as guidance for teachers to teach. (Edwards et al., 2020)

4.3 Some missed opportunities to learn about the English-speaking "Other."

In all the textbooks/teachers' guides, there were missed opportunities to learn about the "Other." A missed opportunity in this instance means an opportunity to learn about English-speaking cultures/countries that seem foreign and different from our own, like India, South Africa, Nigeria, and more. Instead of learning about the

"Other," the books discuss the culture similar to "Self," like the UK, the US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. Some of the textbooks had chapters that talked about traveling to English-speaking countries while only presenting the UK, while in other instances, there was a presentation of the "Other," but it was very limited, and the learning outcome seemed very small/narrow. Some selected examples of the findings will be presented below.

4.3.1 English speaking children

In all the textbooks, the learners are introduced to American, English, and Australian-speaking children and culture somehow. Most of the introductions to English-speaking culture were dedicated to the UK, the US, and Australia. In the subchapter above, "positive portrayal of culture", we looked at how Mezzetti et al. (2021a) introduced the fictional characters and how the teacher was encouraged to teach this topic. Even though Mezzetti et al. included what kind of language the characters spoke and elaborated a bit, the information about each character's cultural background could have been discussed in more detail. However, the guidance on how the teacher should work with the teaching material, in some sense, made up for the lack of information since it opened up to more opportunities.

In the examples below, there are similar topics. There is, however, less of an intercultural focus on how the teachers should work with the learning material, and they are therefore also considered missed opportunities.

4.3.1.1 *Stairs 5*

In the subchapter "Families are different," Solberg and Unnerud (2006a, p. 31; 2006b, p. 8-9) introduces the learner and the teacher to three characters that will follow them through the year, Fatima (10), Ian (11), and Emma (10). They all have different cultural backgrounds and live in the UK. Fatima's grandparents were born in Pakistan, while she, her two older sisters, her older brother, and her parents were born and live in England. Moreover, she describes herself as a brown-eyed, dark-skinned girl with long, straight, black hair who loves to play football when she is with friends. Ian, think he looks like a mad professor in the mornings because of his big hair, which he hates. He has green eyes, pale skin, and freckles. He lives with his parents and older brother in Scotland. Ian's family has a dog named Topsy, and Ian

has his own horse named Polly. Emma lives with her adoptive mother, father, and younger sister in England. She has long black hair, light brown skin, and dark brown eyes. Her little sister always makes a mess in her room and loves wearing her clothes. Emma and her family love sailing in their sailboat.

Even though the readers know that one of the characters has roots in Pakistan, there is no information about what that entails. There is no mention of language or other interesting information. The focus is on appearance and descriptions. Solberg and Unnerud (2006a, p. 31; 2006b, p. 8-9) gives activity for the learners where they are encouraged to describe what they look like and what clothes they are wearing. Moreover, in the teachers' guide for how to present this in class, there is not much of a description. Solberg and Unnerud (2006a, p. 31) only state that the characters have different cultural backgrounds and that the learners should all participate in reading the text. There does not seem to be a focus on the cultural differences and what it means to be different. Therefore, this chapter was placed in the missed opportunities section.

4.3.1.2 Engelsk 5

In the subchapter "young travelers", Solberg and Unnerud (2020, p. 13-15) introduce Thomas, a ten-year-old Norwegian boy traveling by himself to England to meet his aunt. He meets a British boy named William on the plane ride, whom he befriends. Considering Thomas is traveling by himself, and the destination is England, a plane ride would be an excellent opportunity to meet people one usually does not get the chance to meet.

Unfortunately, there is no specific encouragement to teach about culture in the guidance section for how the teacher can teach. Instead, there are questions for the learners about what the boys might be thinking based on what the learners can see, what kind of pets they like, what they are eating, and standard "chit chat." For example, there could have been an additional character from a different part of the world, but there were only William and Thomas. Therefore, this is characterized as a missed opportunity to learn about the "Other."

4.3.1.3 Explore 5 2015

In *Explore 5* by Edwards et al. (2015, p. 50-51), a subchapter for the learners is called "kids around the world". This would be an excellent opportunity to introduce the

learners to cultures that differ from their own. Instead, the fictional children that the learners are introduced to are Bird (10) from Ireland, Beatrice (10) from England, and Brayden (9) from Australia, none of whom represent “Other”. Bird is an only child who lives on a sheep farm in Dunlewey, Ireland. Bird’s favorite food is chicken and rice. She is good at mathematics, and her favorite subject is history. She can play football, and lambs are her favorite pets. Beatrice has a younger brother called Nicky, her favorite food is sushi, and because of her busy job, her mother does not always have the time to cook. She often gets to eat takeaway sushi or pizza. Beatrice has dark curly hair and brown eyes. Beatrice is good at sports and outruns her mom. Her favorite subject is art. She has a kitten named Caramella, which she describes as cute and playful. Caramella is her favorite pet. Brayden lives in Brisbane, Australia, and has a sister, Shannon, and a stepbrother, John. Brayden has blue eyes and blond hair. He is allergic to nuts and milk, and his favorite food is fish. His favorite subject is physical education, and he is also very good at spelling. He has a pet rabbit called Houdini, who lives up to his name and escapes into their neighbors’ cabbage patch. Even though Houdini is Brayden's favorite pet, his neighbors no longer like Houdini.

In Edwards et al. (2015, p. 50-51), the learning aims for this subchapter are: “Converse about different ways of living in English speaking countries”, “Read and understand texts about English speaking children and their interests”, and “Converse about own interests.” Moreover, the teachers are guided to start the lesson with “before you read” questions. The questions include the learners sharing if they know someone who lives in another country and, if so, where they live and how they met them. Considering the learning aims and the questions just mentioned, it is evident that this subchapter would be an excellent opportunity for the learners to learn about an “Other.”

4.3.1.4 Explore 5 2020

Among the five learning aims on page 24 in the subchapter “my school day” in *Explore 5* (Edwards et al. 2020, p. 24), two learning aims stand out regarding cultural learning. The first is “tell about the everyday school life of children in English speaking countries,” and the next is “identify similarities and differences between one’s own and an English-speaking country’s everyday school life”. This could have been an opportunity to learn about several cultures and compare them to each other

and one's own. However, Edwards et al. (2020, p. 24) dedicated four pages to the everyday school life of The British boy Zaheer. It does not have to be an either-or situation; it could be yes to both perspectives.

4.3.1.5 Discussion:

The four different titles (Families are different, Kids around the world, My school day, and Young travelers) from the four different textbooks are titles that indicate plurality/diversity. However, except for Brayden from Australia and Thomas from Norway, all the kids are located and have grown up in the UK.

Every one of the four texts would benefit from having a representative of "Other." The closest one is Fatima. Fatima from *Stairs 5* does have a different cultural background than the other children considering Fatima's grandparents are from Pakistan. However, two generations removed might not be the best representative. There is also no encouragement for the teacher or learners to explore Pakistan. The "families are different" subchapter offers no background information for the teacher, and the tasks related to the chapter are about appearance and descriptions. Knowledge about how different families around the world function could make the learners reflect on their own family dynamics to learn about themselves as well as the "Other". In *Engelsk 5*, where Thomas as a "young traveler," was traveling by himself to London, he could have met anyone during his trip. There would have been more than just one person on the plane ride. Unfortunately, *Engelsk 5* chose to only include William from London and thereby missed an opportunity for the learners to get to know an "Other."

Explore 5 2015 edition could have made more effort to find different children from different corners of the world with "kids around the world". Edwards et al. chose to only include kids from the UK and Australia (with close ties to the UK). The learning aims are about the learners learning about different English-speaking children and their everyday school life. Here, the learners miss out on the "Other's" way of living, which could be an interesting way of learning about someone completely foreign, what kind of hobbies they might have in common, what kind of animals they like, and more. It is a shame not to. The same goes for *Explore 5* 2020. There was an opportunity to learn about a typical school day for someone from a completely foreign culture. Edwards et al. (2020) chose only to describe a school day in the UK.

Not to say that the Australian and British culture, which in this context is considered more like “Self”, is not important and something the learners should learn about. However, the learners should also have access to and learn about the “Other” cultures. There does not have to be an either-or approach to culture learning. The problem is that there could and should be *more* room for the “Other”.

As explained in the background and theory chapter on page 32, there is a specific competence aim in LK20 that says that by year seven, the learner is expected to have the ability to explore traditions and ways of living in different English-speaking societies. Furthermore, they are expected to be able to reflect on identity and cultural belonging. To achieve this competence aim, the learners depend on their teacher's guidance. The teacher is also dependent on guidance on how to help their learners attain competence. Both Hoff and Byram discuss the importance of exposing the learners to “Other” and the benefits of doing so. In different words, they discuss how learning about “Other” can be part of the formation of the human and that by learning about others, we ultimately learn about ourselves.

4.3.2 London Zoo

In both *Stairs 5* and *Engelsk 5*, a section is dedicated to London Zoo. London Zoo is probably an excellent attraction for children when in London. Therefore, it is understandable that it is included when speaking about what to experience in London. There is, however, something about this that does not sit right. Because all these beautiful animals do not originate from the zoo, they or their ancestors were taken from their natural homes and placed in cages to live most and maybe even the rest of their lives in.

4.3.2.1 Stairs

Solberg and Unnerud (2006b, p. 116) present a Gorilla named Guy and further describe the zoo and Guy. Guy was a big and gentle gorilla that lived in the zoo from 1947 until he died of a heart attack in 1978. If he found a bird in his enclosure, he would pick them up, look at them, and set them free. Today the only thing left of Guy is a statue in his honor. London Zoo was built in 1826 and is in Regent's park. At the time of writing, Solberg and Unnerud (2006b, p. 116) claim that there are over 5000 different animals at the zoo.

Moreover, it was (is?) possible to adopt an animal in the zoo to provide food and care for it. However, one is not allowed to bring the animal home. As an activity, Solberg and Unnerud (2006b, p. 116) ask the learners to make a list of what kind of animals they can find at the zoo. There is no information about where the gorilla or any other animal is from. The main focus is to speak about a gorilla that died in his enclosure decades ago.

In the *Stairs* teacher's guide, Solberg and Unnerud (2006a, p. 59) highlight the competence aim of LK06. There are two regarding "culture, society, and literature." Translated to English, these are "express oneself in a creative way, inspired by English-speaking literature from different genres and media" and "compare persons and content in a selection of English-speaking children's books." Neither of the competence aims mentions anything about learning anything culture-related. Moreover, Solberg and Unnerud (2006a, p. 83) encourage the teacher to inform the learners about the person that Guy the gorilla is named after. Instead of giving background information on where the gorilla is from, there is a paragraph about the man Guy Fawkes and his accomplishments.

4.3.2.2 Engelsk

Solberg and Unnerud's (2020) new teaching material, *Engelsk 5*, has a different approach to London Zoo than their previous teaching material in *Stairs 5*. The introduction in the textbook (Solberg & Unnerud, 2020) is more informative than the prior learning material, and there is more of an emphasis on the fact that the animals come from different countries. There are some facts about London Zoo. However, here there is more of a reflective approach to what a zoo is, how the animals live, and where they come from. Two animals are depicted on the second page, a penguin from South America and a Gorilla from Africa. In the section for the teachers, the teacher is encouraged to use the pictures to ask the learners what kind of animals they see, where the animals would live in the wild, and if the learners have been to a zoo, and if so, which animals they saw there. Moreover, the teacher is encouraged to share that the animals are from Africa, South America, and Asia, tell the learners that the zoo strives to create a place that resembles their natural home, and ask the learners what they think that would entail.

Solberg and Unnerud (2020, p. 118-119) further introduce a lion pride, lemurs, and tigers. There is a brief explanation of what a lion and a lemur are, while there is

only a tiger picture. The teacher is encouraged to play a guessing game with the learner where the learners get a note to put on their forehead with an animal on it. So, they must guess which animal they are. This can be an excellent way to learn more about each animal and the culture/country related to the animal. There is definitively an upgrade to this learning material, however. There could be more emphasis on which English-speaking countries these animals originated from. That would be an exciting and fun way to learn about aspects of the “Other”. Since the emphasis was on London Zoo and not really on intercultural learning, this was filed as a missed opportunity.

4.3.2.3 Discussion

Contrary to the subchapter on English-speaking children above, this chapter includes aspects of the “Other”. In both *Engelsk 5* and *Stairs 5*, a chapter includes the London Zoo. The fact that most of the animals’ countries of origin are from the countries of the “Others” makes it seem strange that the way to mention these animals is, for the most part, limited to talking about a zoo in London. Not only do the animals not naturally belong in cages, but this would be an excellent opportunity to teach the learners about parts of Africa and Asia. The learners could learn about where the lions live, how the elephants survive in the wild, what a jungle is, and more. This would be a positive and interesting topic of conversation regarding the English-speaking “Other’s” culture.

4.4 LK06, LK20, teacher’s guides, and discussion

This subchapter will present what the competence aims for after year seven in the two curricula and what the teacher’s guides say about culture. Then based on the findings from the teacher's guides above, there will be a brief discussion/conversation about the changes and the teaching materials function.

In LK06, for what a learner should know by the end of year seven, there is one competence aim that mentions culture specifically and one competence aim that indirectly talks about cultural competence. The learning aim that specifically uses the word culture is: “converse about how people live and socialize in different cultures in English-speaking countries and in Norway, including the Sami culture” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 8). Moreover, the one that indirectly speaks about

cultural learning is: “narrate about people, places and events in English-speaking countries” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 8). In LK20, there was one competence aim to mention culture and what knowledge to have after year seven, and that is: “investigate ways of living and traditions in different societies in the English-speaking world and in Norway and reflect on identity and cultural belonging” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p.8)

In most of the teacher`s guides, introduction sections were dedicated to “culture” or interculturality. Some books had one line, others had pages, and only one of the books did not have anything about culture in the introductory pages. Below is a description of what each of the teacher`s guides says about culture.

In *Explore 5*, the 2015 edition, there are a couple of lines in the section for “practical tips for the education” where it says that throughout the textbook, the learners will experience text of different lengths and genres, both literary texts and multidisciplinary factual texts. These texts will, among other things, develop cultural competence in other English-speaking countries. (Edwards et al., 2015, p. III)

In *Explore 5*, the 2020 edition, the word culture is not mentioned in the “practical tips for the education” what is mentioned is that to create situations where the learners get to practice what they have learned, independent in new contexts is a way in which *Explore 5* facilitate in-depth learning. The teacher`s guide will provide proper tools for the teacher to help the learners develop their multilanguage- and intercultural competence. (Edwards et al., 2020, p. III)

Stairs 5 p. 10 states that the learners should be able to use the English language's different cultural expressions. That the learners will learn about literature, culture, way of living, traditions, and customs in the English speaking countries. They will achieve this by participating in plays, performing poems, and working with children's literature from English-speaking countries. (Solberg and Unnerud 2006a, p. 10)

In *Engelsk 5*, a brief description says that within the English subject, public health and the mastery of life are connected to ways of expressing oneself and gaining the ability to understand others' way of living and life situations. Under this explanation, there is a quote from LK20 that says that democracy and citizenship in the English subject involve learners learning about different cultures and ways of

living through English learning and that by learning this, they will understand their view of the world is culture-dependent. (Solberg and Unnerud 2020, p. 4)

Link 5 has approximately two pages (6-7) dedicated to the intercultural perspective. The two pages include, among other things, the emphasis on the individual, that culture is more than a country. A lot of the intuitive processes from early-on language and communication development open up to understanding and insight for others by increased awareness. It will help develop the ability to see things from a different perspective. A goal is to develop empathy and understanding for people not behaving and acting like themselves and that the way one does things are not necessarily the only proper way to do them. Moreover, Intercultural learning can be tied up to sociocultural pedagogical beliefs, meaning the belief that learning occurs during interactions with others. That one uses oneself as a foundation to understand others. Language learning revolves around language in context, and an example would be norms in the form of politeness, how to behave, and more. A “how-to” develop intercultural competence also explains that contrasting and comparing are tools to use in the EFL classroom. Contrasting can be done by reading through texts, watching movies, studying pictures, and then discussing the differences. Comparing can be done by reading texts, watching movies, or studying pictures, then asking what the learners recognize and looking for similarities. (Mezzetti et al. 2021a, p. 6-7)

In the Background and theory chapter of the thesis, it is mentioned that there are no specific guidelines on how to obtain (inter)cultural competence in LK06. This correlates to the findings of the two LK06 teacher`s guides regarding both the view on culture in the introduction and the presentation of the “Other”. There were very few (if any) findings of “Others” in *Stairs 5* and *Explore 5*. The one example of Malavath elaborated in subchapter 4.2.1 found stereotypical information, where poverty is highlighted when someone from a country like India is mentioned. Other than that, quite many missed opportunities were found in the two books. One can say that since LK06 does not have a focus on interculturality, there is no wonder that the following teacher's guides had the same focus.

One could expect a change to the new teachers guides since there were changes in the intercultural perspective from LK06 to LK20 (see background and theory chapter page 31 for elaboration). The main changes from LK06-LK20

regarding intercultural development are found in the “core elements”. The core element concerning culture from LK06 is “development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between persons with different cultural backgrounds. Thus, language and cultural competence promote the general education perspective and strengthen democratic involvement and co-citizenship.” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2013, p. 2) While in LK20, the competence aims are about how working with English texts will help the learner to develop “knowledge and experience of linguistic and cultural diversity, as well as [...] insight into ways of living, ways of thinking and traditions of indigenous peoples” (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p. 3). Furthermore, Ministry of Education and Research (2019) states that learners will develop intercultural competence “by reflecting on, interpreting and critically assessing different types of text in English” (p. 3) by doing so the learners will “acquire language and knowledge of culture and society” (p. 3) which in return will enable the learners to master the different aspects of life better. The Ministry of Education and Research (2019) further explains that by learning this, the learners will have built a foundation for how to see “Self” and “Other” in a “multilingual and multicultural context.” (p. 3). There is also information about the intercultural aspect in the relevance and central values part of LK20. An example is how the English subject is meant to provide the learners with a foundation with others regardless of their cultural background, and that by achieving these goals, the learners will be open to new and curious ways of interpreting the world, and that ultimately this will help prevent prejudice. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019, p.2).

From this noticeable upgrade from LK06 to LK20 regarding interculturality, one should expect to find more intercultural meetings with “Others”. When looking at how the authors of *Stairs 5* vs. *Engelsk 5* chose to change, there is the example of Sara from South Africa. In *stairs 5*, we did not get to know anyone like Sara, so it was nice to be introduced to her in *Engelsk 5*. Unfortunately, there was more encouragement to look at the British point of view than to learn more about South Africa in the teacher's guide, which can be considered a missed opportunity. However, there was an upgrade to include Sara, which is positive. Maybe they will include more (authentic) information next time and encourage the teacher to research more about the specific country independent from the British colonies.

Regarding the *Explore 5* 2015 and 2020 edition, the authors Edward et al.'s chose to keep the story of Malavath from India and to keep *poor* as a word to learn in the context of the world's youngest girl to climb Mount Everest. Respectfully, this is not an upgrade, in my opinion. However, they did decide to include Thulani from South Africa in the 2020 edition, which was a good choice. Thulani is portrayed as the other children in the textbook, and that part was good. The troublesome part of the teacher's guide was that the background information (which is considered important information to learn) did not fit the context of the chapter. The background information about the effect of Apartheid should be covered as its own topic, not as a side note to what it is like to grow up in South Africa today. One can wonder if the same background information would be provided if Thulani was a "white" South African.

In *Link 5*, Mezzetti et al. did a good job compared to the other books. They included a section for "intercultural development" in every double-spread page throughout the book. There could have been more presentation of "Other" in the textbook. However, the "how-to" guidance with advice on how to approach aspects of interculturality made up for it.

As stated in the Background and theory chapter, the concept of *Bildung* has a significant role in the Norwegian school system. Within this concept is the aspect of formation, rather, the development of the learners to become democratic citizens. Developing intercultural competence is a part of this development at school. The teachers need guidance to guide the learners in this developing process. The guidance most assessable for them is that from the learning material. However, it would be unrealistic to believe that every EFL teacher has the time, the mental capacity, and the knowledge to research and find their own teaching material.

5 Conclusion

While conducting my analyses of teacher's guides searching for positive presentations of "Other", I found a few. For example, Mezzetti et al. (2020a) introduced the learners to Nigerian traditions, they showed how food could be an excellent intercultural learning opportunity, and their fictional characters originated from all corners of the world. Mezzetti et al. (2020a) indeed have a different perspective on interculturality and its importance than the four other books. The way

they advised and guided the teacher on “how to” approach the topic of interculturality, in a sense, made up for their lack of authentic text and the fact that none of the representatives for “Others” were located in their respective countries.

As an upgrade from *Explore 5* (2015) to *Explore 5* (2020), Edwards et al. (2020) exchanged Brayden with Vijay. Both boys live in Australia. However, Vijay’s country of origin is India. This was a positive change. However, the same issue regarding the person not living in their respective country was also seen here. Solberg and Unnerud (2020) included Sara from South Africa in *Engelsk 5*, Sara was a good representative for “Other”, so they did a good job including her. However, it was a shame that the focus for the teacher was to talk about early British colonies and not elaborate more on South Africa.

As for the more “irrelevant” presentations of “Other”, there were the examples of Malavath and Thulani, both found in *Explore 2020*. Edwards et al. (2020) chose two different approaches to the texts, one about Malavath and the other about Thulani.

Malavath, the youngest girl to climb Mount Everest, had the word *poor* as a *word to learn* from her text in the learner’s textbook. In comparison, the teacher’s guide told the teacher to mention the effect of Apartheid in Thulani’s text about himself, where no mention of hardship, inequality, or poverty occurred. There was also the visual component for Thulani, where his picture was smaller than the others. These correlations between “Other” and poverty/hardship/inferiority promote a stereotypical, static, essentialist view/understanding of the “Other”. However, the text could and should promote a realistic perspective, meaning that there is more to the “Other” than poverty and hardship. Hoff (2018) explains that this fluid and more complex approach to culture teaching is known as a non-essentialist view.

All the books had missed opportunities to teach/learn about the “Other” Mezzetti et al. (2020a) were the only ones that made up for this by how they guided the teachers to approach interculturality. However, they and the others could benefit from including more representatives and authentic texts of “Other” in their next editions.

Throughout the analysis, there were no apparent findings of information about “Other” from authentic sources. There were rewritten texts that were easy for the learners to read for the most part. However, there was no guidance on where to find

such authentic text or how to use them. Hoff (2018) claims that exposure to challenging texts is a great way to gain a better understanding of “Other” and “Self”. By failing to understand, one needs to reassess, reflect and try to understand again. The authors of these teacher’s guides should be encouraged to provide better guidance, either by including such text/images/movies or by guiding the teacher in how to find and/or use them in the lessons.

There are clear benefits of developing intercultural competence. Different words are used to explain the process and what it entails, but they always seem to revolve around human development. Byram’s model (1997; 2002) can be seen as a tool kit that the teachers can use to help the learners develop intercultural competence. An important goal within intercultural competence is to achieve a curious, open-minded, and accepting attitude, which ultimately will lead one to grow as an empathetic and understanding human. This idea is supported by Byram (2002), Hoff (2018), the Ministry of Education and Research (2017), and Biesta (2002).

There is also an apparent correlation between communicative competence, intercultural competence, and *Bildung*. In order to understand different cultures, one is reliant on communicative competence. An aspect of communicative competence that is beneficial for the learners to learn is pragmatics. By gaining pragmatic competence, the learners can learn to interpret the context for language use and, in that way, better understand and reflect upon the “Other” as well as “Self”. This is related to intercultural competence to gain an understanding of “Self” and “Other”. This again is related to *Bildung* as the teacher-guided, autonomous self-formation that takes place in the classroom, which ultimately is a way to develop empathy for both “Self” and “Other”. (Biesta, 2002; Byram 1997/2002; Hoff, 2018; Sjöström & Eilks, 2020;)

There were a couple of potential cultural biases in the teaching material. The cultural biases correlate to hardship or poverty concerning “Other”. The first was the background text about Thulani, and here the textbook was of no concern. The problem was that the teacher was guided to talk about the effects of Apartheid as a “side-note” to a text about school and everyday school life. Apartheid deserves more attention than that, And Thulani deserves to be a boy from South Africa exempt from any political discussions. The second was the text about Malavath. The story about

her being the youngest girl ever to climb Mount Everest, and somehow the word *poor* was one of the words to learn in this text.

Based on these cultural biases, a few findings are similar to Brown and Habegger-Conti's (2017) study on the visual representations of indigenous cultures in textbooks. As Brown and Habegger-Conti found a stereotypical view of how indigenous people are presented in the EFL textbooks, I found a stereotypical correlation between poverty/hardship and "Others" in some texts.

In the battle against prejudice, racism, and stereotype-based biases, Brown and Habegger-Conti (2017) argues that teachers should add authentic images to their teachings. This is something I agree with. There is no doubt that teachers are, in a great deal, responsible for what goes on in their classroom. They hold the power to decide which learning materials to use and how to use them. However, in teachers' everyday lives, there are a lot of "fires to put out". Therefore, it is not only unreasonable to put all the responsibility and demands on the teachers. It is also unrealistic to think they can do it all by themselves. The overarching responsibility for providing the teachers with the tools they need lie with the teacher's education, the curricula, the workplace, and the learning material. In other words, the responsibility is shared. Since many teachers depend on teachers' guides/textbooks, I argue that the guidance provided in these guides is essential for good learning. Therefore, there lies a responsibility within these books to properly guide the teachers in the "right" direction, meaning that the learner's guides do not need to include every specter of teaching material. However, it should offer advice/guidance on "how to". How to include images from the internet, how to find and use authentic texts, provide tips and tricks on how to teach the different topics, and more. Both teacher and learner have the potential to develop intercultural competence simultaneously if the right guidance is provided.

A limitation of the study is that I only researched year five books. The initial idea was to look at a selection of year five, six, and seven teacher's guides. However, the guides for years six and seven were not available, and I did not have the opportunity to purchase all of them. Therefore, I do not know if the findings are representable for more than year five.

For further research on the topic, I suggest exploring the curriculum reform and how the learning material reflects the attitudes and beliefs expressed in the new

curriculum LK20. I also suggest investigating changes in the learning potential and the teachers' and schools' attitudes toward the new curriculum and the associated teaching materials.

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