

# Textbook Tasks and the Development of ICC in the EFL-classroom

How do textbook tasks in the subject of English in VG1 potentially promote the development of intercultural communicative competence?

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## **Abstract in Norwegian**

Det er et faktum at engelsk er blitt et verdensspråk. Som følger av denne utviklingen behøver elever i 2016 og årene fremover god kompetanse i engelsk for å kunne kommunisere med mennesker både i personlige, faglige og yrkesmessige sammenhenger, både innad i egne og i møte med fremmede kulturer. For å være i stand til dette er man avhengig av å utvikle interkulturell kommunikativ kompetanse, som kort kan defineres som evnen til å kommunisere effektivt og passende i interkulturelle situasjoner, basert på interkulturell kunnskap, ferdigheter og holdninger. Ifølge læreplanen for fremmedspråk i Kunnskapsløftet 2006/13 skal «kommunikative ferdigheter og kulturell innsikt fremme økt samhandling, forståelse og respekt mellom mennesker med ulik kulturbakgrunn», og «slik ivaretar språk- og kulturkompetanse det allmenndannende perspektivet» (LK06/13). Selv om utvikling av interkulturell kompetanse er et fokus i styringsdokumentene, viser undersøkelser at kulturelle aspekter ikke nødvendigvis er et fokus i produksjonen av lærebøker. Dette er problematisk ettersom læreboken fortsatt står sterkt i den europeiske skolehverdagen, og er kilden til de fleste tekster og oppgaver som jobbes med i skolen. I tillegg antydes det av andre studier at heller ikke lærerne selv er tilstrekkelig opptatt av den interkulturelle dimensjonen av språkundervisning.

Det er derimot bred enighet blant forskere om at skjønnlitterære tekster kan gi elever innblikk i både fremmede og egne kulturer, samt forholdet mellom disse, og at slike tekster derfor er spesielt godt egnet i undervisning rettet mot utvikling av interkulturell kompetanse. En slik oppfatning er basert på at skjønnlitterære tekster er autentiske uttrykk fra engelskspråklige kulturer, at denne typen tekster ofte tiltaler og påvirker elevene på et dypere, og mer emosjonelt nivå enn sakprosaetekster, og medbringer derfor større sjanse for å påvirke elevenes holdninger. Som følger av dette dreier denne masteroppgaven seg om å belyse hvordan oppgaver tilknyttet skjønnlitterære tekster i lærebøker brukt i engelskfaget i VG1 kan bidra til økt utvikling av interkulturell kompetanse hos elever. Selv om det å lese tekster i seg selv kan bidra til økt interkulturell kompetanse, er det ofte oppgavene som dikterer den videre prosessen i læringsarbeidet, og som kan forsterke en slik prosess.

Resultatet av forskningen viser at endel oppgaver tilknyttet skjønnlitterære tekster kan bidra til å utvikle elevenes interkulturelle kompetanse, men at det fortsatt finnes rom for forbedring.

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Introduction

“It was a moment when everyone came together. You felt it in your heart, you felt it in your gut, it was a special, moving, grandiose moment,” (Didier Deschamps, 2015).

The words of the football manager of France, Didier Deschamps, paints a vivid picture of a moment of ‘communal grief’, as supporters of England and France showed solidarity at Wembley Stadium by singing ‘La Marseillaise’, only days after the terror attacks on Paris<sup>1</sup>. According to *the Guardian* (2015), “never had an opposition national anthem been sung more loudly or more lustily at the home of English football”. As so many times before, language became the way in which people were able to express themselves. In a time of worry and despair, the fans still managed to send the powerful messages of “*Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité*” and “We are not afraid” both through writing on signs and song, both in French and English. This event showed people from different cultures together against terrorism, but also people united through language, and it illustrates the importance of communication across and between different cultures, as well as the importance of language itself.

As of 2016, due to globalization, cross-cultural contact and communication are at an all-time high. Therefore, it is important that education prepares pupils for the increased interconnectedness of the world, and as a result, the culturally complex society of which they are part. This is of course a complex aim, and an enormous field of study. However, in foreign language teaching in Norway, the education of pupils is highly influenced by the material in textbooks. The aim of this master’s thesis in English didactics is therefore to investigate how textbook tasks in the subject of English in VG1 potentially promote the development of intercultural communicative competence. The research will be carried out by investigating parts of three textbooks which are produced in Norway and designed to fit the curricula of *The Knowledge Promotion 2006/13*.

## 1.2 The concept of culture

Culture is a concept that is very difficult to define. However, “‘culture’ in language teaching and learning is usually defined pragmatically as a/the culture associated with a language being learnt” (Byram et Grundy, 2003, p. 1), largely referring to, as defined by *The Oxford*

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<sup>1</sup> Friday 13<sup>th</sup> of November, 2015

*Dictionary*: “the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society”. As of 2016, the English language, due to its global status, naturally involves even greater and more diverse cultures than any other language. The English language carries and expresses the cultures of the world, which obviously complicates both the teaching and learning process of it. Claire Kramsch (2008) poses an important question in a time of growing economic and political globalization: whose and what culture(s) should we teach: national, regional or global culture?

### **1.2.1 Cultures in language teaching**

Cultures have always been an aspect of language teaching, but as population mobility and cross-cultural contact among people and languages are at an all-time high, being socialized into English-speaking cultures can no longer solely refer to the cultures of the typical American or British citizen. After all, the goal of teaching English is not for pupils to adopt the ways of its native speakers, but “to be able to communicate with people who have more or less different cultural backgrounds and identities” (Andersen, 2008, p. 8). Therefore, English foreign language learning (EFLL) and teaching (EFLT) should not only focus on communicative competence in a national context but also on intercultural competencies in a complex, multicultural world (p. 8). In other words, the stakes have been raised within the classroom, as learning English nowadays, in addition to acquiring vocabulary and linguistic structures, is also a matter of developing the intercultural competence which today’s global community requires:

Predictions focus on an increasingly interconnected world, with global travel and instant international communications available to more and more people (...). Employers increasingly want their employees to be interculturally competent. They want them to be skillful negotiators in increasingly intercultural work situations (Sercu, 2005, p. 1).

In the Norwegian context, the National Curriculum for Knowledge Promotion (LK06/13) has often been criticized for being too goal-oriented, which has also been reflected in the subject of English. Mastering basic oral communication skills such as listening and speaking is highly focused on, and teaching methods connected to developing these skills are “often based on explicit knowledge about linguistic structures on the sentence level” and as result “do not always provide a solid basis for the interpersonal level” (Andersen, 2008, p. 87). The five basic skills of numeracy, being able to orally express oneself, read, write, as well as to use digital tools in a sufficient way, are all very important, yet, one must not forget that in

addition to these basic skills, *Bildung* and intercultural competence (IC) are overall aims of Norwegian education.

### **1.3 Intercultural communicative competence**

*Bildung* refers to the process of “developing and bringing out the full potential of a human being, based on his/her nature, but stimulated and structured by education” (Fenner, 2012, p. 374). It “encompasses the process of becoming educated/becoming one’s own self”, through which “the mental, cultural and practical capacities as much as the personal and social competences are being developed and continuously widened in a holistic way” (Fenner, 2012, p. 374). Developing IC can be regarded as part of such a process, and is what this thesis is concerned with.

The concept of IC will be discussed in detail in chapter 2, but is defined by Deardorff (2008) as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s own intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (p. 33). Michael Byram’s model (1997) connected to IC will also be further discussed in chapter 2, but it can be explained briefly as “the knowledge, skills and attitudes which together make up intercultural competence”, which “have been organized in a conceptual framework comprising five *savoirs*” (Sercu, 2005, p. 3), resulting in intercultural communicative competence (ICC), and it is ICC which is the main focus of the present study.

#### **1.3.1 ICC in LK06/13**

As stated in the previous subchapter, the development of ICC is part of an overall process of *Bildung*. Therefore, although the concept of *Bildung* is not further discussed in the thesis, an understanding of such a concept is still a requisite for understanding a discussion of ICC. In LK06/13, *Bildung* is specified to include developing skills, understanding and a responsibility that will prepare pupils for life at work and in society, and to assist them in their personal development. The objective of *Bildung* changes with time and what was expected of Norwegian pupils ten years ago has already changed. Today, as the world becomes more and more globalized, the process of *Bildung* does not only reflect becoming a functional member of one’s own country, but additionally so, a “citizen of the world” (Nussbaum, 2010, p. 7). In relation to being a ‘world citizen’, ICC is a key concept.

In order for pupils to develop ICC in a multicultural society, which Norway has become, education should “enable them to acquire knowledge and experience of a wide range of forms

of expression. The education must promote cultural understanding and develop self-insight and identity, respect and tolerance” (LK06/13), across different cultures, which further illustrates how the concepts of *Bildung* and ICC are closely related. Therefore, in relation to the development of ICC we “have to see English as an international language in terms of the cultural identities it offers its speakers” (Pennycook, 1994, p. 12), and as a great tool for cross-cultural communication in all sorts of international settings. In the foreign language curriculum of LK06/13, ICC<sup>2</sup> is mentioned explicitly. It is emphasized that learning languages enables pupils to come into contact with other people and cultures, and therefore results in a raised awareness in relation to how humans think and live. Given the integral part that textbooks play in the process of foreign language education it is essential that one questions their usefulness both in general, but also specifically in relation to the development of ICC, which the present study does.

#### 1.4 Textbooks

For decades, the use of textbooks in school has been discussed among scholars. In their international research, Leah Davcheva and Lies Sercu (2005) conclude that “more than anything else, textbooks continue to constitute the guiding principle of many foreign language courses throughout the world” and that textbooks, to a large extent, “determine the selection of texts, the choice of classroom work forms and audio-visual materials” (p. 90). Several research projects related to textbooks have also been carried out in Norway, thereof *Valg, vurdering og kvalitetsutvikling av lærebøker og andre læremidler*<sup>3</sup> (Skjelbred, 2002), which showed that textbooks were employed in all the studied classrooms and subjects, but that the extent of use differs.

The most recent study in relation to the use of textbooks in Norwegian schools, *Læremiddelforskning etter LK06*<sup>4</sup>, revealed that textbooks continue to be the primary source of teaching material (Juuhl, Hontvedt and Skjelbred, 2010). However, because LK06/13 is concerned with the different competences a pupil is supposed to develop during the different stages of his/her education, and not on specific content or material to focus on, both producers of teaching materials and teachers have more freedom to choose what to focus on in relation to content. The question is, however, how this may have affected the quality of the teaching

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<sup>2</sup> In Norwegian referred to as “interkulturell og kommunikativ kompetanse” (LK06/13)

<sup>3</sup> *Choice, assessment, and quality development of textbooks and other teaching materials* (my translation)

<sup>4</sup> *Researching teaching material following LK06* (my translation)

materials in general, but also in relation to ICC, which this thesis aims to question. One important aspect of textbooks is the variety and quality of tasks.

### **1.5 Tasks**

Tasks hold a central place in current language acquisition and pedagogy, EFLT being no exception. The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) (2001) defines a task as “any purposeful action considered by an individual as necessary in order to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfil or an objective to be achieved” (p. 10). The objectives of tasks are what make analyzing tasks both interesting and necessary in order to detect their productiveness in relation to pupils’ language acquisition. In this thesis, the investigation of the productiveness of the tasks will be limited to investigating to what extent tasks in the chosen textbooks aid the development of ICC. The present study employs different categories of tasks, which are discussed in detail in chapter 2.

### **1.6 Fiction**

As fictional texts may carry great potential in relation to the development of ICC, this is the focal point of the thesis. In foreign language teaching, Byram (2002) argues that what teachers should ask, is not how much information about a country and its cultures one can include, but how one “can develop those other competencies which will help learners to interact successfully with other cultures and identities” (12). Such interaction, or dialogue, can also originate from working with literature. Fenner (2012) states that “traditionally, dialogue in the foreign language classroom is seen as communication between teachers and learners”, but that “genuine dialogue is much more than that” (p. 377). Ultimately, as pupils’ own voices encounter other voices in narratives, the act of reading can represent an intercultural meeting. Because it is an impossible task for teachers to arrange for pupils to have real-time encounters with different people originating from all the English-speaking cultures, working with fictional texts can be a good substitute. Through an exploration of different aspects, such as characters, plot, setting, and themes, fiction can engage pupils, and expand their cultural perspectives of themselves, as well as those different from them, and therefore possibly enhance ICC.

Whereas LK06 otherwise says little about *how* ICC can be enhanced, one of the competence aims states that that in VG1<sup>5</sup>, pupils must read “a variety of different texts in English to stimulate the joy of reading, to experience greater understanding and to acquire knowledge” (LK06/13). However, LK06/13 does not state what kinds of texts or how they could be approached, although, as textbooks remain the primary source of teaching material, it is probably where teachers will seek guidance.

## 1.7 The research gap

As stated above, culture (e.g. Hall, 1976; Kramsch 1998; 2000; 2004; 2006), literature (e.g. Nussbaum, 1995; Aase, 2005; Fenner, 2012; 2014) IC/ICC (e.g. Byram, 1989; 1997, Byram and Risager, 1999, Dardoff, 2006, Stavik, 2015) textbooks (e.g. Lund, 2007; Fenner 2012; Eide, 2012; Nygaard, 2014) and tasks (e.g. Willis 1996; Skehan, 1998; Lee, 2000; Bygate *et al.*, 2001, Ellis 2003) are all aspects of language teaching which have been thoroughly researched.

Most recently, in 2015, Malin Osvik Stavik completed her qualitative study on *Reading Literature in the EFL<sup>6</sup>-classroom*, where she discusses *Bildung* and IC. Her investigation reveals that “the aspect of intercultural competence is not as frequent in the teachers’ answers as the concept of *Bildung*”, although “[s]ome teachers are quite conscious of this aspect, and actively try to enhance intercultural competence through choice of texts, tasks and discussions” (p. 117). Such views were largely based on “a belief that when pupils read literature, they are communicating with the Other<sup>7</sup>”, and that such a process can “help pupils gain a better understanding of other cultures” (p. 117). However, Stavik concludes by stating that “[i]n total, the teachers seem to be less aware of this potential in reading literature” (p. 117). This complies with an international study conducted by Davcheva and Sercu (2005) which shows, with some variation among the targeted countries, that to teachers, the least important criterion is the amount of cultural information that textbooks offer. Stavik (2015) also points to the fact that

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<sup>5</sup> The last year in the Norwegian school system with English as a compulsory subject

<sup>6</sup> EFL is an abbreviation for English as a foreign language

<sup>7</sup> A philosophical term (Kristeva, 1991; Levinas 2003; Ricoeur, 1992) used to describe the identities of those of the target language cultures.

[s]ome of the teachers focus purely on the content of literature, in that a specific literary work can provide knowledge the pupils should have. Thus, their views on teaching literature show that they focus on developing *savoir* from the model of intercultural competence (Byram, 1997) (p. 118).

Whereas Stavik (2015) studies teachers' views on the teaching of literature in EFL, Liv Eide wrote a PhD dissertation (2012) based on an analysis of texts in Spanish textbooks. Her dissertation focuses on the portrayal of Latin-American cultures, and states that few authentic<sup>8</sup> voices from Latin-America are heard, which leads to the texts only reflecting the target cultures on a superficial level. Due to this, the texts do not require that pupils reflect or discuss, all of which makes Eide question whether textbooks are suitable for developing pupils' ICC. This is also questioned in a master's thesis from 2014, written by Agnes Nygaard, though here the focus is placed on tasks connected to texts, rather than the texts themselves.

The thesis written by Nygaard (2014) examines how textbooks in International English<sup>9</sup> invite students to expand their intercultural perspectives through tasks related to texts about multiculturalism. Nygaard concludes her study by stating that many comprehension tasks are included in the textbooks, and that it might be beneficial to add more tasks which require reflection and enactment in order to improve the overall potential of textbook-tasks in relation to ICC. Also Lund (2001) identifies a trend of tasks in textbooks being more focused on linguistic aspects than questions about culture, and that "the selection of texts, topics and exercises also indicates that the development of the students' intercultural awareness and of their attitudes towards other cultures is no main concern in today's textbooks" (p. 324).

Whereas Nygaard's study is based on tasks and ICC in textbooks used in an elective English subject, no study in connection with tasks and ICC, known to the researcher, is conducted in the mandatory subject of English in VG1. Arguably, as many pupils will go on to selecting other subjects, the need to ensure a certain level of focus on the development of ICC is even greater in this subject. Also, Nygaard's thesis solely deals with multicultural texts. Because such texts are chosen and included on the basis of representing multiculturalism, it is likely that the tasks related to such texts might reflect a larger focus on cultures than tasks connected

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<sup>8</sup> An authentic text is «created to fulfill some purpose in the language community in which it was produced» (Little, Devitt & Singleton 1989, p. 23). This means that it carries the culture of a specific language community (Hoff, 2013, p. 32).

<sup>9</sup> An elective subject in the second year of the program for general studies in upper secondary school



with other fictional texts. An additional difference between the present study and Nygaard's, is that her thesis focuses on identifying possible differences between tasks related to factual texts and tasks related to fictional texts, whereas the present study focuses solely on fictional prose texts.

## 1.8 Research questions and hypothesis

The primary research question of the present study is:

**How do textbook tasks in the subject of English in VG1 potentially promote the development of intercultural communicative competence?**

In order to answer the primary research question properly, several subordinate questions will also be discussed:

- How do various types of tasks carry different potential in developing pupils' ICC?
- How is the potential of each task in relation to the development of ICC affected by being either efferent or esthetic?
- To what extent are different types of tasks represented in each textbook?
- Are some of Byram's *savoirs* more widely represented in the tasks than others?
- Are the linked tasks actually connected with the prose fiction texts?
- Does the wording of the tasks explicitly include terminology related to culture, and what consequences will this have for the development of ICC?

On the basis of the previously mentioned research (e.g. Lund, 2001; Davcheva and Sercu, 2005; Eide, 2012; Nygaard, 2014; Stavik, 2015), the hypothesis of the present study is that in textbooks designed for EFL/EFLT, tasks connected to prose fiction will have a focus upon comprehension and therefore emphasize an efferent<sup>10</sup> reader response, rather than more open<sup>11</sup> and esthetic<sup>12</sup> tasks which carry more potential in relation to pupils' development of ICC.

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<sup>10</sup> Here efferent means 'to carry away' (Rosenblatt, 1938, p. 15)

<sup>11</sup> An open task is "a task where the participants know there is no predetermined solution" (Ellis 2003, p. 347).

<sup>12</sup> Ibsen (2000) explains that 'aesthetics' comes from the Greek word *aisthethikos*, which means 'I feel, I perceive' (p. 137).

It is also important to state that the matter of enhancing pupils' ICC will also depend on other factors than those considered in this thesis, such as which texts are included, and how tasks are approached by teachers and pupils within each classroom. Due to restraint in time, such factors are not taken in consideration in the present study, which is a clear limitation.

## **1.9 Research methods**

In order to conduct the study both qualitative and quantitative research methods are employed. The qualitative research analyses the potential of the different types of tasks for developing ICC in accordance with Byram's model of *savoirs*, as well as Rosenblatt's theory related to efferent and esthetic reader response, and the quantitative research provides precise data about the ratio of the tasks types and other categories in relation to the development of ICC in each textbook. The material for the study consists of a selection of two chapters from the three different textbooks *Access* (2014), *New experience* (2009) and *Targets* (2015), which are written and published in Norway, all designed according to the curricula of LK06/13. Naturally, this also requires an exploration of LK06/13 itself.

## **1.10 An outline of the thesis**

The thesis is structured in five chapters with corresponding subordinated chapters. In the first chapter, an introduction to the topic and thesis is given. The second chapter is centered on the theoretical foundation which supports my research. Here, one finds definitions of the different concepts which are central in order to understand the term ICC, in addition to discussions regarding types of texts and tasks as these are highly relevant to the study. The third chapter displays the different materials and methods which have been employed during the study, and the different steps which have been taken in order for it to be completed. Chapter 4 presents results and a discussion of these results. Finally, chapter 5 concludes the study, and suggests further research.

## **Chapter 2: Theoretical Background and Curricula**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter constitutes a theoretical framework of how working with textbook tasks linked to prose fiction texts can influence the development of intercultural communicative competence, which this thesis aims to investigate. It starts off with elaborating on the role of culture in foreign language teaching, before presenting Michael Byram's model of *savoirs* and objectives of ICC, as well as parts of Martha C. Nussbaum's educational philosophy in relation to educating not only citizens, but citizens of the world, and how foreign language teaching can play an important role in such a process. Furthermore, as this thesis, along with a long academic tradition, argues that working with fiction can be beneficial in relation to the development of ICC, relevant literary theory is included; thereof reader response-theory as presented by Wolfgang Iser and Louise M. Rosenblatt. Because this thesis investigates how textbook tasks linked to fiction can influence the development of ICC, theory related to types of tasks is also included. In addition, this chapter elaborates on the official framework connected with the issues, both internationally in terms of the Council of Europe's guidelines, and in relation to the Norwegian curriculum LK06/13. These official documents need to be examined since the production of textbooks are influenced by their guidelines presented in them, as is the very notion of ICC and how the development of this competence is to be perceived in a Norwegian educational context, and they therefore provide a background for understanding this research in its context.

### **2.1 Cultures in foreign language teaching**

In what Randal Holme (2003) refers to as the communicative era, language teachers tend to focus on culture according to a combination of five views: the communicative view, the classical curriculum view, the instrumental or culture-free language view, the deconstructionist view, and the competence view (p. 18). Of these five views, the first three "treat cultural contact as marginal or even irrelevant to successful language teaching", and the last two "treat language and culture as being acquired in dynamic interaction, with one being essential to the full understanding of the other" (p. 18). It is the competence view that seems to have influenced European educational guidelines the most. The competence view (e.g. Byram, 1989; Byram and Fleming, 1998; Byram and Risager, 1999) "contends that the knowledge of a language's culture is thought essential to a full understanding of a language's

nuances of meaning” (Holme, 2003, p. 18). Thus, from this point of view, learning a language should include a cultural dimension.

Claire Kramersch (2006) points to a change from culture being synonymous with the way of life and everyday behaviors of a speech community, to being “embroiled in the controversies associated with the politics of ethnic identity, religious affiliation and moral values” (p. 11). Such controversies might lead to avoidance of cultures in the subject of English, and an ideology that regards English as “a multinational, culture-free language that speaks all cultures and none in particular” (p. 18). Arguably, such political and ethical dilemmas are what make the inclusion of cultures in the classroom even more important. Whereas there is a common conception among educators today that learning a language means interacting with one or more cultures at some level, Kramersch (2006) states that there are roughly two different ways of looking at culture in current language study: *the modernist perspective* and *the post-modernist perspective*. Both perspectives often co-exist in the same school or university. Within *the modernist perspective*, “the term ‘culture’ is associated with the context in which the language is lived and spoken by its native speakers, themselves seen as a more or less homogenous national community with age-old institutions, customs and way of life” (Kramersch, 2006, p. 12). Such a perspective may lead to ‘culture’ being viewed as “monolithic, like the native speaker him/herself” (p. 14).

Teaching culture has meant teaching the typical, sometimes stereotypical, behaviors, foods, celebrations and customs of the dominant group or of that group of native speakers that is the most salient or exotic to foreign eyes. Striking in this concept of culture is the maintenance of the focus on national characteristics (p. 14).

This is problematic, because

[i]n the teaching of English as the language of immigration, global employment, and global transactions, culture has taken on a radically different flavor than in traditional language teaching. Culture, in the territorial, hierarchical sense given by the modernist conception of the term, has been seen as a handicap to individual mobility, entrepreneurship, and change associated with the mastery of English as a second or international language (Kramersch, 2006, p. 16).

According to Kramersch (2004) *the postmodernist perspective* establishes a much closer link between language, thought and culture than the modernist conception. *The postmodern perspective* draws connections from cultures to discourse, which can be defined as “ways of using language, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and of acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or ‘social network’” (Gee, 1990,

p. 143). Culture as discourse, according to Kramsch (2006), “introduces the notion that every utterance is embedded in asymmetrical relations of power between communication partners, that culture in the form of language is embodied history, and that the meaning of this history is constantly renegotiated through language” (p. 17). Additionally, the perspective draws connections to identity. Identity can be defined as “how people understand their relationship to the world, how that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how people understand their possibilities for the future” (Norton, 1997, p. 410). Rather than focusing on the collective, an emphasis is placed on the individual. Notions from both the modern and postmodern perspectives are noticeably represented in Hall’s “The Iceberg Model of Culture” from 1976.

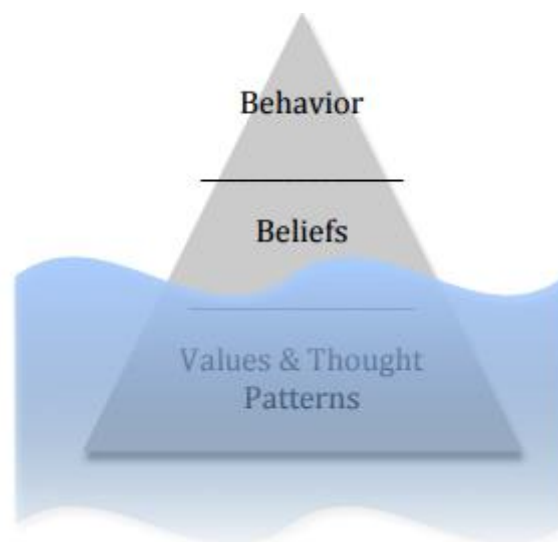


Figure 2.1: The Iceberg Model of Culture (Hall, 1976)

Hall’s iceberg analogy of culture represents the notion that there are some parts of a society’s culture that are visible, which is represented by the top of the iceberg sticking out of the water. This visible, or external part, represents the members of a society’s behavior. Such behavior may include customs related to food, music, festivals, flags, games, dress codes, and much more. This is of course only a small portion of a society’s culture/cultures, and knowledge related to such explicit parts can easily be acquired. However, to solely focus on such explicit cultural traits in EFLT can lead to the pupils developing a conception of the culture/cultures in question as being homogeneous, and can therefore also reinforce stereotypes. In connection with the two perspectives as discussed by Kramsch, the tip of the iceberg can be compared to what supporters of *the modernist perspective* on culture often tend

to focus on. Some beliefs can be part of the visible tip of the iceberg as well, though these are also often hidden below water as seen in Figure 2.1.

Below ‘beliefs’ one finds the part of the cultural iceberg labeled ‘values and thought patterns’, which can reflect expectations, assumptions, etiquette, rules, perceptions, gender roles, notions of Self, modesty, concept of fairness, etcetera. As it relates to a more unconscious and subjective kind of knowledge, this section can be connected to discourse and identity, and therefore reflects the focus of what Kramsch (2006) calls *the post-modernist perspective* on culture. In the iceberg-model, the ‘values and thought patterns’ of a culture are completely covered by water, and are what both literally in this analogy, and otherwise metaphorically speaking, underlie behavior. According to Hall (1976), this part can only be uncovered by actively participating in the cultures in question, and that only by interacting with individuals from these cultures can one uncover the values and beliefs that underlie the explicit behavior of a society. Interacting does not necessarily mean face to face with a person. A dialogue can also take place when working with texts, such as fictional prose. The significance of working with fictional texts and dialogic interaction in relation to ICC will be further discussed in subchapter 2.6.

In addition to the fact that the iceberg-model graphically displays the notion of having both a visible and an invisible structure, it also symbolizes the dangers of what cannot be seen. For anyone who has seen the film about the Titanic, the danger of not identifying the hidden part of an iceberg is well-known. To make use of an iceberg to symbolize culture, can therefore also be an analogue as to what might happen if the less visible part of cultures are ignored in EFLT. Thus, both parts of the iceberg, both explicit and implicit cultural knowledge, are needed for pupils to develop ICC.

## **2.2 The intercultural dimension**

During the last decades, “mobility amongst the European population has increased enormously – even those who are not professionally mobile need to interact professionally and privately with more and more people from different cultures” (Penz, 2009, p. 53). More often than not, this interaction is English-based. Therefore, intercultural competence has been identified as “one of the key competences to create cohesion in today’s multilingual and multicultural societies” (p. 53), both by the Council of Europe’s (2001) *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) and LK06/13, which will be discussed in detail in subchapters 2.4 and 2.5.

In her book *Not for Profit* (2010), Martha Nussbaum discusses what she calls *the silent crisis*. She claims that there is a world-wide crisis in education, and that the thirst “for national profit, nations, and their systems of education, are heedlessly discarding skills that are needed to keep democracies alive” (p. 2), which to a large degree includes ICC. According to Nussbaum, if such a crisis goes unnoticed and unresolved, education around the world will be reduced to “producing generations of useful machines, rather than complete citizens who can think for themselves, criticize tradition, and understand the significance of another person’s sufferings and achievements” (p. 2).

In relation to a democracy being built upon respect and concern, Nussbaum distinguishes between “an education for profit-making and an education for a more inclusive type of citizenship” (p. 6). Surely, subjects such as science and economics are all important to the education of citizens as well, but they must not overshadow what Nussbaum calls “the spirit of the humanities”, which involves “critical thought, daring imagination, emphatic understanding of human experiences of many different kinds, and understanding of the complexity of the world we live in” (p. 7). Despite the fact that Nussbaum does not explicitly mention the term ICC, one can still draw links to this competence, as the kind of attitudes and skills she depicts are crucial parts of ICC, and therefore focused upon in the intercultural dimension in language teaching. In addition to the pupils developing linguistic competence in the subject of English, developing ICC helps them “prepare for interaction with people of other cultures; to enable them to understand and accept people from other cultures as individuals with other distinctive perspectives, values and behaviors; and to help them to see that such interaction is an enriching experience” (Byram et al., 2002, p. 10). Byram states that

[t]he 'intercultural dimension' in language teaching aims to develop learners as intercultural speakers or mediators who are able to engage with complexity and multiple identities and to avoid the stereotyping which accompanies perceiving someone through a single identity [...]. Intercultural communication is communication on the basis of respect for individuals and equality of human rights as the democratic basis for social interaction (Byram et al., 2002, p. 5)

As bringing a foreign language into the classroom means “connecting learners to a world that is culturally different from their own” (Sercu, 2005, p. 1), one can say that “foreign language education is, by definition, intercultural” (p. 1), yet in order for a pupil to develop intercultural competence, certain knowledge, skills and attitudes are needed.

## 2.3 Communicative competence and intercultural communicative competence

In order to fully grasp the concept of ICC, one must first understand the concept of communicative competence (CC) of which ICC is an integral part. Therefore, a definition of CC is given in subchapter 2.3.1, followed by theory related to ICC as a whole.

### 2.3.1 Communicative competence

In the 1970s, during the appearance of the communicative-language-teaching movement, the term CC, as it is now understood, was devised by Dell H. Hymes. CC in foreign language teaching revolved around enabling the pupils to understand, negotiate and express meaning in communicative situations. The concept of CC remains influential in foreign language education, and is included in the educational work of The Council of Europe, as well as the Norwegian National Curriculum.

Since its establishment in 1949, The Council of Europe has become the leading human rights organization of the continent. It includes 47 member states, thereof Norway, all of which have signed the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law (coe.int). In the 1960s, the organization established a common European area in the field of foreign language teaching, which resulted in The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching and assessment* (CEFR) (2001). It is, as stated by the CEFR itself, “a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency” (2001).

The CEFR states that CC can be considered as comprising several components: *linguistic*, *sociolinguistic* and *pragmatic* competence. Each of these components “is postulated as comprising, in particular, knowledge, and skills and know how” (p. 13). The first component, linguistic competences includes “lexical, phonological, syntactical knowledge and skills” (CEFR, 2001, p. 13). The second component of CC consists of *sociolinguistic competences*, and refers to “sociocultural conditions of language use” (p. 13). The CEFR states that through its sensitivity to social conventions (rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations, sexes, classes and social groups, linguistic codification of certain fundamental rituals in the functioning of a community), the sociolinguistic component “strictly affects all language communication between representatives of different cultures, even though



participants may often be unaware of its influence” (p. 13). The last component identified by the Council of Europe is *pragmatic competences*, and is defined accordingly:

Pragmatic competences are concerned with the functional use of linguistic resources (production of language functions, speech acts), drawing on scenarios or scripts of interactional exchanges. It also concerns the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence, the identification of text types and forms, irony, and parody. For this component even more than the linguistic component, it is hardly necessary to stress the major impact of interactions and cultural environments in which such abilities are constructed (p. 13).

Together the components characterize different areas and types of competences a social agent will need in order to communicate effectively and successfully with other agents.

### **2.3.2 Intercultural communicative competence**

IC can be defined as “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s own intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes” (Deardoff, 2004, p. 194). In relation to ICC, many different definitions exist, but it is Michael Byram’s theory which has been, and continues to be the most influential in the European educational context. In order for a pupil to develop ICC, Byram identifies five elements, or *savoirs*, as he calls them, as part of such a process:

- Knowledge (*savoir*)
- Attitudes (*savoir être*)
- Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*)
- Skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*)
- Critical cultural awareness (*savoir s’engager*) (Byram 1997, p. 34).

One important element in relation to ICC is knowledge, or *savoir*.

When two people talk to each other, they do not just speak to the other to exchange information, they also see the other as an individual and as someone who belongs to a specific social group, for example a 'worker' and an 'employer' or a 'teacher' and a 'pupil'. This has an influence on what they say, how they say it, what response they expect and how they interpret the response. In other words, when people are talking to each other their social identities are unavoidably part of the social interaction between them. In language teaching, the concept of 'communicative competence' takes this into account by emphasizing that language learners need to acquire not just grammatical competence but also the knowledge of what is 'appropriate' language (p. 9).

For a pupil to know what denotes appropriate use of language, he or she needs socio-cultural knowledge. That means knowledge of “social groups and their products and practices in one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction” (p.8). According to Byram, knowledge in relation to ICC can be defined as having two major

components: “knowledge of social processes, and knowledge about how other people are likely to perceive you, as well as some knowledge about the other people” (p. 8). Also Nussbaum (2010) stresses the importance of knowledge by noting that “knowledge is no guarantee of good behavior, but ignorance is a virtual guarantee of bad behavior” (p. 81).

In relation to English having become a global language, pupils no longer just need sociocultural knowledge about the UK and the USA or other native speakers of the language in EFLT. Firstly, it can be argued that the pupils are already heavily exposed to these cultures outside of school, through the media and travel. Also, these specific cultures have been, and keep becoming increasingly similar to Norwegian culture. One can assume that the greater the cultural difference, the greater cultural communicative challenges follow, which might suggest a need also to focus on other, more foreign cultures in EFLT. Nevertheless, whatever the exposure of cultures at home or in their personal life is, the pupils must also develop certain attitudes. This is also supported by Nussbaum (2010), who claims that “citizens cannot relate well to the complex world around them by factual knowledge and logic alone” (p. 95).

What Byram (2002) identifies as the “foundation of intercultural competence” (p. 7), is the attitudes (*savoir être*) of the intercultural speaker. Such intercultural attitudes include “curiosity and openness” as well as “readiness to suspend belief about other cultures and beliefs about one’s own” (p. 7). In order to act interculturally, one needs to be willing to relativize one’s own values, beliefs and behavior, in other words be open to the fact that they are not the only possible and naturally correct ones. Other key words are cultural sensitivity, tolerance, respect of otherness and empathy. Additionally, one must also be willing to consider how one’s own culture might be viewed by an outsider, with values, beliefs and behaviors different from one’s own, what Byram calls “the ability to decenter” (p. 7). Research conducted by Deardoff (2006) supports Byram’s notion that it is, in relation to developing ICC, salient for the pupils to develop certain attitudes, stating that “the transformation of attitude, including self-awareness and openness to new values and beliefs” (Moeller 2014, p. 3) is a vital first step to becoming interculturally competent. In addition to attitudes, certain skills are also important in relation to ICC.

Developing ICC involves a shared understanding with people of different social identities. This also includes seeing people as “complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality” (Byram et al 2002, p. 5), and in order for the pupil to adopt such a view,

the pupil will need to develop certain skills. The first set of skills that a pupil needs to develop in relation to ICC, are skills of interpreting and relating, or *savoir comprendre*. Such skills can be developed by “putting ideas, events, documents from two or more cultures side by side and seeing how each might look from the other perspective” (p. 8). As a result, the pupil can train to become able to detect possible communicative misunderstandings when dealing with social identities different from their own.

To develop ICC, pupils also need skills in terms of personally being able to acquire new knowledge, and to know how to successfully integrate it with their existing knowledge. After all, a teacher can never fully identify, nor teach a pupil, all the knowledge that he/she will need in life. What can be taught, however, is the ability for pupils to keep on gaining knowledge themselves. Therefore, intercultural speakers/mediators need skills of “discovery and interaction” or *savoir apprendre/faire* (p. 8). Such skills include 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” (p. 8).

It is, however, also important to note that developing ICC is not about becoming or identifying with a person from another culture in such a way that one loses one’s own personal identity. Byram’s fifth element of ICC is therefore critical cultural awareness, or *savoir s’engager*, which relates to how intercultural mediators need to become aware of their own values and how these influence their views of other people’s values and ways of life. Byram states that “however open towards, curious about and tolerant of other people’s beliefs, values and behaviours learners are, their own beliefs, values and behaviours are deeply embedded and can create reaction and rejection” (p. 9). In other words, an intercultural mediator needs to develop a certain critical awareness of themselves as well as of others. Critical cultural awareness, *savoir s’engager*, entails an ability to evaluate, critically and on the basis of explicit criteria, perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries (p. 9). An overview of Byram’s model of ICC is given in Figure 2.3.2:

	<b>Skills</b> interpret and relate <i>(savoir comprendre)</i>	
<b>Knowledge</b> of self and other; of interaction: individual and societal <i>(savoirs)</i>	<b>Education</b> political education critical cultural awareness <i>(savoir s'engager)</i>	<b>Attitudes</b> relativizing self valuing others <i>(savoir être)</i>
	<b>Skills</b> discover and/or interact <i>(savoir apprendre/faire)</i>	

Figure 2.3.2: Factors in intercultural communicative competence (Byram, 1997, p. 34)

Although one can divide ICC into separate objectives, as seen from Byram’s model, it is important to remember to view the development of ICC as a process.

### 2.3.3 ICC as a process

As pupils enter school with different viewpoints and worldviews, they can hardly be expected to grow interculturally in the same manner and at the same pace. Therefore, many researchers of IC and ICC describe the classroom experience as a process (Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Moloney & Harbon, 2010; Moeller & Nugent 2014). Although agreeing on the fact that developing IC and ICC is a process, their views vary. Byram (1997) describes the intercultural learning process as a linear process, where “learners enter the process from different points based on backgrounds, life experiences, and perspectives, and move at different speeds (Byram, 1997 in Moeller & Nugent 2014, p. 5), whereas the *Process Model of Intercultural Competence* by Deardorff (2006) “explains further the importance of a continuous process towards intercultural competence” (p. 6) and shows how “the journey is never ending as the learner continues to learn, change, evolve, and become transformed with time” (p. 7).

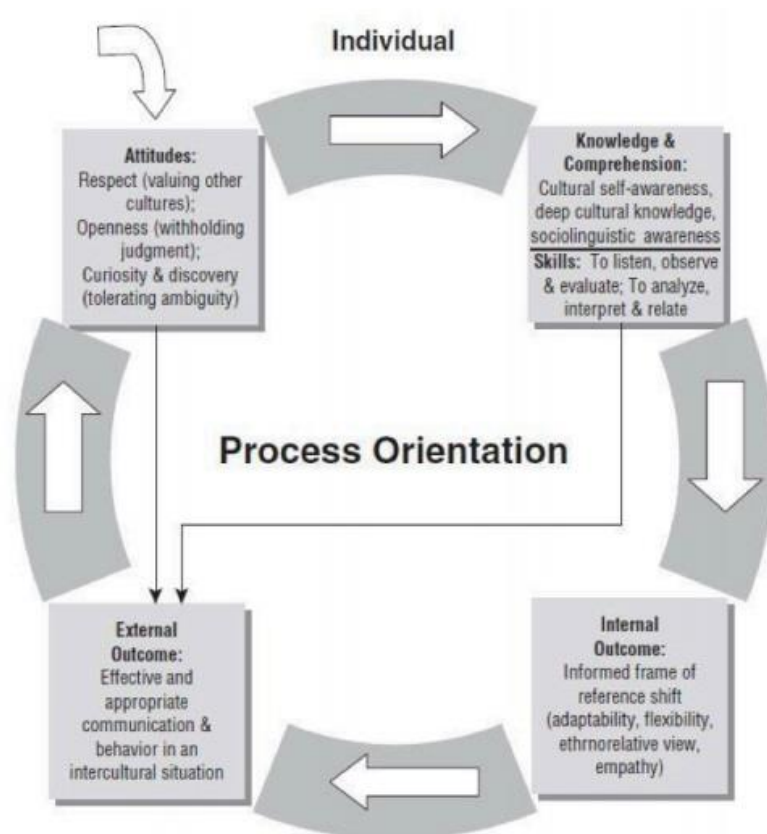


Figure 2.3.3: Deardoff's Process Model of Intercultural Competence (2006)

As seen in Figure 2, Deardoff's process orientation model is circular. The figure indicates intersections and movement between the individual attitudes, knowledge, comprehension, as well as internal and external outcomes when dealing with intercultural matters. Its openness signals that individuals are allowed to "enter at any point and move freely between categories, sometimes moving ahead, and at other times returning to delve deeper into a concept previously encountered (Moeller & Nugent, 2014, p. 7). From this one can argue that it is crucial to view the development of IC and ICC as a process and not just an end point. However, it is Byram's view of ICC which has mainly influenced The Council of Europe's work and publications related to the topic.

## 2.4 The Council of Europe and intercultural communicative competence

In a document entitled *The White Paper* (2008), the Council of Europe states that an intercultural approach offers a forward-looking model for managing cultural diversity, based on "shared fundamental values, respect for common heritage and cultural diversity as well as

respect for the equal dignity of every individual” (p. 4). At the very center of such a model is intercultural dialogue. Intercultural dialogue (ID) is understood as “an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals, groups with ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage on the basis of mutual understanding and respect” (p. 10). The importance of ID in EFLT will be discussed further in relation to fictional texts in subchapter 2.6.2.

In order to promote ID, the Council of Europe argues that “intercultural competences should be taught and learned” (p. 4), and *The White Paper* goes as far as stating that “the learning and teaching of intercultural competence is essential for democratic culture and social cohesion” (p. 43). Therefore, it argues that

[i]ntercultural competences should be a part of citizenship and human-rights education. Competent public authorities and education institutions should make full use of descriptors of key competences for intercultural communication in designing and implementing curricula and study programmes at all levels of education, including teacher training and adult education programmes (p. 43).

As stated, the Council of Europe’s definition of ICC is based on Michael Byram’s theory, which has been discussed in detail in subchapter 2.3. The Council of Europe and its framework have greatly influenced the Norwegian curriculum, which will be discussed in subchapter 2.5.

## **2.5 The Knowledge Promotion 2006/13 and intercultural communicative competence**

As it is a highly influential political document, it is relevant to see what the Norwegian Curriculum has to say about ICC both in relation to general education, as well as to EFLT specifically. LK06/13 continues to influence teachers and pupils, and most textbooks are modeled on and focus on the whole curriculum and competence aims of LK06/13.

Already on the first page of LK06/13’s core curriculum for primary, secondary and adult education in Norway, the need to educate pupils to become democratic citizens of the world is stressed. Here the Upper Secondary Education Act §2 states that the purpose of upper secondary education is to develop “the skills, understanding and responsibility that prepare pupils for life at work and in society” (LK06/13), which in 2015 is a highly globalized one.

Throughout, Norwegian education should “further solidarity with other peoples [...] so that our country can remain a creative member of the global community” (Core curriculum, p. 5). Naturally, this entails that “education should counteract prejudice and discrimination, and foster mutual respect and tolerance between groups with differing modes of life” (p. 12).

In the foreign language curriculum, IC is mentioned explicitly. In connection with learning a foreign language, it is emphasized that learning languages enables the pupils to come into contact with other people and cultures, and therefore results in a raised awareness in relation to how humans think and live. According to the curricula, due to increasing mobility and digital interaction, it is safe to say that language competence, including IC, is a direct requirement in order for a pupil to communicate in, and partake in several areas and aspects of everyday life.

The curriculum for foreign language subjects is divided into three main areas: ‘language learning’, ‘communication’, and ‘language, culture and society’. The last main area concerns cultural understanding. It encompasses topics related to different aspects of the society and culture of target countries, as well as a general awareness-raising of cultural similarities and differences, and how these might influence communication. This specific area of the curriculum also mentions that “intercultural aspects” in relation to one’s own cultural experiences, prerequisites, and attitudes should be focused on in working with texts and cultural expressions such as film, sport, music and graphic art. The curriculum also explicitly states that the basic skill of being able to express oneself in writing and orally in the foreign language also relates to being able to do so in communication across different cultures. Thus, both the cultural aspect, the meeting of cultures and cross-cultural communication are given prominence. The fact that the main subject areas supplement each other and must be considered together also strengthens the notion that the curriculum to a large degree promotes ICC and its importance in education.

### **2.5.1 The English subject curriculum and intercultural communicative competence**

So far IC and ICC have been discussed in relation to the foreign language subject curriculum. As this thesis focuses on EFLT, it is also important to discuss specifically the English subject curriculum, and what it says about ICC. Here the need to take cultural norms and conventions into consideration when communicating is also emphasized. The curriculum states that “in a

world where English is used for international communication, it is necessary to be able to use the English language and to have knowledge of how it is used in different contexts” (LK06/13). It further states that

[i]n addition to language learning, the subject of English shall contribute to providing insight into the way people live and different cultures where English is the primary or the official language. The subject of English shall provide insight into how English is used as an international means of communication. Learning about the English-speaking world and the increasing use of English in different international contexts will provide a good basis for understanding the world around us and how English developed into a world language.

As to why such aspects should be included and given prominence, in addition to the reasons stated above, the curriculum claims that “development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between people of different cultural backgrounds. Thus language and cultural competence promote the general education perspective and strengthen democratic involvement and co-citizenship” (LK06/13).

LK06/13 states that in the subject of English, the main area ‘culture, society, and literature’ focuses on pupils developing cultural understanding in a broad sense, and should be based on the English-speaking countries and cover key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions. However, in the competence aims for the subject of English after VG1, culture is only explicitly mentioned once. It states that after VG1 pupils should be enabled to “discuss and elaborate on culture and social conditions in several English-speaking cultures” (LK06/13). However, in the curriculum connected to the non-compulsory English VG2 subject, namely International English, one competence aim clearly lists that an important communicative skill is to use appropriate language in different social, professional and *intercultural* contexts. The word *intercultural* is not mentioned explicitly in the competence aims for VG1 English.

The curriculum for VG1-English does, however, include two competence aims related to cultural artifacts. It states that after VG1, pupils should be able to discuss and elaborate on news items from English language sources and literary texts from different parts of the world. It also states that “literary texts in English can instill a lifelong joy of reading and a deeper understanding of others and of oneself” and that “working with and discussing expository texts, literary texts and cultural forms of expression from different media” are essential to “develop knowledge about, understanding of and respect for the lives and cultures of other



people” (LK06/13). Although LK06/13 clearly takes the need for a focus on ICC in the subject of English seriously, the document says very little about how the development of ICC can be facilitated in the classroom. It states that literary texts are especially useful in developing the cultural and intercultural competence pupils are expected to have developed after VG1, but nothing about how they can or should be approached.

## **2.6 Fictional texts**

In foreign language teaching, Byram (2002) argues that what teachers should ask, is not how much information about a country and its cultures one can include, but how one “can develop those other competencies which will help learners to interact successfully with other cultures and identities” (p. 12). Arguably, in relation to teaching, a shift from “an information based approach to an approach which involves analyzing cultural products” (p. 12) is very beneficial as analytical skills are much less “perishable than just facts, and [...] are flexible enough to keep up with constant cultural change and can be applied to a wide range of ‘cultural products’” (p. 12). An example of such ‘cultural products’ is literary fiction. Literary fiction can be said to be “an expression of how people think and act as a part of a culture within a place and time”, and therefore “offers linguistic and cultural otherness which serves as an ideal point of departure for pupils to put themselves into different positions, in order to better understand Self and Other” (Stavik, 2015, p. 17). Kramersch (1993) also supports such a view of literature, stating that “[literature and culture are inseparable. [...] literature has shaped the self and other-perceptions of a people as much as have the events and experiences that gave birth to this literature” (p. 175). To work with fictional texts in EFLT can therefore be a very good way of both developing such analytical skills as proposed by Byram (2002), as well as putting them to use. Not only is the development of the certain aforementioned skills important to ICC, but also the abovementioned attitudes that are a crucial part of ICC can be heavily influenced by working with fiction.

### **2.6.1 The emotional persuasiveness of fiction**

Some decades ago, behaviorism and structuralism lead to a reduction of “language learning to a near science, with language learning being represented as a set of techniques that could be learnt, and where answers were correct or incorrect” (Fenner, 2001, p. 14). Fenner (2001) states that within such instrumentalist frames, “literature had little place as it did not focus on

specific practical, utilitarian situations of communication” (p. 14). In addition to fiction being “the personal voice of a culture and, as such, gives the opportunity for learners to read and interpret voices in time within a cultural setting” (Fenner, 2012, p. 375), fictional texts also work on both a cognitive and an emotional level (Ibsen, 2000; Naranic-Kovac and Kaltenbacher, 2006). Fenner (2001) notes that because fictional texts are likely to involve pupils more strongly on a personal level than factual texts, they are better suited to motivate the learner’s involvement and independent reflection which are, as noted, important aspects of developing ICC:

Literature has richer and more diverse semiotics than factual text genres and consequently offers more learning potential. Literary texts are experiments with thought, a dialectic between reality and fantasy. They employ more metaphorical language than other types of texts [...]. Metaphors can be interpreted differently by different readers, and literary language, more than everyday language, consequently provides the ‘space’ where the learners can experience the multiplicity of meaning (p. 16).

Also Louise M. Rosenblatt, whose transactional literary theory has been widely acknowledged from 1938 until today, emphasizes the importance of viewing literature as an exploration. According to her, the meaning of the text is neither in the text, nor in the reader, but is created in the meeting, or experience, between the text and the reader. She states how the cultural moment of both authors and readers affects both what is created and what the reader makes of it. As put by Wayne Booth (1995) in the foreword of the fifth edition of Rosenblatt’s work *Literature as Exploration* (1938), it is this “awareness of the deep cultural embeddedness of every writing and reading act that produced her emphasis on attending to each reader’s stance as a critical part of every literary ‘exploration’ (p. xii). Rosenblatt states that literature is “everything that human beings have thought or felt or created” (5), and that

[t]he lyric poet utters all that the human heart can feel. The novelist displays the intricate web of human relationships with their hidden patterns of motive and emotion. The writer of stories catches some significant moment, some mood, some clarifying clash of wills in the life of an individual or a group. An author may give us the humorous tale [...], the revelation of character [...], or the harsh image of frustration [...]. The dramatist builds a dynamic structure out of the tensions and conflicts of intermingled human lives. The joys of adventure, the delight in the beauty of the world, the intensities of triumph and defeat, the self-questionings, and self-realizations, the pangs of love and hate – indeed, as Henry James has said, “all life, all feeling, all observation, all vision” – these are the province of literature (pp. 5-6).

Most readers will, as part of the literary exploration, seek to “participate in another’s vision – to reap knowledge of the world, to fathom the resources of the human spirit, to gain insights

that will make his own life more comprehensible” (p. 7), and therefore, “literary materials contribute powerfully to the student’s image of the world, himself, and the human condition” (p. 7). Ragnhild Lund (2007) also points to the fact that “when trying to understand something that is said or written, we also, simultaneously, interpret the context in which the text is embedded” (p. 24).

Rosenblatt states that in contrast to the analytic approach of the social sciences, the literary experience “has immediacy and emotional persuasiveness” (p. 7). In addition to this, the reader must also “draw on his past experience with life and language as the raw materials out of which to shape the new experience symbolized on the page” (p. 25), which is exactly what *savoir s’engager* relates to. Not only does the pupil engaging with fiction gain new insight into another culture, but also his own, and himself. As put by Fenner (2000):

Through the foreign culture they can also achieve a useful and necessary outside perspective of themselves and their own culture. The literary text as an artifact of the foreign culture provides the mirror in which they can see themselves reflected; it provides an outside to their inside” (p. 149)

Such insights arise in what can be called the dialogue between the text and the reader.

### **2.6.2 Dialogic interaction**

As emphasized in subchapter 2.4, the Council of Europe places ID at the very center of an intercultural approach or model. Fenner (2012) states that “traditionally, dialogue in the foreign language classroom is seen as communication between teachers and learners”, but that “genuine dialogue is much more than that” (p. 377). Dialogue can be understood as a process through which meaning and understanding are created through interaction and confrontation between voices. According to Bakhtin (1994), it is the differences, the divergences, the tension between different voices that facilitate a deeper understanding, and cause new thoughts to arise, resulting in learning and creativity. When relating the idea of dialogue to fiction and EFLT, one can speak of a meeting between the pupil’s own voice, and those voices he/she might encounter in different narratives. Intercultural communication is easily limited to meaning actual verbal communication between two people from different cultures. However, intercultural communication can also happen when pupils read texts, as the act of reading also represents a meeting between their culture and that of the text. Seeing as it is an impossible task to arrange for the pupils to have actual face-to-face and real-time encounters

with different people originating from all the English-speaking cultures, fictional texts can be a good substitute, especially because literature is undetermined and open (Iser 1991).

According to Wolfgang Iser (1974), the literary work has two poles, which he calls *the artistic* and *the esthetic*. The artistic refers to the text created by the author, and the esthetic refers to the realization accomplished by the reader. His theory relates to the fact that the literary work is “more than the text, for the text only takes on life when it is realized, and furthermore the realization is by no means independent of the individual disposition of the reader” (p. 274-5). The convergence of text and reader brings the literary work into existence. Iser claims that a “literary text must be conceived in such a way that it will engage the reader’s imagination in the task of working things out for himself, for reading is only a pleasure when it is active and creative” (p. 275). One can say that literary texts have certain gaps that the pupil will need to fill, and therefore “discovering and interpreting the gaps constitute an active dialogue with the text, whether internal or external, dependent on the social context” (Fenner 2001, p. 17). Iser’s reception theory is important in relation to this thesis, as tasks should ensure that the pupils are challenged, and that they themselves can interpret the text, because it is in this interaction that meaning is created, and the pupils can develop skills in relation to *savoir comprendre*, as well as *savoir apprendre/faire*. Tasks must therefore not only focus on the *artistic* pole of a text, but also give emphasis to its *esthetic* qualities, which is further discussed in subchapter 2.6.3.

Working with fiction offers the pupils practice in how to deal with different life situations and a wide array of actions and characters contribute to the pupil’s own life experience. Therefore, one can say that “dialogue with different literary texts develops a different kind of competence than traditional language competence” (p. 18), and this is due to the fact that through fiction the learners can experience how language can be used in different situations, for different purposes, and to varying effect (Aase et al., 2000). Fiction also makes it easier for the pupils to relate to and identify with particular individuals and situations rather than the general, both from the past and the present. All in all, through engaging with fiction, “characters, plot, setting, and theme of the narrative text, the drama, or the poem offers them possibilities to widen their perspectives, their view of self, and their cultural capital” (Fenner, 2001, p. 19). If, in EFLT, the teacher or the text itself is considered to have the ‘correct’ answers, there is little or no dialogue.

In order for an authentic dialogue to take place, it “depends on new information being exchanged” (p. 26). What often dictates dialogue with the texts, are the different tasks that follow each literary work in the textbooks. However, the tasks connected to literature in many textbooks show that “understanding language has been reduced to an instrumental understanding” (Fenner, 2001, p. 18), and that an efferent reading-response has been focused upon.

### **2.6.3 Efferent and esthetic reading response**

An efferent reading response is “concerned with what the reader will carry away from the reading process and stems from the Latin word *effere*, which means ‘to carry away’” (Rosenblatt, 1938, p. 15). An efferent reading response can be described as “a more scientific approach to a text”, which “gives the reader the skill of finding specific information that is presented clearly in the text, and the reading response is compared to reading a recipe or answering comprehension questions on a reading text” (Adventsen, 2012, p. 18). To refer back to the Iceberg Model of Culture (1976), as discussed in subchapter 2.2, one can say that an efferent reading of a text will most often solely refer to discovering and exploring the visible parts, the tip of the iceberg, of the cultures represented in the text. In order for pupils to interact with and gain insight and knowledge related to the more implicit parts of cultures, as represented in Hall’s model as beliefs, values and thought patterns, pupils must take an esthetic stance (Rosenblatt 1938) towards what they read.

In contrast to an efferent reading response, one finds an esthetic response. As discussed in subchapter 2.6.1, Rosenblatt emphasizes the view of literature as exploration. In relation to such an exploration, Rosenblatt sees pupils’ personal relationship with the text as central, thereof their emotional experience. Their perceptions of what they have read become the focus – consequently the term esthetic, which means ‘I feel, I perceive’ (Ibsen, 2007, p. 137). Rosenblatt’s views are of relevance to this thesis as she argues “that some materials – e.g., newspapers, political speeches, writings about social problems, advertisements – require a predominantly efferent stance while others – e.g., novels, poems, dramas – require the aesthetic” (Roen and Karolides, p. 60). A focus on the esthetic when working with fiction can also be justified by turning to the educational framework, The Core Curriculum, which governs today’s educational practice, where it is clearly stated that “the aim of education is to expand the individual’s capacity to perceive and to participate, to experience, to empathise

and to excel” (Core Curriculum, 1996, p. 5). When pupils’ esthetic response to a literary text is emphasized, it is the reader’s participation in the culture of the speech community represented by the text which is given relevance. As this thesis deals with how tasks linked to prose fiction texts can promote the development of ICC, whether tasks focus on pupils’ efferent or esthetic stance towards the texts they are linked to can be of direct relevance to the development of ICC. This will be discussed in detail in subchapter 2.8.

#### **2.6.4 Textual authenticity**

Another important point to discuss in relation to fiction, culture and ICC is that of authenticity. The term ‘authentic text’ is used to indicate that a text is not written for pedagogic purposes. Fenner and Newby (2000) argue that it is a problem that many textbook texts are not authentic, and have not originated in the language community of the specific culture in question, but instead been constructed by textbook writers from the learner’s native culture. This is problematic because “if we regard language as an expression of culture as well as of communication, specially constructed texts will not necessarily reflect the foreign culture” (Fenner, 2001, p. 14). Such inauthentic texts are often included in foreign language textbooks to “provide students with clear and instructive examples of language that suit their level of proficiency”, yet it is “obvious that the language presented in such texts may seem contrived, and not always resemble the type of ‘real’ or ‘authentic’ language that is used in real life situations” (Lund, 2006, p. 99).

### **2.7 Textbooks**

For decades, the use of textbooks in school has been discussed among scholars. As this thesis investigates how tasks in the subject of English in VG1 potentially promote the development of ICC, and the fact that the majority of tasks which pupils work with are found in textbooks, an elaboration of other research connected to textbooks is relevant and will be discussed in this subchapter. Given the integral part that textbooks and learning materials play in the process of foreign language education it is essential that one questions their usefulness in relation to promoting ICC.

#### **2.7.1 Previous research**

In their research, Leah Davcheva and Lies Sercu (2005) conclude that “more than anything else, textbooks continue to constitute the guiding principle of many foreign language courses

throughout the world” and that textbooks, to a large extent, “determine the selection of texts, the choice of classroom work forms and audio-visual materials” (p. 90). Their data show that the large majority of teachers from all the responding countries: Belgium, Sweden, Poland, Mexico, Greece, Spain, and Bulgaria, use textbooks in their teaching. Research conducted by Skjelbred et al in 2000, as well as by Lund in 2007, shows that textbooks remain central for educational work in a Norwegian context as well. There is no questioning that textbooks are convenient, but they can also vary in quality, and have

often been criticized for being too rigid, not being able to cater for the needs of all pupils, not being good at presenting multiple sides of any issue or at addressing timely and topical issues, imposing particular teaching styles onto teachers and learning styles onto learners, allowing insufficient space for teacher or learner creativity, presenting a highly fragmented picture of the foreign culture and stereotypical tourist views on the target people (Lund, 2007, p. 90).

In subchapter 2.6.4, the textual authenticity of fiction was discussed briefly. This topic also needs to be addressed in relation to textbooks. Where the textbooks are produced, and by whom they are written and edited, will have a large impact on the usefulness of the finished product in relation to pupils developing ICC. If a textbook used in EFLT is produced by UK or US authors, it implies that pupils are presented “with an image of the foreign culture as natives of the countries see it”, and if the textbook has been locally produced, “this implies that pupils may view the foreign culture through the eyes of non-natives of the countries, cultures and people associated with the foreign language they are learning” (Davcheva & Sercu 2005, p. 92). The latter case can be problematic due to the fact that, as a result, pupils are left with what is often one or several textbook writers’ outside view on the cultures in question, which can be misleading and even wrong in extreme cases.

The aforementioned study by Davcheva and Sercu (2005) showed that teachers from nearly all seven countries use both locally produced books and books produced in the United Kingdom. Sweden is the only exception, where teachers exclusively use textbooks produced locally. The study does not state whether or not authentic texts are included from other countries, or if the entire content is constructed for pedagogic purposes by Swedish authors. It does, however, state that the study at large shows that, “literary texts are increasingly omitted from textbooks” and “when literary texts do appear in textbooks they are often abbreviated or simplified” (p. 101).

Norway is not a part of the aforementioned study, or any other similar studies known to the researcher. However, despite the official certification of textbooks for usage in Norway being

abolished in 2000, one can assume that “considering the long tradition of selecting among a limited number of authorized textbook series, there is reason to believe that schools and teachers” continue to “opt for teaching materials that are produced by one of Norway’s main publishers” (Lund, 2007, p. 17). Such an assumption affirms the notion that the present study is of relevance, as it studies textbooks produced by the three largest publishers in Norway. However, textbooks which have been produced in Norway do, to a large extent, also include authentic texts which originate in English-speaking countries. Had this not been the case, it is likely that more teachers would turn to and employ other materials outside the textbook in their teaching. Ultimately, both choice and use of textbooks rely heavily on what each teacher deems significant.

Davcheva and Sercu (2005) also found that there is a fair degree of similarity with regard to the five most important criteria for the choice of textbooks, which are:

- (1) the degree to which the book is attuned to the level and age of the pupils
- (2) the degree to which the book can motivate the pupils
- (3) the fact that additional materials come with the book
- (4) the degree to which the textbook meets the curricular requirements
- (5) the amount of cultural information the book offers (p. 95).

Despite some variation among the targeted countries, the least important criterion is the amount of cultural information that the textbook offers. However, the teachers mention that “textbooks should make an effort to alter student’s stereotypical perceptions regarding the countries associated with the foreign language they teach” (p. 99). From this one can infer that inclusion of tasks relating to the pupils’ development of *savoir être* and *savoir s’engager* would be deemed especially important by many teachers in relation to working with foreign cultures.

Whereas many of the teachers from other countries point to other aspects, the teachers from Poland mention variety of tasks as a positive feature of textbooks. Also, teachers from Spain, Bulgaria and Belgium are all dissatisfied with the textbooks they use, claiming that they lack a ‘methodology of culture teaching’, as they are “information based and do not provide enough activities or variety of tasks” (p. 102). Seemingly, authors of textbooks focus more on the presentation of cultural information, rather than approaches to cultures, where tasks can be found at the very center. Ultimately, this may be one of the reasons why the conclusion of the study by Davcheva and Sercu is that many pupils “fail to develop a more complex perception of certain cultural trends” (p. 102). Of course such a complex perception can be experienced



by for example just reading texts, but one can assume that working with tasks can boost such a process and outcome, as tasks are often what dictate how the pupils work with a text.

## **2.7 Tasks**

In this subchapter, different types of tasks and their correlation to the pupils' work with fictional texts and ICC are discussed. Working with tasks plays an important role in providing input and facilitating communicative interaction in EFLT, also across cultures. As stated by Sercu (2002):

Just as the cultural content of foreign-language courses deserves more scrutiny than it has received till now, the culture learning tasks and practice activities, which are at the heart of any learning process, also deserve closer examination if we want to enhance the potential of language courses for promoting the acquisition of intercultural communicative competence (p. 69).

Because textbooks and their tasks have enormous influence in the EFLT-classroom, their contribution in terms of input and interaction is crucial to overall language acquisition, but also specifically to the development of ICC.

### **2.8.1 Definition of the term 'task'**

As stated in chapter 1, tasks hold a central place in current language acquisition and pedagogy. This is evident in the large number of recent publications relating to task-based learning and teaching (for example, Willis 1996; Skehan, 1998; Lee 2000; Bygate *et al.*, 2001). However, "neither in research nor language pedagogy is there complete agreement as to what constitutes a task" (Crookes 1986, p. 1), which makes a definition challenging. The *CEFR* (2001) defines tasks as "any purposeful action considered by an individual as necessary in order to achieve a given result in the context of a problem to be solved, an obligation to fulfil or an objective to be achieved" (p. 10). The objectives of tasks, however, are extremely diverse, also related to ICC, and that is what makes analyzing tasks both interesting and necessary in order to consider their productiveness. Some studies make a distinction between activities, exercises and tasks, but due to the limited scope of this thesis, such a distinction will not be made, and the term task as defined above is what will be used from this point on.

### **2.8.2 Different types of tasks**

Among educators and theorists, not only how to define a task has been discussed, but also how to differentiate between different tasks. As stated by the *CEFR*, tasks can be extremely

varied in nature, and may involve language activities to a greater or lesser extent. Not only the form and purpose of a task vary, but also where they are placed within a textbook. Task can be placed either pre-, while- or post-reading.

### **2.8.3 Pre-, while-, and post-reading tasks**

In relation to pupils experiencing dialogic interaction with texts, as discussed in subchapter 2.6.2, pupils' prior knowledge, or the lack thereof, will have an impact on how they comprehend the text, and therefore also the potential of the text and its linked tasks in relation to ICC. One way of assuring that pupils are properly prepared for the texts they encounter in a textbook is to include *pre-reading tasks*. Pre-reading tasks "relate to the topic of the text to be read or listened to" (Simensen, 2007, p. 152). Within EFLT, one can identify two main views on what equals a good pre-reading task. Theorists and educators who regards a text as a finished product will want pre-reading tasks to focus on explaining certain words or structures, whereas a process-oriented approach would stress that "schema-based pre-reading activities should be used" (Ajideh, 2003, p. 1) in order to activate and construct the needed background knowledge.

A schema can be defined as "a hypothetical mental structure for representing generic concepts stored in memory" (Ajideh, 2003, p. 4). As humans experience different events, objects and people, each experience is stored and schemata are created. When encountering something repeatedly, such as dining at restaurants, one begins "to generalize across our restaurant experiences to develop an abstracted, generic set of expectations about what we will encounter in a restaurant" (p. 4). For example, if one is to have a conversation about something that happened at a restaurant, the participants will not have to exchange every little detail about the visit, because the customs involved in visiting a restaurant is part of each participant's schemata. The schemata of each person lead one "to expect or predict aspects in [one's] interpretation of discourse" (p. 4). Orasanu (1986) compares the notion of "schema" to a framework containing slots to be filled by incoming text information, for example when reading a text related to travelling, a pupil

would likely have a slot in the vacation schema for packing a suitcase. Text statements about folding clothes or carrying bags could then fill the slot. If a reader did not have a vacation schema with a "suitcase-packing slot," the information about clothes and bags might not be readily understood. (p. 118)

The development of schemata is of direct relevance to foreign cultures as well, because people belonging to different cultures will often have different background knowledge, which may lead to errors in communication and is what forms the need for pupils to develop ICC. Therefore, EFL-teachers can benefit from providing

the student with appropriate schemata s/he is lacking, and must also teach the student how to build bridges between existing knowledge and new knowledge. Accordingly, the building of bridges between a student's existing knowledge and new knowledge needed for text comprehension (Carrell and Floyd 1987 in Ajideh, 2003, p. 5).

If a pupil does not have the necessary schemata before reading a text, it is likely that he/she will not comprehend the text in a way that leads to intercultural dialogue. Therefore, the inclusion of *pre-reading tasks* which can expand pupils' schemata before encountering a text can be beneficial in terms of improving the skill of reading, as well as the development of ICC. Ultimately, the inclusion of pre-reading tasks does not only influence the building of bridges between a student's existing knowledge and new knowledge, but can also lead to bridges being built between pupils' own cultures and the foreign ones, and thereby enable intercultural dialogue, which is important to the development of ICC.

According to Parviz Ajideh (2003), pre-reading tasks have tended to focus on preparing the reader for linguistic difficulties. This can be considered problematic as research conducted by Chia (2001) shows that what pupils have problems with is not understanding words and sentence structures, but that they rather have trouble when trying to reach a satisfactory interpretation of the text. However, Ajideh notes that recently "attention has shifted to cultural or conceptual difficulties" (p. 6). What also makes pre-reading tasks beneficial in relation to ICC is that they not only carry potential in compensating pupils' linguistic or socio-cultural insufficiencies, but "they may also remind readers of what they do, in fact, already know and think, that is to activate existing schematic knowledge" (p. 6-7). As stated, having knowledge about one's own culture is of great relevance to ICC. As pre-reading tasks can contribute to a better understanding of texts, and therefore also a greater potential in relation to ICC, the number and quality of pre-reading tasks in the textbooks are presented and discussed in subchapter 4.1. However, *while-reading* and *post-reading* tasks are also highly beneficial to the development of ICC.

Another category of tasks which can help expand the schematic knowledge of pupils when reading texts is *while-reading* tasks, although such tasks are rarely included. This might be due to the fact that "there are only a few research studies that show 'the effects of intervention

and their outcomes” (Alyousef, 2006, p. 69). Or, possibly, it could be the other way around, and that the lack of research is related to the lack of the implementation of such tasks. However, due to a large difference in occurrences, it is obvious that the focus of textbook writers is placed on post-reading tasks. Within the categories of pre-, while- and post-reading tasks, one can also separate between efferent and esthetic tasks.

#### **2.8.4 Efferent and esthetic tasks**

As discussed in subchapter 2.6.4, one can speak of an efferent or esthetic reading response. Additionally, one can also speak of tasks being efferent. According to Kramsch (1998), efferent tasks are concerned with what the reader will carry away from the reading process (p. 123). Such tasks often seek information on a very superficial level, whereas esthetic tasks require more personal involvement. In relation to fictional texts, the former type of tasks will often require no more than a mere repetition of a part of a text or some other type of information. In relation to working with prose fiction, as this thesis deals with, efferent tasks typically entail for example understanding the plot, remembering where a story is set, or perhaps which character is the main character. Esthetic tasks, on the other hand, require more reflection in order to be completed, and ask pupils to feel and perceive, and therefore focus more on what happens when pupils read. This involves not only interpreting aspects of the text, but also paying attention to how the words on the page make pupils feel, as well as possible associations, attitudes and ideas originating from such feelings. In short, one can say that efferent tasks focus on the explicit level of a text, whereas esthetic tasks focus more on the implicit parts of it, or rather what occurs in the meeting between reader and text. Another important distinction to be made in relation to different types of tasks is whether the tasks are open or closed.

#### **2.8.5 Open and closed tasks**

A closed task is “a task that requires students to reach a single, correct solution or one of a small finite set of conclusions” (Ellis 2003, p. 339). In contrast, an open task is “a task where the participants know there is no predetermined solution” (p. 347). Due to the fact that such tasks have no set answers, one can also refer to such tasks as authentic tasks.

In relation to tasks and the development of ICC, Lund (2007) states that

[q]uestions and exercises must encourage the learners to develop and formulate their own understandings of the material, in situations of dialogue and social interaction. This means that, although controlled and ‘closed’ language practice activities may be important in helping students master the formal aspects of the foreign language, students also need to be given exercises that open for more independent, varied and creative work (p. 107).

According to Byram (2003), tasks and exercises that explicitly refer to intercultural learning are gradually finding their way into foreign language textbooks. However, Lund’s doctorate research (2007) on textbooks and ICC revealed that most of the studied tasks were in fact closed. One example connected to working with fictional texts, where solving tasks have been reduced to locating and reproducing answers which can be directly found in the texts, is what one can term *comprehension tasks*.

### **2.8.6 Comprehension tasks**

Comprehension tasks are “tasks that are designed to obligate learners to process a specific feature in oral or written input” (Ellis, 2003, p. 157). This kind of tasks is typically efferent and closed. Comprehension tasks can of course lead to a development of *savoir*, but arguably less so in relation to the other aspects of ICC, as these require more and deeper involvement of the pupil. When tasks connected to literary works in textbooks mainly focus on comprehension, it goes against the conception that tasks connected to literary works should be non-finite and open to learners’ interpretations and opinions (Fenner, 2001), especially if the aim is for the pupils to develop ICC. Research conducted by Fenner and Newby (2001) shows that

questions and exercises must be included that trigger the students’ active involvement by signalling that there is no one ‘correct’ answer, but rather a variety of equally valid answers that depend on the students’ previous understanding and on their own active work in order to formulate them (p. 107-108).

It is a fact that when motivation is high, “i.e. when pupils find the information presented novel and interesting and the learning tasks acceptably challenging”, the pupils are “more inclined to reconsider preconceptions and existing attitudes” (Davcheva & Sercu, 2005, p. 109), which is an important, if not the most important, objective in relation to developing ICC.

### **2.8.7 Problem-solving tasks**

As previously stated in subchapter 2.6, one of the most important aspects of including fictional texts in EFLT is that such works open up for an exploration of meaning in different ways than non-fictional texts do (Kramsch & Kramsch, 2000). Lund (2007) states that “A task

that has only one, clearly defined outcome cannot be said to encourage the type of dialogic process that seems to be crucial for the development of new knowledge and insight” (p. 108). Lund goes on to state that “rather than establishing ‘a regime of truth’, texts, tasks and suggested activities in the textbooks can open for the students’ choices, for the voicing of personal opinions and concerns, for reflection and an active negotiation of meaning” (p. 112). One way of facilitating such processes in EFLT is having pupils work with *problem solving-tasks*.

Problem solving-tasks entail “cognitive processing directed at achieving a goal when no solution method is obvious to the problem solver” (Mayer & Wittrock, 2006, p. 287). This kind of processing entails reasoning, decision-making, critical and creative thinking, which are all important to the development of ICC. This is also noted by the Council of Europe, stating that experimental learning or “learning by doing” is the most effective in relation to the development of ICC (Barret et al. 2014). As a matter of fact

when pedagogical approaches, methods and techniques encourage learners to become actively involved in experience, discovery, challenge, analysis, comparison, reflection and co-operation [...], learning activities tend to be very effective as they engage learners as whole persons and address their intellectual, emotional and physical potential” (p. 38).

Within the categorization of *problem solving-tasks*, one can identify many subcategories, thereof *reflection*, *discussion* and *role-playing tasks*. Fenner (2012) states that “textbooks should [...] include tasks which encourage learners to speak about their own cultural background” as well as “tasks which require comparison between cultures” (p. 377). After all, “*Bildung*, intercultural competence, and individual personal development can only result from *savoir s’engager*” and it is therefore, according to Fenner, “vital that the tasks involve the learners” (p. 377), which the three aforementioned subcategories all do to a large extent.

### **2.8.8 Reflection tasks**

Based on the theory presented in this chapter there seems to be a consensus among scholars that in relation to ICC, one needs to focus on “a type of pedagogy that fosters both direct and indirect ways of transmitting knowledge, that values not only facts but relations between facts, and that encourages diversity of experience and reflection on that diversity” (Kramsch, 2006b, p. 11).

According to the Council of Europe’s publication “Developing intercultural competence through education” (Barrett et al., 2014), facilitators need to include experience, comparison,

analysis, reflection and action in their planning. Because tasks in textbooks are so important to how teachers carry out their lessons, such elements should also be focused upon by textbook writers. As previously stated, working with fictional texts can be a great alternative to directly experiencing how people of foreign cultures act, interact and communicate. One way of experiencing can be through comparison. Through comparison, pupils can be exposed to “difference”. When encountering foreign cultures, it is easy for pupils to deem what is unfamiliar as something “weird” or base their views on other possible negative connotations. Consequently

[f]acilitators need to be aware of this kind of comparison of value and replace it with comparison for understanding, which involves seeing similarities and differences in a non-judgmental manner and taking the perspective of the other in order to see ourselves as others see us (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 29).

Here the aforementioned key words cultural sensitivity, tolerance, respect of otherness and empathy play an important role. It is not about identifying with every member or element of a foreign culture, but being able to develop an understanding of the perspectives of others, as well as understanding how their perspectives might differ from one’s own, and “that both are simply different in some aspects and alike in other aspects” (p. 29). This way, learners “reflect on and are engaged in a conscious comparison of their own values and attitudes with different ones, in order to better realise how they construct the other (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 29).

Arguably, textbooks should include tasks which foster comparison between different cultures, and especially make pupils’ compare their own cultures to foreign ones. When working with prose fiction, comparison is strongly connected to analysis. Facilitators should make pupils aware of the fact that behind possible cultural similarities and differences, lie explanations as to why, and pupils would benefit from analysing “what may lie beneath what they can see others doing and saying” (p. 29). In relation to analysis, tasks can help enabling the process. Also, what the tasks should also reflect is turning the analysis “back on the learners so that they may question their own practices, values and beliefs” (p. 30). As result, one can argue that comparison and analysis are of great relevance to ICC, but at the very core of both activities one finds reflection.

Both in relation to comparison and analysis, pupils will need time and space to reflect, which can lead to a development of critical awareness and understanding, which are crucial parts of ICC. Reflection can occur when pupils are asked to discuss their experiences, write, draw, or respond in one way or another to whatever they may encounter in relation to foreign cultures.

In order to encourage experience, analysis and reflection while working with foreign cultures, and the sharing thereof within a class, *role playing tasks* related to fiction can be very beneficial.

### **2.8.9 Role-playing tasks**

The importance of communication is strongly emphasized by sociocultural learning theory, which accentuates participation in conversation, dialogue and collaboration as key elements of learning. Especially the work of Lev Vygotsky has been, and continues to be, important within the field of learning theory. Vygotsky's term *zone of proximal development* is widely recognized, and can be defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined by problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978 in Chaiklin, 2003, p. 40). Peer collaboration can therefore also be very useful in relation to pupils developing ICC. As stated in subchapter 2.6.2, fiction makes it easier for the pupils to relate to and identify with particular individuals and situations rather than the general, both from the past and the present. Also, through engaging with fiction, "characters, plot, setting, and theme of the narrative text, the drama, or the poem offers them possibilities to widen their perspectives, their view of self, and their cultural capital" (Fenner, 2001, p. 19). One especially beneficial way of facilitating or emphasizing such an engaging encounter, both between pupil and text, but also between pupils, is for pupils to use fictional texts as a starting point for role-plays.

During the 1970s and 1980s the use of role-play increased [...] and role-play is now commonplace in university curricula, business, and industrial training programs (Dorathy & Mahalakshmi, 2011, p. 3). Role-play is "a technique in which students are presented with a real or artificial environment and they are exposed with some kind of case or situation and they need to exhibit the same in form of roles" (p. 1). Ultimately, role playing can function as "a multi-skill where the students not only develop a broader perspective about a [...] new role but also the horizon of understanding others' behavior resulting in empathy, team work, better communication, interpersonal skills [...]" (p. 1), all of which are essential to developing ICC.

Role-playing becomes especially relevant to ICC when the character, setting or any other element of the process connects them to a foreign culture, as it then becomes an intercultural experience. Arguably so, it will make the strongest impression if a pupil is to play a character from a culture different from their own, and thereby somehow have to adopt the character's



mindset and actions, which can be different or similar to that of the pupil herself/himself. Not only is role-play important because it can make pupils more aware of social contexts and social roles, but also due to the fact that the pupils are given an ideal opportunity to practice how to communicate within such contexts and roles. Teachers might easily think that role-playing is too challenging for pupils who are shy and not that outspoken, but role play can actually help by “providing a mask, where learners with difficulty in conversation are liberated” (p. 3). Additionally, role-playing is often acknowledged by pupils as being fun, and “enjoyment leads to better learning” (p. 3). Ultimately, role-playing can lead to the world of the classroom being “broadened to include the outside world – thus offering a much wider range of language opportunities” (p. 6). In addition to role-playing tasks, another type of tasks which often involves collaboration with peers is tasks related to discussion.

### **2.8.10 Discussion tasks**

Samuda and Bygate (2008) distinguish between one-way tasks and two-way tasks. One-way tasks are “when one speaker has information to give to the other and two-way tasks where both or all speakers have information to give and therefore also have information to receive” (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 109-110). Tasks which ask pupils to discuss are therefore two-way tasks, and can be influential in the process of working with fiction and developing ICC in more ways than one. However, it is important to note that *discussion tasks* can vary in terms of being open or closed, as this depends on the wording of the task. Therefore, discussion tasks “may be comprehension, reflection and enactment tasks” (Nygaard, 2014, p. 58). As a result, due to each task type carrying different potential in relation to developing ICC, tasks related to discussion constitute a subordinate category in the present study. The subordinate category includes tasks where pupils are asked to “discuss”, “express opinions” and “compare answers” orally, as well as “talk about it” with peers.

According to Laila Aase (2005), having conversations or discussions connected to literary works in the classroom is crucial in connection with *Bildung*, and arguably so, also in connection with developing ICC. One of the reasons for this is that it creates a community where “reading experience and interpretation is expressed” (p. 106). Also, as it reflects a democratic practice where everyone contributes and everyone must be heard, irrespective of whether the participants agree or not, a literary conversation models what the pupils will encounter outside school and can be beneficial in terms of developing tolerance, respect for otherness and empathy, which are important elements of *savoir être*. Throughout, pupils can

also improve and develop skills of relating and interacting. As literary conversations revolve around negotiation, pupils' views might be challenged, and, as a result, pupils can end up with an altered or broadened understanding of the topic in question (Aase, 2005, p. 115-117), as well as of their peers or other participants in the conversation, and ultimately the cultural diversity which is present in such a conversation. Also, as stated by Fenner (2001), listening to other learner's views can "enhance their own understanding of the text" (p. 30).

In a series of studies conducted in British secondary schools, Douglas Barnes (1976, 1977, 1995) explored the relationship between two types of classroom talk and learning, focusing especially on "pupils' talk during group work in a number of curricular subjects, including English literature, history and science" (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 32). Barnes (1976) distinguishes between talk that is *exploratory* and *final draft* talk, and "emphasises qualitative differences between the process surrounding the two types of discourse and their role in learning" (p. 32). Whereas "exploratory talk is characteristically associated with pupil-pupil talk in the absence of a teacher during collaborative group work; final draft talk is characteristically associated with 'well-shaped utterances' elicited by the teacher" (p. 32). According to Barnes (1976), *final draft* language is:

presented for evaluation, and seems to deny the possibility of revision and learning processes that can go with it", whereas 'exploratory talk' seems to allow, and indeed encourage, the active formulation and reformulation of hypotheses, engagement with understanding of the material, and with the thought processes that enable that understanding (p. 33).

The type of conversation which remains dominant in Norway is an example of classroom practice which often skips the part relating to *exploratory talk*. Such a conversation typically consists of three parts or steps. First, the teacher asks a question, and thereby initiates the conversation. Secondly, the pupil is expected to give a response, and lastly the teacher evaluates the pupil's answer, and gives feedback as to whether or not his or her answer was correct. Ultimately, the main focus is placed upon the answer pupils give their teacher, and not the process that precedes it. The kind of active participation and engagement with understanding of the material which, according to Barnes, are aspects of *exploratory talk*, suggests that exploratory talk is also highly relevant to ICC, as pupils will have to engage actively with the cultural material in order to change attitudes and develop skills.

As previously stated, in order for pupils to develop ICC, questions and exercises must encourage them to develop and formulate their own understandings of the material in situations of dialogue and social interaction. However, this does not mean that "final draft

language is abandoned, but rather that significantly more space is created for learners to work their ways towards a satisfactory final draft” (Samuda & Bygate, 2008, p. 33). Therefore, tasks which “open up the dynamics of learning to the attention of learners and to teachers, not merely to structure ‘final draft’ performance” (p. 33-34) and the reproduction of existing knowledge, should be included in textbooks. Every textbook should include discussion tasks which can foster the kind of sharing of views and *exploratory talk* which can be of great relevance to pupils’ development of ICC.

Due to the influence textbooks have in relation to classroom practice and learning in general, thereof the pupils’ development of ICC, it is crucial that they include tasks that initiate or facilitate different types of problem-solving tasks, such as reflection tasks, discussion tasks, and role-playing tasks as they can, as discussed, be of great benefit to the pupils’ development of ICC. However, also included in relation to prose fiction texts are what one can refer to as linguistic tasks.

### **2.8.11 Linguistic tasks**

Linguistics can be defined as the “scientific study of language and its structure, including the study of morphology, syntax, phonetics, and semantics” (Oxford Dictionary 2016), and *linguistic tasks* can therefore be defined as tasks relating to such aspects of language, what one can term the grammar of a language. It is a known fact that “the teaching of grammar has been a controversial question among L2 teaching theorists and practicing teachers for years” (Simensen, 2007, p. 214). According to Simensen (2007)

the most fundamental distinction in the controversy is between those who maintain that there should be no formal teaching of grammar, only plenty of exposure to natural, interesting, and comprehensible L2<sup>13</sup> material, and those who maintain that grammar should be taught formally, in one way or another. (...) In a complementary approach to teaching, however, both exposure and formal teaching are considered necessary (p. 214).

Differences in views related to the teaching of grammar can also be spotted in the production of different textbooks.

Hanne Leith Andersen (2006) draws attention to the fact that if one looks at the structure and dialogues in foreign language textbooks used in many European countries, it becomes clear “that there is still a firm belief in many teaching traditions that knowledge of grammar comes first” (p. 88). She goes on to note that “it should be clear though that progression in foreign

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<sup>13</sup> L2 stands for second language

language learning does not involve a progression in explicit knowledge of grammar, but rather a progression in the learner's receptive and productive skills – in communication" (p. 88), and that therefore, "along with the grammatical input that is often the focus of the progression of textbooks, the many pragmatic and interpersonal functions must also be included if the goal is communicative competence" (p. 101).

A discussion of whether linguistic tasks should be included in relation to prose fiction texts is outside the scope of this thesis. However, when included "[t]he goal should be for learners to interpret and produce meaningful discourse yet also to practice the phonological features, words, formulas and grammatical structures that are salient in the discourse providing the content" (Celce-Muria, 2007, p. 51). Because, as stated, working with prose fiction texts can have great potential in the enhancement of pupils' ICC, the more the tasks focus on the actual texts, the more pupils will have to engage with them, and ultimately, more of the task potential in relation to the development of ICC can be realized.

## **2.9 Chapter summary**

In this chapter, the theoretical framework for this thesis has been discussed. It starts out with considerations of culture in EFLT/EFLL, and how globalization, resulting in increasing cross-cultural contact, is both changing and adding to the process of *Bildung*, which can be seen as an important part of the development of ICC,. Related to this, theories of IC/ICC with a focus on Dearsold and Byram have been presented. Then the role of fiction as cultural artefacts was discussed in relation to the development of ICC. Central to this discussion is how one can distinguish between an efferent and esthetic reading response as presented by Rosenblatt (1938), as well as Iser's receptive response-theory (1974) which distinguishes between what he calls the artistic and the esthetic pole of a text.

Because the thesis investigates textbook tasks, theories related to the function of tasks in EFLT/EFLL were presented, as well as a categorization of how different tasks may carry different potential in relation to the development of ICC. Such variation in the potential of tasks related to the development of ICC is largely based on which elements of pupils' reading process or reading response which are focused upon. Naturally, because the investigated tasks represented in textbooks, the role of the textbook itself has also been discussed. Throughout, the chapter has discussed how the development of ICC and the inclusion of literature are treated in the frameworks which regulate EFLT and EFLL: The Knowledge Promotion (2006/13), the Core Curriculum and the CEFR.

## **Chapter 3: Research Methods and Materials**

### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter starts off by presenting the material of the study in subchapter 3.1, before moving on to a discussion of the research design in 3.2. Because the present investigation is based on both qualitative and quantitative research, both methods will be discussed in general, followed by how, as well as why, the present study employs a combination of these methods in subchapter 3.3. Subchapter 3.4 provides information regarding the different steps which have been completed while analyzing the material. In subchapter 3.5 the validity and reliability of the present study are discussed, and finally, subchapter 3.6 presents ethical concerns and limitations.

### **3.1 Materials**

This thesis investigates to what extent textbooks in the subject of English in VG1 promote the development of ICC through the tasks connected with prose fiction. Therefore, the basis of the present study is a selection of tasks connected to prose fiction texts. The tasks are selected from three different textbooks, all produced in Norway and designed to accommodate the curricula for the subject of English in VG1. Due to restraint of time, a selection of which textbooks and which chapters to focus on had to be made. This selection will be discussed in the following subchapter. However, the investigation excludes tasks on the webpages of the textbooks involved in the present study, as well as other connected teaching material. This is due to time limits, but also the fact that the tasks in the textbooks are the ones which the researcher has reason to believe are the most used in Norwegian classrooms.

#### **3.1.1 Selecting textbooks**

The chosen textbooks have been published by three of the most popular and well-esteemed publishers in Norway, namely *Access to English* (Burgess & Sørhus, 2014) published by Cappelen Damm, *New eXperience* (Heian et al., 2009) published by Gyldendal, and *Targets* (Balsvik et al., 2015) published by Aschehough. Each book will from this point on be referred to as *Access*, *New eXperience* and *Targets*.

Because the textbooks are published by influential publishing companies, one can assume that their products are widely used in the context of Norwegian education. Although LK06 curriculum for the subject of English in VG1 was revised in 2013, and *New eXperience* was

published in 2009, Gyldendal still states on their website that the textbook is in accordance with the Knowledge Promotion. As known to the researcher, the changes made in the curricula were not so significant that the textbook cannot be used for teaching the subject, although it is likely that newer textbooks might include topics and texts which are of more immediate relevance to pupils. This aspect is especially important in relation to the development of ICC, because the teaching material has to reflect cultural matters and identities which are parts of a continuously changing, increasingly complex and multicultural world, which is noted in LK06/13.

The curriculum for the subject of English in VG1 states that “in a world where English is used for international communication, it is necessary to be able to use the English language and to have knowledge of how it is used in different contexts” (LK06/13). It also states that “development of communicative language skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between persons with different cultural background” (LK06/13). In such a process of teaching, the different textbooks and the tasks they include are of great significance as they often dictate which cultures are focused upon, and how these are approached and worked with in class. As stated in chapter 2, the opinion among many theorists and educators is that when working with cultures, fictional texts can be beneficial. Therefore, whether the textbooks include fictional texts can be of relevance to the development of ICC.

### **3.1.2 Selecting prose fiction**

As stated in chapter 2, in addition to fiction being “the personal voice of a culture and, as such, gives the opportunity for learners to read and interpret voices in time within a cultural setting” (Fenner 2012, p. 375), fictional texts also work on both a cognitive and an emotional level (Ibsen, 2000; Naranic-Kovac and Kaltenbacher, 2006). Fenner (2001) notes that because fictional texts are likely to involve pupils more strongly on a personal level than factual texts, they are better suited to motivate the learner’s involvement and independent reflection which are, as noted, important aspects of developing ICC. Due to the restraint of time, poetry has been excluded from this study, and a focus has been placed on prose fiction. What often dictates how fiction is approached in textbooks are the tasks which are attached to the texts. Consequently, in this study, these tasks are analyzed to reveal their potential in relation to developing ICC.

### **3.1.3 Selection of chapters**

As an analysis of all the tasks connected to prose fiction in each textbook would have been too time consuming, a selection had to be made, and the researcher chose to focus on two chapters from each textbook. As the three textbooks have different structures when it comes to the division of material into chapters, a selection of chapters based on for example topic or a specific emphasis was considered impossible. Therefore, the chapters were chosen on the basis of being the chapters which included the most prose fiction, and consequently including a large number of tasks connected to prose fiction texts. In addition, investigating two chapters in each book was deemed adequate in terms of possibly identifying a certain tendency of how the tasks connected to the prose fiction in each textbook are presented and what they focus on, and whether they invite the pupils to enhance their ICC. The selection of chapters lead to an investigation of chapters 3 and 5 in *Access*, chapters 1 and 5 in *New Experience*, and lastly chapter 4 and 5 in *Targets*.

The two chapters in *Access to English* are called “Thorns and Roses” and “Somewhere I Belong”. In *New Experience*, the chosen chapters are called “English Experience” and “Experience Art and Literature”, and finally, in *Targets*, the chapters “The USA and Canada” and “Around the World”. Additionally, all the chapters include both short stories and excerpts from novels, which are different types of prose fiction, and therefore might be treated differently by the writers of the textbooks. Additionally, supplementary materials in terms of the curricula of LK06/13 and the CEFR also had to be included in the study in order to fully understand the background and requirements which form the basis of the textbooks.

### **3.1.4 The Knowledge Promotion 2006/13**

LK06/13, the Norwegian national curriculum currently in use, was implemented in 2006 as part of the most recent educational reform, The Knowledge Promotion. The curriculum

features important changes from the 1997 curriculum, most conspicuous of which is probably the implementation of new subject curricula featuring competence aims, which signaled greater priority on what students should have learned at the various stages of education (Knaldre, 2015, p. 41).

The curriculum does not give instructions in relation to specific methods or resources which should be used when working with the competence aims. Due to this, the curriculum has been subjected to criticism, but also acclaimed for focusing on, and improving, pupils’ basic skills and facilitating improved assessment practices. The curriculum was revised in 2013.

### **3.1.5 The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages 2001**

In the 1960s, the Council of Europe established a common European area in the field of foreign language teaching, which resulted in The *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching and assessment* (CEFR). It is, as stated in the CEFR itself, “a transparent, coherent and comprehensive basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses and curriculum guidelines, the design of teaching and learning materials, and the assessment of foreign language proficiency” (eco.int). In short, it describes the different aspects of learning and teaching a language. Despite not being an official curriculum, the framework has been very influential in the development of curricula and teaching practices in European language classrooms, Norway being no exception.

### **3.2 Quantitative and qualitative research methods**

After deciding on what material to work with, a choice of research methods had to be made. The following chapters present the methodological contemplations made in connection with the present investigation.

Research can be defined as “the systematic investigation into and study of materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions” (Oxford Dictionary, 2016). In order to establish such facts or new conclusions, one can employ different *methods*. A method is “a particular form of procedure for accomplishing or approaching something, especially a systematic or established one” (Oxford Dictionary, 2016). Combined one can say that research methods “involve the forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation that researchers propose for their studies” (Creswell, 2014, p. 247). This section will provide theoretical background regarding the three types of methodological approaches which have been employed in this study, namely qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods.

According to John W. Creswell (2014) “the distinction between qualitative research and quantitative research is framed in terms of using words (qualitative) rather than numbers (quantitative)” (p. 4). From this one can decipher that qualitative methods deal with what kind something is, whereas quantitative methods relate to how much of something is of a certain kind. Therefore, to use qualitative methods is a suitable choice when the purpose is to understand in depth how a small number of something works in relation to a given subject, which in this thesis relates to the potential of tasks in relation to pupils developing ICC.



To elaborate, qualitative research “involves data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes, and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of the data” (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). Basically, “those who engage in this form of inquiry support a way of looking at research that honors an inductive style, a focus on individual meaning, and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation” (p. 4). One can say that “qualitative research is concerned with subjective opinions” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 38), because after the collection of data is completed, the researcher draws on personal reflections and past theory and research (Creswell, 2012, p. 626). In contrast to qualitative research, one can say that quantitative methods of research are more objective because findings are represented in numbers and statistics.

Quantitative research “is an approach for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables” (Creswell, 2014, p. 4). A variable “refers to a characteristic or attribute” which “can be [...] observed and that varies” (p. 250). Such variables “can be measured, typically on instruments, so that numbered data may be analyzed using statistical procedures” (p. 4). Both research methodologies have strengths and weaknesses, which will be discussed in subchapter 3.5. In addition to taking such strengths and weaknesses into consideration, in order to both display individual variety and work with concepts of averages, this study employs a mixed methodology.

### **3.3 Mixed methods**

A mixed methods design “involves combining or integration of qualitative and quantitative research and data in a research study” (Creswell, 2014, p. 14). According to Creswell (2014), the value of employing multiple methods in research “resided from the idea that all methods had bias and weaknesses, and the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data neutralized the weaknesses of each form of data” (pp. 14-15). Also Falk Pingel (2010) states that when working with interpreting textbooks, both quantitative and qualitative methods should be used (p. 66). All in all, “the combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach” (Creswell, 2014, p. 4), which is evident in the conduction of the present investigation. Although, it must be noted that using mixed methods is only beneficial when the researcher has adequate knowledge and skills in both fields.

### 3.4 Choice of methods

This subchapter presents methodological considerations related to the present research. As this thesis aims to investigate what kinds of tasks can be said to carry the most potential in relation to the development of ICC, as well as how often these types of tasks occur in the different textbooks, both qualitative and quantitative methods have been employed. In this investigation, the qualitative research examines the potential of the tasks for developing ICC, and the quantitative research provides precise data about the ratio of the task types and other categories in relation to the development of ICC in each textbook.

As mentioned in subchapter 3.1.4, the material for this study had to be limited by selecting two chapters from each textbook to focus on. By limiting the sample size, it was possible to conduct an in-depth study of the tasks by analyzing each task separately in accordance with the following categories and the research questions. In order to conduct such a qualitative analysis, the tasks were divided into three main categories:

1. Pre-reading tasks
2. While-reading tasks
3. Post-reading tasks

Each task was then analyzed in relation to being efferent or esthetic (Rosenblatt, 1938), as well as open or closed, as defined in chapter 2. Based on their fulfillment of these features and qualities, the tasks were further divided into the following subcategories:

1. Comprehension tasks
2. Reflection tasks
3. Discussion tasks
4. Role-playing tasks

Such categories were chosen on the basis of the tasks carrying different potential in relation to the development of ICC, as stated in chapter 2. Each task had to be interpreted and analyzed to identify which category it belonged to. Furthermore, each task was analyzed as to whether it complies with the different *savoirs* as determined by Byram (1997). Then a quantitative inquiry was conducted to illustrate how often each of the task types occurs in each textbook, and how many of the *savoirs* each task may promote and if one task type may promote more *savoirs* than others. This approach can be considered quantitative because it results in a collection of measurable data: the number of tasks in the material chosen from each textbook, how much of

each task-type is represented in the material, and how many of the tasks comply with the different *savoirs*.

All in all, the quantitative data makes it easier to discuss the variations in the textbooks in relation to ICC. Also, due to the conception that working with fictional texts can be beneficial in relation to ICC, one can argue the importance of the connected tasks actually focusing on the texts in order to grasp this potential. Therefore, in relation to the overall potential of textbooks in relation to ICC, it was also considered important to reveal to what degree the tasks actually focus on the prose fiction texts, which lead to the inclusion of the following categories:

1. Tasks which showed no links to the fictional text
2. Tasks which were only connected to the prose fiction text by topic

As part of these two categories, the implementation of linguistic tasks is also discussed. Additionally, in order to identify how clearly the textbooks focus on cultural matters, and how visibly this is presented to pupils and teachers, an additional category was implemented:

3. Tasks which explicitly use terminology related to culture

### **3.5 Carrying out the investigation**

The process of this investigation can be divided into six parts in order for it to sufficiently identify to what extent the textbooks in VG1-English promote the development of ICC through tasks connected with prose fictional texts:

1. To start out, each task was categorized as being either a pre-reading, while-reading or post-reading task, which all depends on whether the task is meant to be carried out by pupils before reading the text, during the reading process, or after having read the text. This categorization was needed because, as stated in chapter 2, these types of tasks can have different effects in relation to prose fiction and the development of ICC.
2. By using a qualitative method, because each type of task carries different potential in relation to ICC, each of the tasks were analyzed and categorized on the basis of focusing on comprehension, reflection, discussion, role-playing or language/linguistic features. Here, an important factor was whether a task could be considered esthetic or efferent as defined by Rosenblatt (1938).

3. Because some of the tasks focus for example on both reflection and discussion with peers, such tasks are counted as belonging to both the category referred to as *reflection tasks* and *discussion tasks*. The qualitative method shows the inclusion of the different types of tasks in each textbook. Also to be identified in this step were the different tasks which either showed connection to the prose fiction texts by topic only, or not at all, as this kind of implementation of prose fiction as a tool could also affect the overall potential of ICC. All data of the complete division of the task material from each textbook into task types is included in Appendix 1-3.
4. Following the second step was a quantification, where the different types of tasks were divided into tables, showing the quantity of each type of task in the three textbooks. Because the different categories of tasks carry different potential in relation to developing the different *savoirs* (Byram 1997), the quantification also suggests some trends in the material even without the final qualitative analysis, which was carried out in step 4.
5. The quantification made in step 3 then served as material for yet another qualitative analysis in relation to the potential of each task in relation to the different *savoirs*. All data in connection with this step is included in Appendix 4-6.
6. Furthermore, quantification was made on the basis of revealing how many times the *savoirs* are represented, which especially answers the sub-question with regards to how the development of some *savoirs* may be more, or less, prominent in the different textbooks.
7. Lastly, the number of times where terminology related to culture was used explicitly was counted.

As the qualitative research provides an in-depth analysis of the tasks and the quantitative method provides exact answers regarding the ratio of tasks, the mix of methods provides sufficient answers to the central research question which is how tasks in the subject of English in VG1 potentially promote the development of ICC. However, as with all research projects, the trustworthiness and validity of the present study can be discussed, and possible ethical concerns can be identified.

### **3.6 Validity and reliability**

Hopkins (2008) states that “validity is usually regarded as the degree to which the researcher has measured what they have set out to measure”, and that therefore, “concepts of validity are

of great importance to both quantitative and qualitative researchers” (p. 139). For example, the qualitative method “has historically been charged as employing non-scientific methods in its analysis and thus, some would argue, as not being valid” (p. 138). On the other hand this kind of research “might address issues of validity through the honesty and richness of the data achieved” (p. 139). Although quantitative research “has elaborate statistical techniques at its disposal to ensure the trustworthiness of its data, there is always a measure of standard error that is inbuilt and needs to be recognized” (p. 138). Even though quantitative methods

work with concepts of averages, they do not have the possibility of doing justice to individual subjective variety. Furthermore, their possibility of uncovering underlying dynamics of the studied situation or phenomenon and exploring the reasons for their observations is very limited (Sannes, 2013, p. 38).

Not only is the validity of research of importance, but also its reliability. Reliability “is concerned with consistency and generalizability and the use of standardized instruments” (Hopkins, 2008, p. 141). McCormick and James (1989) describe it accordingly:

Basically reliability is concerned with consistency in the production of results and refers to the requirement that, at least in principle, another researcher, or the same researcher on the same occasion, should be able to replicate the same piece of research and achieve comparable evidence and results (p. 188).

However, as stated, mixing qualitative and quantitative methods can be beneficial as this can “blend the strengths of one type of method and neutralize the weaknesses of the other” (Creswell, 2012, p. 536). Therefore, such a combination contributes to the validity and reliability of the present study.

Both in the qualitative and quantitative research included in this thesis, all data have been studied in detail several times to ensure an accurate analysis based on a deep understanding of the material, and in order to avoid errors in the statistical data. However, one must keep in mind that the research is conducted on a subjective basis, and that the researcher has worked alone. The reliability of the study would have been strengthened if it was based on the opinions of several researchers. Although, being the only researcher in a study might lead to one having an ever more enhanced critical awareness when studying the material. A focus on providing a thorough investigation of the material, as well as using mixed research methods have hopefully lead to a study which is reliable and valid, although some ethical concerns and limitations of the present study are worth mentioning.

### **3.7 Ethical concerns and limitations**

A reoccurring challenge when conducting the present study has been not to advertise one textbook more than another. Therefore, as far as possible, both successful and less successful examples in relation to developing ICC through tasks have been provided from all the textbooks. Throughout the investigation it has also been important to be respectful towards the writers of the studied textbooks, and the researcher has tried to avoid being normative.

It must also be stressed that although the textbooks may vary in potential of promoting ICC through inclusion of tasks connected to prose fiction, they may have other qualities in relation to EFLT which have not been investigated in this study. Therefore, whereas one textbook may carry greater potential in relation to the tasks, another textbook might carry greater potential due to for example the included texts representing a greater cultural diversity, or including a larger number of fictional texts, etcetera. Also, the different textbooks may also vary in other aspects connected to language acquisition, which this study does not take into account.

In addition to not having studied other features than the potential of the textbooks in relation to developing ICC which may influence other aspects of EFLT, it is also a concern that, because of a restraint of time, all the parts of the textbooks have not been studied. Therefore, chapters which may have included tasks connected to prose fiction texts which carry more or less potential in relation to the development of ICC may have been excluded. However, within the scope of the selection and in connection with the research questions and subordinate research questions, the research has been thoroughly and accurately conducted.

## Chapter 4: Research Results and Discussion

### 4.0 Introduction

The previous chapters have presented the theoretical background to the study as well as the methods which have been employed throughout the investigation. This chapter aims to identify how tasks in the subject of English in VG1 potentially promote the development of intercultural communicative competence. It presents the results of the analysis of tasks related to prose fiction in three textbooks produced to adequately suit the curriculum of English in VG1, namely *Access* (2014), *New eXperience* (2009) and *Targets* (2015).

As many tasks are divided into subordinated constituents such as “a-d” or in bullet-points which ask pupils to perform different actions or answer different questions, each constituent is counted as one separate task in this investigation. This is due to the fact that when working with tasks, pupils might be asked only to do individually selected points or parts. Also, often the different constituents of a task are of different types, and therefore, tasks which carry different potential in relation to developing ICC are often included under one heading. For example, a task might ask for both reflection and discussion with peers. In such cases, a task is counted as one task in the total number of tasks, but is included as belonging to the group of discussion tasks, as well as reflection tasks. In total, 816 tasks form the basis of the present study. Out of this number, 212 tasks are from *Access*, 192 tasks from *New eXperience*, and, lastly, 409 tasks are from *Targets*. In order to detect and discuss how each task exploits the possibilities within the prose fiction texts, thereof the cultural aspects they reflect, in relation to the development of pupils’ ICC, several categories have been implemented in the present investigation.

As mentioned in subchapter 3.4, in order to identify how the implementation of such tasks can have varying effects on the development of ICC, the tasks were first divided into pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading tasks. Thereafter, each task was analyzed in relation to being efferent or esthetic (Rosenblatt 1938), as well as open or closed, as defined in subchapter 2.8.5. Based on the tasks’ fulfillment of these features, causing them to carry different potential in relation to the development of ICC, tasks have been placed in the following subcategories:

1. Comprehension tasks
2. Reflection tasks

3. Discussion tasks
4. Role-playing tasks

Each type of task, together with examples from each of the three textbooks, is discussed in relation to Byram's model of ICC (1997) which comprises five elements, or *savoirs*, as Byram calls them, as part of such a process:

- Knowledge (*savoir*)
- Attitudes (*savoir être*)
- Skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*)
- Skills of discovery and interaction (*savoir apprendre/faire*)
- Critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*) (Byram 1997, p. 34).

Furthermore, the following categories have also been implemented:

1. Tasks which either showed no connection with the prose fiction at all, or only by topic.
2. Tasks which explicitly use terminology related to culture

Of these, the first category was implemented due to the notion that because working with fictional texts can be beneficial in relation to the development of ICC, and that one therefore can argue that tasks need to focus on the texts in order to exploit such potential. Therefore, tasks which are directly linked to the texts in question will have greater potential than those which do not, or which are linked by topic only. The second category was implemented in order to try to identify how clearly the textbooks focus on cultural matters, and how visibly this is presented to pupils and teachers. The following three subchapters present the results and offer a discussion of pre-, while- and post-reading tasks, and how the placement of the tasks possibly can affect the development of ICC.

#### **4.1 Pre-reading tasks**

To varying degrees, all three textbooks include tasks which are meant to be completed before reading the fictional texts, what can be termed "pre-textual activities" (Simensen 2007, p. 152) or pre-reading tasks. Pre-reading tasks "relate to the topic of the text to be read or listened to" (p. 152). In *Access* these tasks are referred to as "Points of Departure", whereas in *New eXperience* such tasks are referred to as "Pre-reading", and lastly *Targets* labels such tasks "Before You Read". Simensen (2007) distinguishes between different common bases of



pre-reading tasks which relate to the title or topic of the following text, questions or statements, pictures, graphs, tables, text excerpts, or a combination of such types (p. 152). A common trend among the three textbooks is to either include a short text which provides information about a topic connected to the prose fiction or its author. This does not constitute a task because there is no objective for the pupils to fulfill.

As pre-reading tasks can be both open and closed, as well as efferent- or esthetically based (Rosenblatt 1938) , and therefore carry varying potential in relation to the development of ICC, they can function well in terms of giving pupils a deepened insight into matters before encountering the texts. Both comprehension and reflection tasks can promote development of *savoir*, which entails intercultural knowledge, such as knowledge related to “social groups and their products and practices in one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction” (p.8). However, as stated in subchapter 2.8.8, reflection tasks, which is further explored in subchapter 4.5, carry greater potential in relation to developing the other objectives, namely *savoir être*, *savoir comprendre*, *savoir apprendre/faire* and *savoir s’engager*. Many pre-reading tasks can function as eye-openers to pupils’ own notions and thoughts on cultural matters which can make them encounter texts and the foreign cultures which the texts are representing with widened perspectives on themselves and/or the foreign cultures.

The percentages of pre-reading tasks and whether they are comprehension or reflection-based, as this might influence their potential in relation to ICC, are included in Table 4.1:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Pre-reading tasks in total</b>	19	9%		15	7,81 %		23	5,6 %
<b>Pre-reading tasks based on comprehension</b>	0	0 %		1	7 %		1	4 %
<b>Pre-reading tasks based on reflection</b>	19	100 %		14	93 %		22	96 %

Table 4.1: The numbers and percentages of pre-reading tasks divided into comprehension tasks and reflection tasks

As represented in Table 4.1, the percentage of included *pre-reading tasks* does not differ greatly among the three textbooks, and they all share a fairly low percentage. However, it is worth noting that *Access*, despite having the highest percentage, only includes pre-reading tasks before two prose fiction texts. In *Access*, the texts are most commonly preceded by short paragraphs which give introductions to topics and authors. However, when pre-reading tasks are included, they are more time-consuming and work well in relation to the development of ICC, this despite only relating to the texts by topic, which is due to the fact that all the included *pre-reading tasks* are *reflection tasks*. Preceding the aforementioned short story “True Love” one finds several tasks:

#### POINTS OF DEPARTURE

“Do you believe in “true love”? What is the basis of true love, in your opinion? Just for fun, look at the following statements and then decide where you stand on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 being “I do not agree at all” and 10 being “I totally agree”). Compare your answers.

- a) Opposites attract
- b) Love is based on compatibility
- c) Love is blind
- d) All’s fair in love and war
- e) Love at first sight doesn’t exist

Were there any surprises in the class? Today many people go to the Internet to find dating partners. Would you consider online matchmaking as an acceptable way of finding a lifelong partner? Why or why not?”

The notion of love is an important part of cultures throughout the world, but it is also an aspect which can highly differ from one culture to another. Some people find love through arranged marriages, and others, as similar to the characters of the short story in question, search the Internet to find that special someone. Each love story is unique, yet each person will have some preconceived notion as to what should or should not be the norm in relation to finding true love, which is due to differences in cultures. As each person will have a different view regarding true love, it is a safe assumption that this is the case with online-dating as well, which one of the tasks also makes pupils question.

As stated in relation to developing *savoir être* in subchapter 2.3.2, in order to act interculturally, the pupils must be willing to suspend beliefs about their own culture. Pupils need to be willing to relativize their own values, beliefs and behavior, in other words be open

to the fact that they are not the only possible and naturally correct ones. But, in order to do so, pupils need to be aware of what those values, beliefs and behaviors are. Despite love being an important part of most of people's lives, and an aspect which one often encounters in books, films and on television, it might still be a topic which needs further exploration. By making pupils connect different quotes from the English-speaking world to their conception of true love, this task has potential of making pupils think about love in a deeper, and more nuanced way than before, and as result possibly develop greater self-awareness. This is also the case with the questions related to online-dating. Byram's model of ICC highly stresses the importance of pupils learning about their own culture as well, not just foreign ones, which the completion of these tasks can lead to. The task can also be connected to the development of *savoir être*, as pupils are prompted to discuss their own perceptions and thoughts with their class, and therefore practice being open and tolerant to views and opinions different from their own, which they will also practise when reading the text.

As pupils will have to try to interpret the quotes, and therefore "assign meaning to cultural phenomena in an independent way" (Byram and Zarate 1997, p. 241), as well as relate them to their own cultural practices, beliefs and values, this task may lead to development of *savoir comprendre*. Through comparison and analysis, when interpreting the quotes, pupils will also have to critically evaluate why they possibly agree with some of them, while they disagree with others. Therefore, pupils can also develop *savoir s'engager*, which relates to how intercultural mediators need to become aware of their own values and how these influence their views of other people's values and ways of life, and thus be able to evaluate the perspectives and practices in their own and other cultures.

Because the tasks exemplified above initiate an authentic dialogue between peers, completing them can also lead to the development of *savoir faire*, as pupils will have to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under the constraints of real time communication and interaction, first with the textual material and then peers. Lastly, pupils may also develop *savoir* in relation to learning new things about love and online-dating, both in relation to their own culture, the cultures of peers, as well as the English-speaking cultures represented by the quotes. Additionally, the tasks also foster discussion among peers, which is an activity that emphasizes and raises awareness of multiple and different perspectives which "will develop learners' skills of [...] interpretation and decentring as well as their openness and non-judgmental thinking (Barrett et al. 2014, p. 39).

After completing pre-reading tasks like the ones mentioned, pupils can carry with them enhanced self-awareness and new realizations into the meeting with the cultures represented in the short story, where pupils will encounter other perspectives as well. Ultimately, the aforementioned tasks carry potential in relation to pupils developing ICC, which is mostly due to the fact that they are open and center on pupils' own thoughts and reflection in connection with cultures of their own as well as English-speaking cultures represented by the quotes. Still, this set of tasks is not directly focused on the literature to which it is linked, and only share a topical connection to the short story.

*Targets* and *New eXperience*, however, have lower percentages of pre-reading tasks, yet include them more frequently, though often only one to three questions:

#### BEFORE YOU READ

- Is education important to you? Why or why not?
- What opportunities would you have if you didn't go to school?  
(Targets 2015, p. 238).

This task precedes the novel excerpt "I Can Be Someone" and shares many of the same qualities in relation to ICC as the tasks connected with "True Love" in *Access*. Before reading about the young South-African boy who struggles with how to juggle a tough life and going to school, pupils are asked to identify reasons why school might be important to them as well as to imagine a life without it. Ultimately, this might make pupils realize what going to school actually means to them. Thus, they might meet the text with a more nuanced view of their own life and how school is an important part of Norwegian cultures.

However, not all pre-reading tasks carry the same potential in relation to the development of ICC. An example of a "Before You Read"-task from *Targets* which focuses on comprehension, which really only carries potential in relation to *savoir*, is the one connected with the short story "Thank You M'am" by Langston Hughes:

#### BEFORE YOU READ:

"Shoes got by devilish ways will burn your feet." What do you think this phrase means?  
(p. 157).

This task checks whether pupils understand what the specific expression means, and therefore does not carry a lot of potential in relation to ICC. However, this is the only pre-reading task which has this type of focus in the textbook.

To conclude, it is important to note that a large number of the pre-reading tasks are not directly linked to the prose fiction texts, but only related by topic. The present study reveals how a number of tasks within each of the task categories have a tendency to what can be viewed as using literature as a tool. This is therefore discussed specifically in subchapter 4.8.1. Nevertheless, several of the tasks still carry potential in relation to the development of ICC and have therefore been included in the study.

## 4.2 While-reading tasks

As stated in subchapter 2.8.3, textbooks rarely include while-reading tasks, which this investigation also reveals. Out of the three, *Targets* is the only textbook which has included this type of task. As can be seen in Table 4.2 below, 15 while-reading tasks have been included. This equals a percentage of 3.6 %. However, all of these are connected to one single text, namely “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona” (pp. 191-202). It is fair to say that in this case, the while-reading tasks have been implemented due to the length of the text. With its 11 pages, though many pictures are included as well, the short story is one of the longest texts in the study. The tasks all foster reflection, and can be exemplified by the following:

This short flashback establishes an important theme. What? (p. 197)

The author chooses sunrise instead of sunset for the boys’ return to the reservation. Why? (p. 201).

All of the 15 tasks draw connections to important parts of the story in relation to both creating engagement with the text, as well as prompting comprehension of the text. The tasks can keep pupils focused and make them pay attention to specific details in a fairly long text. However, as seen in Table 4.2 below, neither *Access* nor *New eXperience* has included such tasks in connection with the studied prose fiction texts.

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>While-reading tasks in total</b>	0	0 %		0	0 %		15	3,6 %
<b>While-reading tasks based on comprehension</b>	0	0 %		0	0 %		0	0 %
<b>While-reading tasks based on reflection</b>	0	0 %		0	0 %		15	3,6 %

Table 4.2: The numbers and percentages of while-reading tasks divided into comprehension tasks and reflection tasks

### 4.3 Post-reading tasks

As presented in subchapters 2.1 and 2.2, the textbooks all include, though to a varying degree, a number of pre-reading tasks, whereas *Targets* is the only textbook which have included while-reading tasks. However, all three textbooks clearly emphasize the implementation of post-reading tasks, as represented in Table 4.3:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Post-reading tasks in total</b>	193	91 %		177	92 %		374	91 %

Table 4.3: The numbers and percentages of included post-reading tasks

As seen from Table 4.3, all three textbooks clearly focus on including a high number of post-reading tasks linked to prose fiction. The textbooks with the lowest numbers are *Access* and *Targets*, with the percentages of 91 %, only 1 % lower than *New eXperience*, which has the highest percentage, reaching a total of 92 %. In the further discussion of tasks and task types, it is not emphasized, nor of direct relevance to the different *savoirs* (Byram, 1997) whether a task is a pre-, while- or post-reading task.

Theory presented in the subchapters 2.7-2.8.11 suggests that different types of tasks carry different potential in relation to the development of ICC. Such assumptions formed the basis for the first subordinate research question which is how various types of tasks carry different potential in relation to developing pupils' ICC. The findings related to this question are presented in the following subchapters, which also aim to answer how the potential of each task in relation to the development of ICC is affected by being either efferent or esthetic. Also up for discussion is how this possibly leads to any of Byram's *savoirs* being more widely represented than others in the task-material. First to be discussed in relation to the research questions are comprehension tasks.

#### **4.4 Comprehension tasks**

This subchapter aims to answer how comprehension tasks carry potential in relation to the development of ICC. This involves a discussion of how comprehension tasks focus on reading texts for specific information, meaning a focus on pupils' efferent stances (Rosenblatt 1938) to what they have read. Tasks with this type of focus are in contrast to tasks which look to the more creative sides of the reading experience, thereof pupils' own perceptions and feelings towards what they have read, what is termed by Rosenblatt (1938) as an esthetic response. Because comprehension tasks focus on pupils' efferent stances towards prose fiction, it influences the ways in which the tasks can be said to promote any of the *savoirs* as presented by Byram (1997). This is exemplified by tasks from each of the studied textbooks. The number of comprehension tasks in each textbook is also identified and discussed, as well as compared to that of the other two textbooks.

As discussed in subchapter 2.6.3, one can speak of an efferent reading response, which focuses on the ability of the reader to find specific information that is presented clearly in the text. In relation to the development of ICC, comprehension tasks mostly carry potential as far as developing the objective of *savoir* is concerned, and arguably less so in relation to the other aspects of ICC, which the present study confirms. In order for pupils to develop a change in attitudes and skills, more and deeper involvement with the material is required. When tasks connected to literary works in textbooks mainly focus on comprehension, it goes against the conception that tasks connected to literary works should be non-finite and open to learners' interpretations and opinions (Fenner 2001), especially if the aim is for the pupils to develop ICC. Therefore, in order to evaluate the potential of the tasks in each textbook related to ICC,

one needs to look at how frequently each textbook includes comprehension tasks. The results are represented in Table 4.4:

	<i>Access</i>	% <i>Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	% <i>New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	% <i>Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Tasks which check for reading comprehension</b>	47	22 %		56	29 %		55	13 %

*Table 4.4: The numbers and percentages of comprehension tasks*

As shown in Table 4.4, in the textbook *Access*, 22 % of the tasks connected to prose fiction are comprehension tasks. In *Access* the third chapter is called “Thorns and Roses” (pp. 118-159). Here, the first fiction text is the short story “True Love” (pp. 120-124) by Isaac Asimov. The short story is followed by six different tasks (pp. 125-126). All tasks have several constituents. The first tasks are comprehension questions, and are labelled “Understanding the text”:

Are the following statements true or false? Correct the ones that are false.

- a) Joe is Milton’s personal computer.
  - b) Although he is capable of thinking he speaks poorly.
  - c) Milton has never married because he is too busy.
  - d) Through the Multivac-complex, Joe is connected to the data banks of every human being in the world.
- [...]

All in all, 14 statements like this are included, and they all check reading comprehension.

In *New eXperience*, 29 % of the tasks check comprehension. As shown in Table 4.4, this is the highest percentage in the three textbooks. Task “1.4 Questions”, related to the novel excerpt “We’re Back”, illustrates typical comprehension tasks in *New eXperience*:

- a** What kind of travel experience have Becky and Luke had?
- b** What kind of travel experience does Janice think they have had?
- c** What has Becky brought back from Paraguay, and how do Mum and Janice react to the gift? (...)(p. 13).



Here, the questions a-c all ask about explicit details in the text which can easily be answered by reading the excerpt. As there is only one correct answer to each question, the questions are all closed. The tasks do not ask of pupils to reflect on what they have read, or to provide their personal responses to the text, and the foreign cultures it represents, and because the tasks only ask for information to be extracted, they can therefore be said to have an efferent focus.

The textbook *Targets* has the smallest number of comprehension tasks connected to prose fictional texts, arriving at a total of 13 %. A task which illustrates a comprehension task in *Targets* is one connected to the novel excerpt “Looking for Alaska”:

#### SPEAKING

##### 1. Discussing literature

a Sum up Miles’ experiences at Culver Creek this first day: the schoolmates, the pranks, the teachers, the teaching, the routines, the clothes, the social codes.

Despite the title of the task, “discussing literature”, pupils will most likely just look for details explicitly mentioned in the text when completing it. As most comprehension tasks do, this task only addresses the explicit, external part of the targeted behavior of the society and characters in the text, what is described as the visible part of Hall’s iceberg-analogy of culture (see chapter 2.1). However, this example from *Targets* does require close-reading which could empower pupils to understand the text at a deeper level. Yet, due to the task being very specific as to which aspects to focus on, and simply asking pupils to summarize, it is likely that pupils will locate and reproduce the explicitly mentioned details of the schoolmates, the teachers, etcetera. By asking pupils to state their personal opinions related to the different aspects, such as what they think the different experiences add to the story, or what they made them feel, the task could have enabled pupils to reflect on their meaning and what the different elements bring to the narrative. This would entail pupils taking an esthetic stance towards the text. However, due to the wording of the task, pupils are more likely to adopt an efferent stance, and to focus on extracting and listing certain information from the text. Therefore, the task’s potential of added value is lost.

The focus on making pupils adopt an efferent stance towards texts is a common denominator of all the examples of the comprehension tasks mentioned in this subchapter. As they ask for certain information to be extracted, they are also closed. A third shared feature is that they focus solely on *the artistic* (Iser 1974), meaning what is created by the author. According to

Iser (1974), it is when the artistic meets the esthetic realizations accomplished by the reader that a literary work takes on life. Therefore, it can be argued that by focusing on the artistic aspect alone, a literary work will not be fully realized, which can be said to be the outcome of having pupils' work with most comprehension tasks. Iser's view of the reading process is similar to that of Rosenblatt, namely that it is as a dynamic process. However, this dynamic is not focused upon in the comprehension tasks.

With regard to teaching and testing of literature, Rosenblatt (1978) states that an emphasis on efferent reading responses can be problematic as it hinders pupils' development in the capacity to read esthetically. This entails what Iser (1980) refers to as filling in the gaps:

What is missing from the apparently trivial scenes, the gaps arising out of the dialogue — this is what stimulates the reader into filling the blanks with projections. He is drawn into the events (...) and made to supply what is meant from what is not said; it is the implications and not the statements that give shape and weight to the meaning (p. 111).

This is the opposite of comprehension tasks as they, according to both theory and the results presented in this subchapter, mainly focus on identifying and extracting statements or information from the texts. Comprehension tasks do not emphasize what the statements or information which pupils extract means to them, or how it possibly affects them. Due to such factors, they mainly carry potential of developing *savoir*, meaning knowledge related to cultures. By signaling that there is only one 'correct' answer in carrying out tasks, comprehension tasks do not trigger pupils' active involvement and reflection, and are therefore not likely to challenge them in a way which makes them reconsider preconceptions and existing attitudes which are, as stated in subchapter 2.3.2, an important, if not *the* most important objective in relation to the development of ICC. Ultimately, tasks which are "designed to make the learner merely reproduce or copy language rather than produce his or her own, is very difficult to combine with the development of personal awareness on the part of the learner" (Fenner 2000, p. 142). Such tasks can be said to rather transfer knowledge and preserve a certain set of values rather than give pupils "a chance to develop a critical awareness of this knowledge" (p. 142).

Although efferent and esthetic readings can be seen as ends of a continuum, Rosenblatt "asserts that much of our reading falls into the middle of the continuum, the reader responding to cognitive as well as emotive aspects" (Becker 1999, p. 60). However, Rosenblatt argues "that some materials – e.g., newspapers, political speeches, writings about social problem, advertisements – require a predominantly efferent stance while others – e.g., novels, poems,

dramas – require the aesthetic” (Roen and Karolides, p. 60). Therefore, one can question the need to link comprehension tasks to prose fiction texts, when a focus on the efferent responses of pupils can be implemented in relation to factual texts instead.

Although comprehension tasks can be useful for certain other purposes in foreign language teaching and learning, in relation to pupils’ development of ICC, they need to be accompanied by tasks which also address the esthetic responses of pupils in order to potentially promote objectives other than *savoir*. Ultimately, if a textbook links too many comprehension tasks to prose fiction texts rather than other types of tasks, it is likely to affect a textbook’s overall potential in relation to the development of ICC, and a lot of the potential of working with fictional texts can be lost. As presented in subchapter 4.9, one can see how a textbook’s number of comprehension tasks affects the overall potential of the task-material in relation to the development of ICC.

In total, the conducted research reveals that the textbooks include percentages varying from 13 % (*Targets*) to a total of 29 % (*New eXperience*) of tasks being comprehension tasks. This partly confirms the hypothesis which suggested that tasks connected to prose fiction might indicate a focus upon comprehension and therefore emphasizes an efferent reader response, rather than more open and esthetic tasks which may carry more potential in relation to pupils’ development of ICC. It can only be said to partly confirm the hypothesis, because the number of comprehension tasks could have been even higher than what is shown by the results from the present investigation. Also, as seen from Table 4.4, there are considerable differences between the three textbooks. As stated, the textbook with the lowest percentage (13 %) of comprehension tasks is *Targets*, whereas the *New eXperience* percentage (29 %) is more than doubled in comparison. *Access* places itself in the middle with a percentage of 22 %. As the textbooks have implemented differing numbers of comprehension tasks, one can say that each textbook to a varying degree confirms the hypothesis.

However, to conclude the discussion of comprehension tasks in relation to the development of ICC, one can argue that a shift in focus can be beneficial. Instead of tasks focusing on having pupils locate specific textual information from the text, and thereby producing the right answers, including more tasks which rather emphasize their esthetic stances, responses and relationships to the narrative world they encounter, in which foreign cultures are represented, can enhance pupils’ development of ICC. The type of tasks which is more likely to foster this

level of active involvement and reflection, and may as a result also promote all the objectives of ICC, is reflection tasks, which are discussed in the following subchapter.

#### **4.5 Reflection tasks**

This subchapter aims to answer how reflection tasks carry potential in relation to the development of ICC. Because reflection tasks emphasize pupils' esthetic response to prose fiction, by emphasizing what they feel and perceive in relation to a text or topic, these have an influence on the ways in which the tasks can be said to promote the *savoirs* as presented by Byram (1997). This is exemplified by reflection tasks from each of the studied textbooks. Differences in implementation of reflection tasks between the different textbooks are also identified and discussed.

As stated in subchapter 2.8.7, "rather than establishing 'a regime of truth'", texts, tasks and suggested activities in the textbooks can open for the students' choices, for the voicing of personal opinions and concerns, for reflection and an active negotiation of meaning" (Lund 2007, p. 112). This is supported by Barret et al. (2014) who state that

when pedagogical approaches, methods and techniques encourage learners to become actively involved in experience, discovery, challenge, analysis, comparison, reflection and co-operation [...], learning activities tend to be very effective as they engage learners as whole persons and address their intellectual, emotional and physical potential (Barret et al. 2014, p. 38).

Therefore, a focus upon such aspects when working with tasks related to foreign cultures is beneficial. Tasks asking questions about the texts which make pupils think of and express their thoughts about their own culture as well as the foreign ones, carry the potential of fostering the development of all the *savoirs*.

The potential of reflection tasks in connection with the development of ICC is based on the idea that they make pupils address more implicit parts of cultures, thereof the part of the cultural iceberg (Hall 1976) labeled 'values and thought patterns', which can reflect expectations, assumptions, etiquette, rules, perceptions, gender roles, notions of 'Self', modesty, concept of fairness, etcetera. According to Hall (see chapter 2.1), this part can only be uncovered by actively participating in the cultures in question, and that only by interacting with individuals from these cultures can one uncover the values and beliefs that underlie the more explicit behavior of a society. In order to do so, pupils can benefit from adopting an esthetic stance towards the text, and the tasks need to focus on it.

An esthetic reading (see chapter 2.8.4) revolves around readers' personal involvement and relationship with the texts, and on the meaning that is created from and within the text. During any encounter with a prose fiction text, each reader will ascribe to it a specific esthetic value, based on the manner he/she has related to it. This is, as discussed in subchapter 2.8.3, due to each person having different schemata, which lead individuals "to expect or predict aspects in interpretation of discourse" (Ajideh 2003, p. 4). Tasks which ask pupils in some way to respond to the text esthetically, such as what they feel or perceive in an encounter with a text, are, as stated esthetic tasks.

During a process entailing comparison and reflection, thereof addressing both the cognitive and affective elements while working with texts from foreign cultures, pupils can develop all five elements of ICC: *savoir*, *savoir être*, *savoir comprendre*, *savoir apprendre/faire*, and *savoir s'engager* (Byram 1997). However, not all reflection tasks carry the same potential, and they have therefore been analyzed individually in relation to the *savoirs*. These results are presented in Table 4.9 in subchapter 4.9. However, different examples have been included in this subchapter in order to show how reflection tasks function and differ in relation to the development of ICC.

As reflection can be expressed both orally and in writing, the number of reflection tasks which are represented in Table 4.5 contains both written reflection tasks and tasks where pupils share reflections orally in pairs or group discussions:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Tasks which promote reflection</b>	84	40 %		68	35 %		196	48 %

Table 4.5: The numbers and percentages of reflection tasks

As shown in Table 4.3, the textbook *New eXperience* has the lowest percentage of reflection tasks, reaching a total of 35 %. To exemplify, one can refer to the novel excerpt entitled "We're Back" by Sophie Kinsella once more. As mentioned in subchapters 4.1 and 4.3, this text seems to be included more due to its topical content than its literary qualities or the pupils' personal responses to it. This is due to the fact that the tasks which follow it are only

based on it thematically, in addition to a few tasks which check for reading comprehension. However, the third task connected to the excerpt can be identified as a reflection task:

#### 1.4 QUESTIONS

**d** Why do you think Becky's parents behave that way? (p. 13).

This task is open and demands interpretation and reflection. In order for pupils to be able to answer, they must adopt an esthetic stance towards the text, and explain what they have felt and perceived when reading the text. In carrying out this task, pupils have to analyze the text, and may discover that Becky's parents stay in the background, not even listening to what she has to say, and that her Mum seems nervous when receiving her gift. In doing so, they might draw connections to how the parents' actions might suggest that they have no travel experiences of their own, and possibly therefore do not know how to act or respond. Perhaps they are even a bit jealous or embarrassed, or possibly genuinely uninterested because they do not see what the fuzz is all about, or see the value of traveling to foreign places. This type of question is a good example of how literary texts have certain gaps which pupils will need to fill, and that "discovering and interpreting the gaps constitute an active dialogue with the text (Fenner 2001, p. 17). Therefore, the task can foster reflection on how different generations, despite living in the same area, can be said to belong to different cultures, and therefore have different values, which might create a gap between them or possible misunderstandings in communication. As noted, such activities can enable pupils to develop both *savoir comprendre* and *savoir apprendre*. This development could have been further strengthened by focusing on what seems to be a culture clash between Becky and her sister Janice.

The clash between the two sisters in the novel excerpt is signaled by them having very different ideas as to what constitutes a travel experience, which to Janice would mean going to typical tourist places such as Tenerife, Majorca or Disneyland, while to Becky it means visiting Africa, South-America and India. By further investigating the sisters' choice of traveling experience, and the parents' possible lack thereof, could have revealed a difference in values, which could have been a good topic for further exploration. Had this been further explored, pupils would have been given the opportunity to learn more about what is beneath the surface, as illustrated in Hall's iceberg-model (see chapter 2.1). Therefore, one can say that a deeper exploration of the text could have led to greater potential in relation to the development of ICC.

It is important to note that a lot of the potential of the texts in relation to ICC may be lost when they are not worked with thoroughly, but it may have worse consequences. In relation to “We’re Back”, the lack of focus on the text itself can be particularly negative. After reading the novel excerpt, one may be left with quite a negative impression of some of the characters, and ultimately the cultures they are meant to reflect. As the text is not dealt with in an in-depth manner, except in task “d” (p. 13), the reader may leave the text thinking that many British people are either uninterested in traveling and foreign cultures or that all they care about are typical touristy places such as Majorca and Disneyland, which can be regarded as less sophisticated. Such perceptions can be considered negative stereotypes, which task- and text-related work may alter rather than enforce if done differently. Ultimately, in the researcher’s opinion, this could have been avoided by including more tasks which required a closer and more reflective look at the text in order to more fully understand the characters and their motivations.

At a total of 40 % of the tasks being reflection tasks, 5 % higher than *New eXperience*, one finds the textbook *Access*. Two of the tasks which belong to the category of reflection tasks are connected to the short story “True Love”.

2 Talk about it

a This story was written by the well-known science fiction writer, Isaac Asimov, in 1977 at a time when computers were in their infancy and the Internet didn’t even exist. It is, in a sense, almost prophetic in its description of the almost limitless range of what computers can do. Do you think we have reached the point where we rely too heavily on machines? What happens when the machines break down? Can you think of any examples where this has occurred?

b In this short story the computer Joe has access to unlimited amounts of personal information and manipulates this information for his own aims. Do you think that computers represent a threat to our privacy? What is your opinion about the amounts of personal information we ourselves publish on sites such as Facebook? (p. 125)

In comparison to the example of reflection tasks from *New eXperience*, these tasks do not require pupils to analyze the texts, because the tasks state for them what “the text is about”. Here, the focus is upon comparison between their cultures and the ones represented in the text. By asking whether pupils think we rely too heavily on machines, task 2a will make them reflect on their own culture, and they can be made aware of their own values connected with the topic. The task can also develop pupils’ ability to evaluate critically the perspectives,

practices and products of their own culture against that of peers participating in the conversation, and it can therefore be said to have potential in terms of promoting the development of pupils' *savoir s'engager*. Task 2b can also make pupils reflect on the dangers of relying too much on a computer in relation to privacy.

By completing both 2a and 2b, pupils may also develop *savoir* in relation to learning new things about computer usage in their own lives, and the dangers of relying on them too much, and how it possibly affects one's privacy. According to Fenner (2012), it is positive that fictional texts do not only represent harmonious situations. After all, "if we expect students to develop judgement, critical thinking, and courage in expressing personal opinions, they need to face injustice and conflict through the texts" and "unresolved situations will encourage both dialogue, critical thinking, and promote opinion forming" (p. 380). For this reason it is also necessary that tasks raise questions related to more serious issues, which 2a and 2b do. However, by linking the questions more to the short story, the tasks could have had more potential in relation to pupils developing *savoir comprendre*; skills of interpreting and relating, as well as *savoir apprendre/faire*, skills of discovery and interaction. One way of doing so would be to ask the question how the pupils' views compare to the ones represented in the text, or how they felt when reading it. This would make pupils base their answers more on their own esthetic responses to the text.

What can also have negative consequences is the fact that due to the lack of a focus on the text itself, the pupils are more focused on themselves, which Lund (2007) also discovered in her research, and noting that:

[t]here may be reason to question a strategy that seems to imply that the learners are, and have a right to be, interested only in themselves. In a foreign language textbook, such an approach must be said to represent a missed opportunity when it comes to opening the students' eyes to new perspectives and new ways of looking at the world. It can also, of course, be described as a quite ethnocentric approach to foreign language learning (p. 181).

Of course questions that relate to pupils' own context and experiences may make them "see the relevance of the issue in their own situation" (p. 181) and knowledge of Self is important in relation to the development of ICC, but except from the tasks in 1, which are comprehension tasks, and 2d, which asks pupils to interpret the text to look for signs of it being a type of "watchdog" literature, the other questions related to the short story "True Love" are not very focused on the text. The tasks are much more focused on developing pupils' own self-awareness and for them to gain a critical and reflected view upon themselves



and their own culture, than what is represented in the short story. This is also visible in task “6 Writing”, which is also connected to the short story:

- a) Love is one of the most common themes in literature. Try writing your own love story! In doing this task, some things to consider are *genre*, *setting*, *characters*, and, of course, *plot* i.e. what actually happens. Most importantly – what is it you as author want to say about love? This will be the *theme* of your short story.
- b) Write a short story set in the future in which technology plays an important role.  
(p. 126)

Whether 6a has potential in relation to the development of ICC is dependent on how it is solved by each individual learner, which is outside the scope of this thesis. However, by giving further instructions as to a certain setting or characters which would have to be included in the short story, one could have ensured that by completing this task, pupils would have had to engage with foreign cultures. Worth noting is also the fact that awareness of context and situation is just as crucial to successful communication in writing as it is in oral communication (Skulstad 2003, p. 157). In 6b, the setting of the short story is said to be in the future, which gives pupils more of a push towards engaging with cultures different from their own, but one is still left with the likelihood of pupils choosing to focus on familiar elements from their own lives. In connection with the development of ICC, creative writing tasks can share many of the same benefits as role-playing. When the writing process connects them to another culture, it becomes an intercultural experience. Had the above suggestion been specified, pupils would have had to create and write about characters originating from other cultures, partake in their mindset and figure out how they would act and why, which could have led to the development of ICC.

All in all, despite it being valuable that the tasks connected to “True Love” facilitate more self-awareness and dialogue between peers, aspects which would enable better dialogue with the text itself could have been included, thereof a larger focus on pupils’ esthetic responses. Another aspect of the short story which would have been interesting to focus upon is how it deals with the notion of perfection, and how this could easily be compared and contrasted to the society of which pupils themselves are part.

In *Targets*, as seen from Table 4.3, 48 % of the tasks can be interpreted as belonging to the category reflection tasks. Why this textbook has a higher percentage than the others is due to its priority of analyzing literature. A set of tasks which work very well in relation to ICC are:

#### READING

1. Discuss in pairs
  - a What similarities do you see between Cebo's life and your own?
  - b What differences? (...) (p. 242).

The novel excerpt "I Can Be Someone" tells of a young South-African boy named Cebo who is an orphan. When reading the text, one learns of a harsh life, where Cebo has to cope with a drunken landlord and do dangerous work. Due to this he also misses classes at school, and has to deal with the girl of his dreams doubting him because of it. These tasks require pupils to analyze the text first, and then compare the foreign culture represented by Cebo and his life to their own. Because the excerpt is about a young boy, it might be easy for pupils in VG1 to relate to the story, and feel empathy with the characters. By encouraging "understanding and respect for people who are perceived to have different cultural affiliations from themselves, learners can benefit from exposure to difference" (Barrett et al. 2014, p. 29), and learn that one can be different in some aspects and alike in other aspects. Thus pupils might develop both *savoir être* and *savoir comprendre*.

As discussed above, the examples from each textbook represent tasks which are open-ended and based on the pupils' own perceptions, and involve a varying degree of contact between pupils' cultures and the foreign ones represented in the texts. Although the reflection tasks are all esthetic to a certain extent, they focus on different parts of pupils' esthetic relationship to the text, and their placement along the efferent-esthetic continuum therefore varies. Different types of esthetic tasks and their relation to the development of ICC are discussed in the following subchapter.

#### **4.5.1 Reflection tasks with different levels of esthetic focus**

Within the overall category of esthetic tasks one can differentiate between tasks which are esthetic to varying degrees, and which therefore can be placed differently along the efferent-esthetic continuum. The seemingly dominating type of esthetic tasks in the textbooks is the one which focus on analysis of literary elements, as exemplified by the following tasks from *Targets* and *New eXperience*:

- 2 Analysing literature
  - e Does the story have a message? Or perhaps a theme? (Targets 2015, p. 266).

SPEAKING

5.29

a What is the theme or message in this story? (New eXperience 2009, p. 310)

As a theme is never stated explicitly in a short story, nor is it so in “Her First Ball”, which the latter example is linked to, pupils must therefore interpret the text and an answer to the question will be based on their personal experience with the text. The task is therefore open to a certain extent. For example, due to having different schemata, pupils might focus on different aspects of the story, and respond to certain parts of it. Therefore, some pupils might identify and relate to themes such as experience, independence, gender, whereas others might respond to how the short story possibly tells a story of reliance and youth. Either way, to carry out the task, pupils will have to consider their esthetic stance towards the text, examine the relationship that was developed when reading it, and base their answer on this. Yet, the task cannot be said to be open to *any* answer, as pupils cannot justify referring to just *any* theme. This is also an important point to make, as Rosenblatt (1938) seemingly “does not valorize response to a literary text at the expense of the text, nor does she eulogize personal response” (Soter et al., 2010, p. 267), and she states that “[u]ndisciplined, irrelevant, or distorted emotional responses and the lack of relevant experience, or knowledge, will of course, lead to inadequate interpretations of the texts” (p. 267). However, she does question the idea of a routine formula for analyze of literature, which seems to have been a focus in the task material of the present investigation as well.

Tasks like the ones mentioned above are common in the textbooks’ treatment of prose fiction texts, and sets of tasks seem to focus on having pupils fill in a routine formula for analysis of fiction. In relation to a routine formula when working with literary works, Rosenblatt (2005) adds that “a method for analyzing a novel is not useful in the way that ‘a method’ for division of fractions is – something to be applied routinely” and that rather a routine approach, “a systematic dissection of plot, setting, characters, theme, style [...]” (p. 69), can be a danger. One reason for this is how the existence of such a pattern can tend to “stultify his [the pupil’s] experience of the word” and that “he is reading in order to say something about these items”, leaving the pupils to solely “focus on the novel itself” (p. 69). As a result, “his attention is turned away from where the novel fits into his experience of life and literature, and any item – plot or theme or style – is as remote from himself as any other item” (p. 69). Here Rosenblatt writes of novels, but her comments are applicable to prose fiction texts as well, which this study deals with.

Nevertheless, in carrying out tasks like the examples above, pupils enter into a dialogue with the text and cultures it represents, and can develop skills in terms of *savoir comprendre* and

*savoir apprendre/faire*. As a result of having to interact, discover, interpret and relate to the text, pupils might also develop *savoir être*, as their cultural capital might be widened, which again may result in the development of cultural sensitivity, empathy, tolerance, and respect of otherness. However, the development of intercultural attitudes can be further strengthened by pupils getting more in touch with their own views and feelings towards the texts and the cultures they reflect when they answer tasks.

Rosenblatt (2005) also states that sensitivity to the different aspects which are focused upon in a standard literary analysis is highly desirable. However, by having pupils also focus more on the work “as personally perceived”, they are not as likely to “march impartially through a set of items or apply again and again a single type of analysis” and instead be “aglow with a particular response” (p. 69). When viewing literary texts as expressions of culture, such a response will not only relate to the text, but the cultures it represents. Hence, greater interaction with the texts and the foreign cultures may occur. Overall, tasks can play an important role in helping to make pupils register their responses and making them reflect on and identify the quality of it.

One way of ensuring a focus on what pupils’ personally perceive is by making them justify opinions by referring to, for example, their emotions. Tasks which ask for literary analysis can be said to belong to the middle section of the efferent-esthetic continuum, as they are based on both cognitive and emotional aspects. Naturally, every type of reading or response will depend on the reader’s cognition and emotion, but some tasks focus more clearly on pupils’ affective responses or expression of feelings. Therefore, one can say that such tasks belong closer to the esthetic part of the continuum. However, few tasks explicitly ask of pupils to express their feelings after reading prose fiction texts such as the following task from *New eXperience*:

1.52 Do the following tasks

d Did you enjoy reading this text? Why/why not? (New eXperience, p. 60)

In fact, this is the only task in the studied material from *New eXperience* which directly asks for pupils to identify how they felt or responded to the text in general, and to reflect on why they felt what they did, or reacted the way they did without referring to a specific aspects of it. Although, it must be noted that because this task is so open, it might possibly make some pupils feel a bit overwhelmed and unsure of where to start, whereas others might thrive at the

chance to answer so freely. The next task exemplifies a more common approach, where pupils are directed towards a specific element or aspect of the text to respond to:

## READING

### 1 Reading literature

j What is the theme of the story? Is there any moral lesson to it? What is your reaction to it? (Targets 2015, p. 161).

In this example, as explicitly stressed in the task, the latter question relates to pupils' reaction to the moral lesson of the story, which entails taking an emotional stand to what they have read. As a result of both these examples, pupils can also develop *savoir s'engager*. This is due to them having to evaluate critically the cultural criteria, perspectives, practices and products presented in the text to those of their own in order to explain their personal reactions. The solving of tasks then becomes an evaluative orientation, where it is not just a matter of pupils having to come up with an answer, but rather state an opinion, forcing them also to figure out *why* they think, perceive and feel the way they do. In the latter example, it is not enough to just interpret the story and provide suggestions to themes being for example empathy and forgiveness, or the power of love and trust, but they must also state how they feel towards whatever themes they deem significant. In this respect, one can say, as put by Fenner (2000), "[i]n addition to interpreting the text, the reader is asked to form an opinion about various aspects of it" (p. 172). This is also the case with an example from *Access*:

## 1 UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

### Analysing character

#### The Son

e Why does he risk driving through the snow anyway? Do you think this is foolhardy?

As pupils carry out this task they must both consider the practices of the cultures of which the boy in the short story is part, as well as consider their own personal feelings related to such practice. After all, it is beneficial to the development of ICC that pupils also reflect on their own culture and what they consider normal, and that they are given a chance to relate their views to the views of another cultural framework. In relation to facilitating such a process, tasks like the abovementioned work well.

To conclude, whether tasks are esthetic or efferent, affect the ways in which a task promotes the development of ICC, especially so in the relation to developing *savoir s'engager*, as presented in Table 4.9 (see chapter 4.9). However, the trend revealed by this investigation is that reflection tasks can promote all the *savoirs* (Byram 1997), but as stated, *savoir s'engager* is the objective which is promoted the least through the tasks. This is due to tasks being open, yet not challenging enough to make pupils engage critically with the texts as cultural artefacts.

In relation to the hypothesis for the present investigation, which pointed to how tasks would focus on checking for comprehension, rather than being open and esthetic, which reflections tasks are, it is contradicted due to all of the textbooks including a higher number of reflection tasks than comprehension tasks. However, *New eXperience* which has a percentage of 29 % comprehension tasks as stated in subchapter 4.4, the textbook only includes 6 % more reflection tasks. This is in contrast to *Access* which has included almost twice as many reflection tasks as comprehension tasks. Yet, it is *Targets* which includes the highest number of reflection tasks, and therefore contradicts the hypothesis most clearly. With 35 % more reflections tasks than comprehension tasks, it is this textbook which shows the largest discrepancy between the number of comprehension tasks and reflection tasks. Although, it is fair to say that in order to increase the promotion of the different *savoirs*, all three textbooks could have included a higher number of reflection tasks.

Whether tasks are esthetic or not is also important when it comes to tasks which are meant to be solved together with peers, what are here labeled discussion tasks. However, as shown and discussed in the following subchapter, not all discussion tasks share the same positive qualities in relation to the development of ICC.

#### **4.6 Discussion tasks**

As discussed in subchapters 2.8.9 and 2.8.10, socio-cultural learning theory accentuates participation in conversation, dialogue and collaboration as key elements in connection with learning. Therefore, the occurrences of tasks which facilitate oral discussions among peers have been studied in detail:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Tasks which ask pupils to discuss</b>	59	28 %		45	23 %		78	19 %

*Table 4.6a: The numbers and percentages of tasks which ask of pupils to discuss*

As seen from Table 4.6a, the textbooks do not include a particularly high number of discussion tasks related to prose fiction texts. Neither is it given that all discussion tasks carry the same potential in relation to the development of ICC. After all, as stated in chapter 2.8.10, discussion tasks may be tasks related to comprehension, reflection and role-playing, and therefore have different potential in relation to pupils' development of ICC. Therefore, whether the discussion tasks are based on comprehension, reflection or role-playing is of relevance to the study, and has been represented in Table 4.6b:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Total of tasks which ask pupils to discuss</b>	59	28 %		45	24 %		78	19 %
<b>Comprehension tasks</b>	12	20 %		6	13 %		12	15 %
<b>Reflection tasks</b>	46	78 %		38	84 %		66	85 %
<b>Role-playing tasks</b>	1	2 %		1	2 %		0	0%

*Table 4.6b: The numbers and percentages of discussion tasks which are also reflection or comprehension tasks*

As seen from Table 4.6b, all textbooks show a large number of discussion tasks which require reflection. Ultimately, Table 4.6b shows a discrepancy of 7 % from the textbook with the highest percentage of discussion tasks which require reflection, which is *Targets* with 85 %, and the textbook *Access* with the lowest percentage of 78 %. All the textbooks show a high number of discussion tasks which are based on reflection, which is positive in relation to the

development of ICC as discussed in the previous subchapter. By having pupils cooperate, they will have to think for themselves and express their thoughts, as well as having the benefit of listening to the other participants' opinions or interpretations, all in an exploratory way of working with the material, which is, as noted in subchapter 2.8.10, seen as positive in relation to the development of ICC. An example of a discussion task which is also a reflection task, and can lead to pupils developing all *savoirs*, is task 3a (p. 287), connected to the short story "Good Advice Is Rarer Than Rubies" (pp. 282-283) in *Targets*:

## SPEAKING

### 3 Expressing opinions

#### a What cultural elements different from your own can you find in the short story?

First and foremost, this task asks for a closer examination of the text. As pupils will have to practice 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 1997, p. 73), the task has potential in relation to pupils developing *savoir apprendre* and *savoir faire*. In order to complete the task, pupils must discover different aspects of the short story. This process of exploration and discovery and the results thereof must then be shared with a peer.

As noted in subchapter 2.8.10, having conversations or discussions in relation to literary works in the classroom creates a community where pupils can share their interpretations and reading experiences (Aase, 2005). Literary conversations revolve around negotiation, thus, pupils' views might be challenged. Consequently, pupils can end up with an altered or broadened understanding of the topic in question (Aase, 2005), as well as of their peers or other participants in the conversation, and ultimately the cultural diversity which is present in such a conversation. Also, as stated by Fenner (2001), listening to other learner's views can "enhance their own understanding of the text" (p. 30), which in this case is "Good Advice is Rarer Than Rubies", and therefore also the foreign cultures it represents. This specific task may also lead to pupils developing *savoir être* because, in order to figure out which cultural elements are different from their own, pupils will have to be "willing to consider how one and one's own culture might be viewed by an outsider, with values, beliefs and behaviors different from one's own" (Byram 2002, p. 7). In doing so, pupils may also develop empathy, tolerance and respect for the young character Miss Rehana who was forced into an arranged marriage,



and then left behind as her husband moved to England. Possibly, pupils might even adopt her point of view on their own lives.

By having to identify possible differences in the foreign and one's own cultures, pupils might develop *savoir comprendre* as they will have to reflect on several cultural elements such as what it is like to live in a Muslim culture where arranging marriages is the norm, and where women have to cover themselves up, which are all explicitly mentioned details. Pupils will also discover and fill the empty gaps, such as what might be the reason why so many women come to the British Embassy trying to leave the country and how the meeting between Eastern and Western cultures is represented. In completing this task, pupils may also develop *savoir s'engager*, because they have to critically evaluate the perspectives, practices and products in their own cultures versus the foreign cultures represented in the short story in order to detect the differences.

Worth noting is also how looking for differences can reveal similarities. Ultimately, Miss Rehana turns down the con artist's proposition regarding a fake passport, and also fails the interview on purpose, which makes her a strong woman who stands up for herself. In this way, she breaks with tradition and might therefore have more in common with Norwegian pupils than what immediately meets the eye. In the researcher's opinion this aspect is important in order for pupils not to develop stereotypical perceptions such as all Muslim women being oppressed. Although the task does not ask pupils to state possible similarities, such thoughts might originate in the process of looking for differences. However, the following discussion task may lead to similar reflections:

- c Is this just a story about arranged marriages, or is there more to it? Comment on other possible themes: freedom, independence, strength, defying tradition. Any others?

This task works well in relation to ICC because it points pupils in certain directions, but still leaves enough room for them to analyze and reflect on their own. As pupils individually have to take an emotional stance towards the text in order to find out how they personally believe that such themes are important or not to the text, the focus is on the pupils' esthetic response. Because pupils are meant to carry out this task orally with peers, it can lead to a comparison of their esthetic responses, which again may add to, alter or enforce each pupil's initial impression of and experience with the text. Also, this task correlates to the discussion of tasks being esthetic, but to varying degrees, and that they therefore can be placed differently along the efferent-esthetic continuum, as discussed in the previous subchapter. Here, the focus is on

literary analysis which makes the task more closed than one which simply asks for an opinion or feeling related to the text. Nevertheless, it is still esthetic as an answer must be based on interpretation which again is based on pupils' personal perception of the text.

A discussion task which explicitly asks pupils to state how they feel about a certain element of the prose fiction text is one from *New eXperience*:

#### SPEAKING

- a. Discuss the following questions in groups
  - b How do you feel about “the fat man”? What is his function in the plot? (p. 310).

Here, pupils will have to discuss their different feelings towards “the fat man” and how they interpret his function in the plot.

In relation to tasks in general, but also specifically discussion tasks, it can be beneficial to the development of ICC that tasks are created in a way which “enable[s] the learner to interact on as many levels as possible with the foreign culture”, which is “possible if at least some of the tasks are open-ended without correct or incorrect answers” (Fenner 2000, p. 148). As a result, learner's own view-points form the basis for discussion, and “[t]hus *their* understanding of the world becomes the stance from which they can gain a better knowledge of and insight into the foreign culture” (p. 148). Therefore, the types of discussion tasks which do not share this potential in relation to the development of ICC are discussion tasks which are based on comprehension.

An example of a task where pupils are asked to get into groups and to discuss, despite the question asked being closed and therefore only have one correct answer is task 1d on p. 135 in *Access*. The task follows the short story “The Luncheon” and is worded accordingly:

#### 1 UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

- d Where does she suggest having lunch? (p. 135)

As both the name and kind of restaurant the character suggests having lunch at is explicitly mentioned in the text, the task does not in any way require analysis or reflection, only reading comprehension. In carrying out this task, pupils only need to take an efferent stance towards the text, as the task only asks for information to be extracted. Due to this, there is in fact nothing to discuss other than if pupils have conflicting answers, which can be quickly settled by re-reading the text. Additionally, it is not likely that a dialogue with the text will take place

as the task does not require true interaction with the text in order to be carried out. Therefore, in relation to the development of ICC, this task carries little potential other than the development of *savoir*, as pupils might acquire sociocultural knowledge related to French cooking.

Discussion tasks can also be role-playing tasks, but here the only example is connected to the same short story, namely “The Luncheon”. In task 6 ACT IT OUT, pupils must “get into groups of at least four and discuss how you would like to present your version of the story” (Access 2014, p. 137) and are then given some pointers to different things to decide on: choice of music, costumes, etcetera. All pointers revolve around practical matters and the staging of the role play, not the actual content. However, the textbooks do include other role-playing tasks, which will be discussed in the following subchapter.

To conclude the section on discussion tasks, the present investigation showed that all three textbooks include discussion tasks to a varying extent. The one with the highest amount is *Access* with a total of 28 %, although it must be noted that the textbook also has the highest number of discussion tasks which are closed and efferent (20 %), with the sole purpose of checking for comprehension. Although, out of the total of 28 %, the textbook includes a total of 78 % of discussion tasks which are based on reflection, which is positive in relation to the development of ICC. *New eXperience* has included a total number of 24 % discussion tasks, of which 13 % are comprehension-based, 84 % are reflection tasks, and 2 % are role-playing tasks. However, the most surprising result is how only 19 % of the tasks in *Targets* are discussion tasks. This is surprising due to the textbook otherwise having a large focus on reflection tasks, but clearly does not emphasize the carrying out of such tasks in collaboration with peers.

In relation to the development of ICC, one can argue that all three textbooks could benefit from including more discussion tasks. This is due to the opinion, as argued in relation to sociocultural learning theory, (as well as exemplified by results from the present investigation) that when pupils participate in conversation, dialogue and collaboration with peers, it can lead to development in their level of problem-solving. Also, as stated by Fenner (2001), listening to other learner’s views can “enhance their own understanding of the text” (p. 30). As argued by Barnes (1976) in subchapter 2.8.10, discussion tasks open up for what he calls exploratory talk, which enables pupils to engage actively with the text, here the cultural material. As such talk, in most cases is not arranged in order to be evaluated by a

teacher, pupils might feel freer and therefore explore the material in a more uninhibited way, which might lead to pupils developing intercultural attitudes and skills.

Because all three textbooks include a higher number of discussion tasks which are based on reflection rather than comprehension, the results in relation to discussion tasks contradict the hypothesis of the present investigation. However, one might question the need to include any discussion tasks related to prose fiction texts which are based on comprehension, as this probably will not lead to an actual discussion, rather just a sharing of answers which are either correct or incorrect. This shows how tasks at a surface level might seem to carry more potential than they actually do, and how one needs to look beyond the headings or introductory lines which say ‘discuss’ in order to detect what is really asked of the pupils. The same can be said about role-playing tasks, which also vary in wording and focus, and therefore also vary in relation to potentially developing pupils’ ICC.

#### 4.7 Role-playing tasks

As stated in subchapter 4.6, some role-playing tasks are also discussion tasks. In order to see how many tasks engage pupils in enactment, all tasks which ask pupils to perform a role play are included in Table 4.7:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Tasks which ask pupils to role play</b>	1	0.5 %		5	2.6 %		1	0.2 %

Table 4.7: The numbers and percentages of role playing tasks

As seen from Table 4.7, the percentages of tasks which initiate role playing are very low in all three textbooks. The textbook with the highest percentage (2.6 %) is *New eXperience*. Out of 212 analyzed tasks in *Access*, only 1 refers to role playing. The same is the case with *Targets*, which out of 409 tasks only includes one single role-playing task.

One example of a role-playing task is 5.29d connected to the short story “Her First Ball” in *New eXperience*:

## SPEAKING

**d** Make a role play from a ball or party where boys and girls are chatting, dan[c]<sup>14</sup>ing and enjoying themselves until something unexpected suddenly happens. Act out the play in class. (p. 310).

This task, in addition to being a role-playing task, is also an example of a task which is only connected by topic to the short story it follows. A further discussion on tasks which are only linked to the prose fiction texts by topic can be found in subchapter 4.8.1. Although the task initiates a role play based on a similar setting as that of the short story, which is a ball, there are no other implications that suggest further interaction with the text. Other than the possible resurfacing of thoughts related to balls and parties in general, the task cannot be said to be based on pupils' esthetic response to the prose fiction text to which it is linked. Therefore, in relation to the development of ICC, because it directly revolves around acting out the roles of the characters in it, task 5.23c connected to the novel extracts "Scrooge from *A Christmas Carol*" and "Miss Havisham in *Great Expectations*" possibly carries greater potential.

### 5.23 GROUP WORK

**c** In pairs, write the script for a conversation between Miss Havisham and Scrooge where they discuss Christmas or love. Act it out in front of the class.

The same can be said in relation to task 5 linked to the short story "Brackley and the Bed" in *Targets*:

5 ACT IT OUT: A conflict of interests

Work in pairs. Act out a communication situation based on the information below:

Brackley has saved some money and wants to buy himself a new bed. Teena, however, has not forgotten about the honeymoon that Brackley promised her on their wedding day.

Student A is Brackley whose back and legs really hurt after a day's hard work and who feels so tired that he sees stars dancing in front of his eyes.

Student B is Teena who misses the smell and sound of the Caribbean Sea and really wants to take a trip to "the old world", their home country. (...) (p. 233).

The last two tasks can be said to carry more potential in relation to the development of ICC than the first example. This is partly due to the fact that, as stated in subchapter 2.6.2, fiction makes it easier for the pupils to relate to and identify with particular individuals and situations rather than the general, both from the past and the present. Also, through engaging with fiction, "characters, plot, setting, and theme of the narrative text, the drama, or the poem

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<sup>14</sup> An error in spelling was spotted in the original material

offers them possibilities to widen their perspectives, their view of self, and their cultural capital” (Fenner 2001, p. 19). When the tasks are more detailed as to what pupils are meant to act out, it is more likely that intercultural dialogue occurs, and that the role play ends up being based on pupils’ esthetic relationship to the text they have read, as well as the cultures which the text reflects.

When only the setting of a ball which includes dancing and chatting is given, as in the first example from *New eXperience*, one risks that pupils will not expand their perspectives or cultural capital at all, as they can end up choosing to focus on something familiar to them. Awareness of context and situation is crucial in both written and oral communication, and if the communication is meant to be intercultural, the context and situation must be related to foreign cultures. Also Nygaard (2014) stresses the importance of having pupils play specific characters:

Role plays are important because students have to understand the situation of the characters they are going to play, how they behave and what they experience, so that students can practice their skills in intercultural situations. Students may also experience how the people they play react in particular situations because they have to put themselves in the position of the other culture represented by the person they play (p. 45).

When giving directions as to context and situation, role playing tasks can enable students to reflect on attitude, feeling and ultimately cause them to change perspectives. As a result, implementing role playing tasks in textbooks can improve their potential in relation to the development of pupils’ ICC. However, as displayed, whether or not the role plays are based on pupils’ esthetic responses to the prose fiction texts is of importance.

Liddicoat and Scarcino (2010) point to “how one approach to assessing interculturality is through the assessment of intercultural communicative behaviours, such as forms of enactment tasks in which a learner is asked to perform the role of a communicator in an intercultural situation” (p. 56), but that “it is often difficult to judge on the basis of such tasks whether or not this performance is in fact intercultural” (p. 56). This is due to how “[c]onformity to a set of cultural norms of another group shows very little knowledge and dispositions, i.e. the interpretive resources, that the learner brings to the task and which contribute to the performance” (p. 56). Liddicoat and Scarcino (2010) further state that “in order to become intercultural, such tasks need to add to the elicited performance elements of reflection that are at play” (p.56), which, the task examples from *Targets* and *Access* to a greater extent do. In relation to the development of ICC, it is important to remember that

“[t]he clarification of values and understanding does not come from a general exposure to another language and culture, but from targeted reflection on language(s) and culture(s) as they emerge from meaningful communication” (p. 57). It is therefore not sufficient for pupils to simply take on a role without engaging with the given role on a deeper, more reflected level.

To conclude the discussion of role-playing tasks, the results show that implementing role-playing tasks is not focused upon by any of the three textbooks. *Targets* is the textbook with the lowest percentage (0.2 %), closely followed by *Access* (0.5%), and lastly *New eXperience* is the textbook with the highest percentage (2.6 %). As all three textbooks include a much higher number of comprehension tasks than role-playing tasks, these results confirm the hypothesis of tasks connected to prose fiction focusing upon comprehension at the expense of more open and esthetic tasks which may carry more potential in relation to pupils’ ICC. As stated up until this point, role-playing tasks can promote all the *savoirs* if worded adequately, i.e. with a focus on specific characters, plot, setting from a foreign culture, preferably from the prose fiction text to which the tasks are linked, might lead to pupils widening their cultural perspectives and capital, and intercultural dialogue may occur. Therefore, including a higher number of tasks which lead to role-playing might add to the overall potential of textbooks in connection with the development of ICC.

#### **4.8 Other categories**

The following subchapters present research connected with the additional categories, which are tasks representing the use of prose fiction only as a tool, thereof linguistic tasks. Findings related to the explicit use of culture terminology, all of which may affect the development of ICC are discussed. The following subchapters aim to answer the subordinate research question of whether or not the linked tasks actually *are* connected with the prose fiction texts. Finally, whether or not the wording of the tasks explicitly include terminology related to culture, and what consequences this can have on the development of ICC are considered.

##### **4.8.1 Prose fiction as a tool**

This and the following subchapter aim to answer the subordinate research question related to whether the tasks actually are directly linked to the prose fiction texts or not. In her doctorate dissertation, Lund (2007) notes how “many of the exercises that are attached to the excerpts from literary classics [...] fail to focus on the special qualities of the texts and to indicate to

the students why these particular texts have been selected” (p. 180). This also became obvious to the researcher, as the present study shows examples where pieces of fiction are, to a large degree, included due to the topic they exemplify. As a result, texts often function as introductions to a further investigation of certain topics, which is evident when the connected tasks provide few or no references to the texts. As shown in Table 4.8.1, this type of tasks supposedly linked to prose fiction is implemented in all textbooks, though to a varying degree:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Tasks which only relate to the text by topic</b>	46	22 %		74	38 %		29	7 %
<b>Tasks without any connection to the text</b>	75	35 %		7	4 %		41	10 %
<b>Total of tasks either not linked to the text at all, or only by topic.</b>	121	<b>57 %</b>		81	<b>42 %</b>		70	<b>17 %</b>

*Table 4.8.1: Numbers and percentages of tasks which are either not linked to the text at all or just by topic*

As shown in Table 4.8.1, the textbook *Access* includes the highest number of tasks which follow prose fiction texts without having any connection with them. These tasks, which constitute a percentage of 35 %, combined with a percentage of 22 % of tasks which only relate to the text by topic, makes up a total of 57 %. Ultimately, over half of the tasks in the subjected chapters either base themselves only on the topic of the text, or not at all. One example of how tasks are based on topic, and not directly on the text they are linked to, is a task connected to the short story “Powder”:

#### WRITING

Pick one of the following topics to write about. Give your text a suitable title.

**a** Divorce has become more and more common in western society and today many young people grow up in families where vacations must be split between father and mother and new



families. For many young people, this is not a problem. Others, however, may find themselves with divided loyalties. Do you think we expect too much of children and teenagers who find themselves in this situation? Write an essay of on this topic.

(Access 2014, p. 143)

The theme of divorce is very prominent in “Powder”, but an easy way of facilitating greater interaction and dialogue with the text, and ultimately the foreign cultures represented, could be to ask pupils to refer to the short story in their essay, for example by pointing to how pupils’ views and experiences relate to the situation of the boy in the text. However, in *Access*, the majority of the tasks which do not relate to the texts at all are tasks which focus on linguistic features, which the tasks below exemplify:

4 WRITE THE SENTENCES BELOW USING THE CORRECT RELATIVE PRONOUN

a My aunt’s dog.... is a bloodhound, has an incredible sense of smell.

b Dogs... are let off the lead risk being shot by hunters.

c Her uncle,... used to work for my father, is very rich. [...]

(Access 2014, p. 135)

As exemplified by these tasks, linguistic features are often introduced in tasks following fictional texts without having any connection with them at all. It is understandable that linguistic tasks are the most difficult to link to fictional texts as they are meant to exemplify and highlight certain linguistic features. Whether or not it is actually necessary to include tasks which focus on grammar and language following pieces of prose fiction, or whether it would be enough to include them in relation to texts designed for pedagogic purposes, such as factual texts, or in separate textbooks, is outside of the scope of this thesis. However, the present study also shows that it is in fact possible to link the linguistic tasks to the texts, which will be discussed later in this chapter.

As seen in Table 4.8.1, the textbook *New eXperience* includes 4 % tasks which have no connection to the investigated texts, whereas 38 % share a topical connection to the texts, reaching a total of 42 %. Compared to *Access*, *New eXperience* therefore creates a stronger connection to the texts by including more tasks that at least revolve around the same topics. However, the textbook’s potential in relation to the development of ICC could have been increased if the tasks focused more on the texts and their literary qualities. An example of how prose fiction is used as a tool to introduce a topic can be spotted in chapter 1, “English

eXperience” (p. 6-56), where one finds the novel extract “We’re Back” (p. 9-12) by Sophie Kinsella.

In the excerpt “We’re Back”, which was also discussed in subchapter 4.3 and 4.4, “Becky (Rebecca), the narrator and main character, has just returned after a 10-month journey around the world with the love of her life, Luke. At home with her parents, she can’t wait to tell them about her experiences, but things don’t turn out the way she had pictured them” (New eXperience 2009, p. 9). The first three tasks following the text are comprehension questions, whereas the fourth question requires reflection. Out of these, only the reflection task has potential to lead to pupils experiencing true dialogue with the text. Rather than focusing on an in-depth interpretation of the text, the textbooks move on to another task which is found under the heading “Speaking”:

#### 1.5 Asking for and giving directions

Study the map of Sydney, Australia. Then in pairs explain to each other how to get:

- From Moore Park to the railway station on Eddy Avenue
  - From Eddy Avenue to Woolloomooloo Bay (...)
- (*New eXperience* 2009, p. 13).

It is clear that this task does not relate to the novel extract in any other way than by the theme of traveling, nor do the last tasks under the heading “1.6 Do you know the English-speaking world”, in which 12 questions related to historical and geographical facts from the English-speaking world are asked, for instance:

e Which of these Queens never married?

1 Queen Elisabeth I

2 Queen Mary I

3 Queen Victoria (...) (p. 14)

Arguably, in relation to the development of ICC, tasks 1.5 and 1.6 carry little potential in other aspects than the development of *savoir*.

As seen in Table 4.8,1, *Target’s* total of 17 % shows that this textbook includes more tasks which focus on the actual texts than its competitors. Nevertheless, this textbook also includes some tasks which in no way relate to the texts they follow, such as the tasks in 7 linked to the short story “This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona”:

7 Some similes are very common and are a part of everyday language.

a What does it mean to:

Eat like a bird?

Eat like a horse?

Eat like a pig? (...) (p. 204).

Whereas the tasks in 7 exemplify how tasks have no connection to the texts at all, task 5 connected to the same short story exemplifies how *Targets* also has tasks which are only connected to the text by topic:

#### FIND OUT MORE

The story “This Is What It Means...” is a road trip story. In literature and film, road trips often become an important symbolic journey and an opportunity for a character to discover himself or herself. Do some research on two or three famous stories and films in which characters “hit the road” (p. 203).

Despite including some occurrences of using fiction as a tool to introduce topics or practice the skill of reading, or having tasks which are not connected to the texts at all, *Targets* also bases several linguistic tasks on the literary texts:

#### LANGUAGE WORK

Translate the passage starting with “The old man was becoming useless to his sons” and ending with “The hunters were now deciding where to go”. Explain the use of the progressive. (*Targets* 2015, p. 219)

In contrast to many linguistic tasks, this task from *Targets* has several levels, and can be interpreted as not only being a linguistic task. First of all, to carry out the task, pupils have to read the text closely. As it is a matter of translation, this task also requires an examination of how the language in the text corresponds to that of pupils’ own language, which can lead to a general language awareness, but also develop knowledge and awareness of literary language. When translating, the task can also promote development of *savoir faire* as they have to interact with the text to which it relates. Not only do pupils have to encode or decode language by identifying the use of the progressive, but they also have to explain the use of it, which is where pupils can be said to encounter language as culture. They will have to ask themselves what this usage of grammar implies about the language, and therefore also cultures represented in the text. Consequently, the task is not solely about form, but meaning as well, and pupils can develop skills of interpreting and relating (*savoir comprendre*). Ultimately, tasks like this one can lead to “insight regarding the ways in which culture affects language and communication” (Sercu 2005, p. 3)

In relation to the development of ICC, the more tasks focus on the texts, the more pupils will have to engage with them, which can lead to a greater possibility of developing the relevant intercultural attitudes, awareness and skills. As noted in subchapter 2.6.2, when pupils engage with fiction, “characters, plot, setting, and theme of the narrative text, the drama, or the poem offers them possibilities to widen their perspectives, their view of self, and their cultural capital” (Fenner 2001, p. 19). Therefore, if tasks fail to focus sufficiently on the texts, a lot of the potential of working with fiction in relation to the development of ICC is lost. The loss of such potential can also be caused by tasks focusing too much on checking reading comprehension, as discussed in subchapter 4.2. Another consequence of tasks only using literary texts as tools is that the focus is solely on the reader herself/himself, and that no intercultural dialogue with the foreign cultures occurs, and that the importance of experiencing such a dialogue is lost. Ultimately, pupils can be left with the notion that literary texts are something only to be read and understood, not interpreted, examined and questioned. This can also be the outcome when prose fiction texts are followed by many linguistic tasks, which is discussed in the following subchapter.

#### **4.8.2 Linguistic tasks**

A natural part of the discussion in relation to the use of prose fiction as a tool in textbooks is how one also finds linguistic tasks which are linked to such texts. As mentioned in subchapter 4.8.1, *Targets* does a good job by also basing several linguistic tasks on the texts. This is positive in relation to the development of ICC, because the more tasks which focus on the texts, the more pupils will have to engage with them, which can result in enhancement of ICC as noted in subchapter 4.6. As stated in subchapter 2.8.11, it is clear that “there is still a firm belief in many teaching traditions that knowledge of grammar comes first” (Andersen 2008, p. 88). The present study reveals that all three textbooks include different types of *linguistic tasks* connected with the prose fiction texts. In *Access*, such tasks are included under the heading “IMPROVE YOUR LANGUAGE”, whereas *New eXperience* simply uses the term “LANGUAGE”, and lastly, *Targets* uses the category “LANGUAGE WORK”. The numbers and percentages of linguistic tasks of each textbook in connection with prose fiction texts, and whether they are connected to the text or not, are represented in Table 4.8.2:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Tasks which focus on linguistic features</b>	120	57 %		64	33 %		127	31 %
<b>Linguistic tasks which are directly connected to the prose fiction texts</b>	11	9 %		10	16 %		87	69 %
<b>Linguistic tasks which are not connected/only connected by topic to the prose fiction texts</b>	109	91 %		54	84 %		40	31 %

Table 4.8.2: The numbers and percentages of linguistic tasks

As seen from Table 4.8.2, there is a clear difference in the number of linguistic tasks which the textbooks have included in connection with prose fiction texts. Only separated by 2 %, reaching a total of 31 % and 33 % one finds *Targets* and *New eXperience*. However, what separates the two textbooks is whether or not the linguistic tasks focus on the prose fiction texts. In *New eXperience*, only 16 % of the linguistic tasks are actually connected to the prose fiction texts, which the tasks in 1.14 on p. 22 exemplify:

#### 1.14 Correcting mistakes

How can you tell from the following sentences that the narrator really does have problems with nouns and verbs? Correct the sentences and explain what is wrong:

- a) Mrs. Margaret have a neatly cut pale blonde hair
- b) No subject here are mans or womans (...)

Although, it must be noted that because the different examples are already extracted from the text, pupils are not likely to go back and re-read and engage more with the text from which they originate, yet they do get to engage more with the specific parts of it. A total of 84 % of the linguistic tasks in *New eXperience* are not, or only by topic, connected to the prose fiction texts, which these tasks connected to a different novel extract exemplify:

#### 1.19 Concord

English grammar can sometimes be confusing because it does not always follow strict rules. One rule you should remember, however, has to do with concord, which means that the verb has to correspond with the subject in a sentence.

Write the correct form of the verb in the open spaces below, using the present tense only. Remember to add the third person –s where needed:

- a) She ..... (need) to work hard on her grammar.
- b) Dictionaries ..... (be) useful tools for language learners.
- c) My students ..... (do) not make grammar mistakes. (New eXperience 2009, p. 26)

Of a total of 33 %, 69 % of the linguistic tasks included in *Targets* are connected to the prose fiction texts they follow, which is by far the highest number. A task from *Targets* which exemplifies this trend has already been presented in the previous subchapter. Despite including a high number of linguistic tasks which focus on the texts, *Targets* also include a percentage of 31 % of which are not connected or only share a topical connection with the texts, which the tasks in 6 on p. 216 exemplify:

#### LANGUAGE WORK

6 Phrasal verbs (page 301)

Complete the sentences.

*away, of, up, out, on/along, over, down, around*

- a They had to get rid ... the dead body.
- b Will you get ... of my way.
- c Are you still in bed? Get ....., you lazy lump!

Out of the three textbooks, *Access* includes the highest number of *linguistic tasks*, and ends at a total of 57 %. Also, of these 57 %, a total of 91 % are *linguistic tasks* which are either not connected at all or only connected by topic to the prose fiction texts they follow. In other words, *Access* includes a high number of linguistic tasks, but very few of them are actually connected to the texts. Some examples can be identified in relation to the short story “True Love”:

#### 3 IMPROVE YOUR LANGUAGE

The use and non-use of the definite article before abstract nouns.

Nouns such as *love, nature, society, friendship* are all examples of *abstract nouns* i.e. things that you cannot touch. (...) Translate the following sentences to English.

A Mine onkler arbeider i bilindustrien (...)

Obviously, these tasks focus on the use and non-use of the definite article before abstract nouns, and how this is a common mistake among Norwegian pupils. In order to practice this, the task provides 10 sentences in Norwegian for pupils to translate into English. These tasks revolve around pupils developing declarative knowledge connected to grammar, which is important in relation to communicative competence, but does not otherwise contribute to the development of ICC as they are closed and efferent. Ultimately, linguistic tasks mostly focus on form and not content.

However, in total, tasks carry more potential in relation to the development of ICC when they actually deal with the prose fiction texts. As stated in previous subchapters, it is a concern when tasks focus too much on checking for reading comprehension, or solely use prose fiction texts as a tool to introduce topics or linguistic features, and it can affect the overall potential of textbooks in relation to the development of ICC.

The subchapters 4.8.1 and 4.8.2 have discussed how prose fiction texts can be used as a tool. The present investigation shows that in all three textbooks, fiction is implemented as a tool in order to introduce a topic or as a basis for linguistic tasks. Also, tasks which do not in any way relate to the texts are included in all the three textbooks, though to a varying degree. As seen from Table 9 in subchapter 4.8.1, over half (57 %) of the studied tasks in *Access* either have no or only a topical connection to the prose fiction texts. Of the total number, 35 % of the tasks in the textbook have no connection to the texts, whereas 22 % are connected by topic. Also *New eXperience* has a high number of tasks (42 %) which show little or no connection with the prose fiction texts. However, this textbook has a higher percentage of tasks which are related by topic (38 %) in comparison to *Access*, and therefore only 4 % of the tasks can be said to have no connection with the texts at all. Out of the three, *Targets* is the textbook with the lowest number of tasks (17 %) which are not connected with the texts at all, or only by topic.

As stated above, another way in which prose fiction seems to have been included in textbooks as a tool is when they are used as basis for linguistic tasks. All the three textbooks in this study have high percentages of linguistic tasks. The highest percentage belongs to *Access* (57 %), and this is also the reason why the textbook's percentage of tasks which are not linked to the texts at all is so high. Only 9 % of the included linguistic tasks are connected with the texts. In *New eXperience*, 33 % of the tasks are linguistic tasks. Thereof, 16 % is linked to the

texts, whereas 84 % shows no connection. So, in addition to having a lower percentage than *Access, New eXperience* also includes more linguistic tasks which focus on the texts. With the lowest percentage of 31 % linguistic tasks in total, *Targets* includes a total of 69 % of linguistic tasks which are based on the prose fiction texts they follow, and only 31 % which are either not connected at all, or only by topic. Although, due to focusing on linguistic features in the texts to which they are linked, linguistic tasks which make pupils go back to the texts at least foster further engagement with the textual material, though on a superficial level.

As a large focus on linguistic tasks in all three textbooks has been revealed, these findings connected with linguistic tasks contradict the hypothesis of this thesis to a certain extent, as it suggested that an investigation might reveal a focus on comprehension tasks. However, it was suggested that this would be at the costs of more open and esthetic tasks, which linguistic tasks clearly are not. So, one can say that less tasks which are open and esthetic have been included due to a possible focus on implementing linguistic tasks, not only comprehension tasks, as proposed in the hypothesis. Therefore, these finds both contradict and confirm different parts of the hypothesis.

To conclude, the research shows that a high number of tasks linked to prose fiction texts are in fact linguistic tasks, which can limit the interaction, discovery and overall dialogue with the cultures represented in the prose fiction texts. The overall potential of working with such texts carries in relation to developing pupils' ICC may therefore be lessened. However, some linguistic tasks, as exemplified in subchapter 4.8.1 can carry further potential in relation to the development of ICC. This is, as stated, dependent on the level of which pupils are asked to interact with the text, how emphasis is also placed on meaning and not only form, all of which are dependent on the objective of each task.

#### **4.8.3 Tasks which explicitly use terminology related to cultures**

One aspect which may influence the potential of tasks in relation to developing pupils' ICC is the explicit use of terminology related to culture. It is the researcher's opinion that when working with prose fiction texts, pupils are often unaware that they are in fact interacting with other cultures, especially if this is not mentioned explicitly either by teachers, in the wording of tasks or in the introduction to the texts. Consequently, this has been investigated in the present study. The results presented in this subchapter answer the subordinate research question related to whether or not the wording of the tasks explicitly include terminology



related to culture, and what consequences this might have for the textbook tasks' potential in relation to the development of ICC.

Although a large number of tasks deal with cultural aspects represented in the texts, the present investigation shows that very few tasks explicitly use terminology related to cultures:

	<i>Access</i>	<i>% Access</i>		<i>New eXperience</i>	<i>% New eXperience</i>		<i>Targets</i>	<i>% Targets</i>
<b>Tasks related to prose fiction texts in total</b>	212	100 %		192	100 %		409	100 %
<b>Tasks which explicitly use terminology related to culture</b>	2	0.94 %		1	0.52 %		4	0.97%

Table 4.8.3: The numbers and percentages of tasks which explicitly uses terminology related to culture

Out of all the three textbooks, *Targets* is the one which has the highest percentage of tasks which explicitly use terminology related to culture. One example is:

**BEFORE YOU READ**

Storytelling and storytellers are important in Native American culture. Why, do you think? (p. 191).

In the selected task-material from *Access*, the term 'culture' is only mentioned twice:

**1 TALK ABOUT IT**

e What do you learn about Maori culture in this excerpt? Is this in any way different from Norwegian culture, for example? (p. 273). (...)

**3 WRITING**

b) Traditions and customs are an integral part of our cultural heritage and we should do everything in our power to preserve them. Do you agree or disagree? (p. 274).

However, in addition to these two occurrences, the term 'culture' occurs in two introductions to two different sets of tasks:

**2 GOING DEEPER INTO THE STORY**

In this story we encounter a very different way of dealing with death than we are used to in western culture. Discuss the following questions in a class discussion (p. 246) (...)

### 3 TALK ABOUT IT

The southwestern part of the United States has long been subject to Spanish culture. One part of this culture is the Roman Catholic religion. For over 400 years Roman Catholic missionaries have been trying to convert Native Americans to their particular form of Christianity. Judging from this story, how successful have they been?

The former introduction is then followed by four tasks (a-d), and the latter by three (a-c), all of which clearly reflect and deal with cultural aspects as stated in the introductions. However, because terminology related to culture is not explicitly repeated in the actual tasks, they are not included in the total in Table 4.8.3. With a total of 0.94 %, *Access* places itself in the middle with regards to this specific category. However, studying the examples from *Targets* and *Access* reveals what seems to be a trend of referring to culture, and not cultures. Arguably, within what is labelled as ‘Maori culture’ and ‘Native American culture’ there is an array of differences in ways of life, customs, etcetera, both in earlier times, and most certainly in recent times as the indigenous peoples struggle with adjusting to the modern world. This displays a “modernist conception of the term” which “has been seen as a handicap to individual mobility, entrepreneurship, and change” (Kramsch, 2006, p. 16). It makes the cultures in question appear homogenous, and ‘culture’ being viewed as monolithic, which can give rise to stereotypical perceptions one would rather see being broken down than enforced. This finding correlates to the notion that possibly, in foreign language teaching, “culture continues to be conceived as a static, monolithic, idealised, undiversified object of study” (Sercu, 2002, p. 68).

What is also interesting is that when terminology related to cultures is used, the cultures in question are both indigenous. In many ways, such cultures are often conceived by pupils as being very exotic, and particularly foreign, which they of course are to most Norwegian pupils. However, solely using terminology related to cultures in such references, may lead to pupils thinking of culture in general as only being something exotic and foreign, when it is not. Therefore, in addition to tasks making pupils more aware of the fact that they are encountering foreign cultures when working with fictional texts by stating it more explicitly, a wider use of culture-specific terminology could possibly provide more nuanced perceptions of the concept of culture. Perhaps this could even lead to pupils realizing the immediate values of working with foreign cultures in EFL and EFLT.

Lastly, in *New eXperience*, terminology related to cultures only occurs once. Out of 189 tasks, only one refers to ‘culture’:

1.11 Talking about grammar

d The narrator believes that language sometimes reflects culture. Explain her point. Do you think she is right? (p. 21).

As seen from Table 4.8.3, *New eXperience* is the textbook with the lowest percentage, reaching a total of only 0.52 %. However, the one task that is exemplified here works well in relation to ICC because it fosters reflection related to an important topic.

Although this has not been a focus in this thesis, and is a topic worthy of a thesis of its own, it seems as if ‘culture’ is mentioned more in tasks related to factual texts. Of course, factual texts are meant to provide factual information, and if ‘culture’ is only mentioned in such tasks, this may lead to pupils thinking of cultures as facts. Thus, cultures can be regarded by pupils as something that can be explicitly learned, and not as dynamic entities which one can interpret, relate to, discover and interact with. Ultimately, this might lead to pupils thinking they are interculturally competent on the basis of being culturally knowledgeable only, and that other skills and attitudes are not of direct relevance. However, this is only based on the researcher’s opinion and informal observation, and is not supported by formal research in the present investigation.

#### **4.9 Representation of tasks with relevance to the different objectives of ICC**

As discussed and stated up until this point, different types of tasks carry different potential in relation to the development of ICC. Although one can identify certain trends in connection with the different types of tasks which have been discussed, also tasks within one specific category can vary in relation to developing the different objectives of ICC, which have also been exemplified in the previous subchapters. This subchapter presents the results connected with the subordinate research question related to in which ways do the representation of tasks aid/limit the development of ICC. Although all of the previous subchapters have contributed to an understanding of how textbook tasks linked to prose fiction texts possibly promote the development of ICC, which is the overall research question of this thesis, this subchapter provides an overview as it presents the complete analysis of tasks in relation to the development of the separate *savoirs* (Byram 1997). For example, as stated, reflection tasks can carry potential in relation to pupils developing the different objectives of ICC, but also within this category one can distinguish how some tasks to a varying degree fulfill the

different aims. How the tasks adhere to the five *savoirs* in *Access*, *New eXperience* and *Targets* is represented in Table 4.9:

Textbook	Total of tasks	% of tasks	Savoir	Savoir être	Savoir comprendre	Savoir apprendre/faire	Savoir s'engager
<i>Access</i>	212	100%	212	95	68	82	53
<b>% of tasks with relevance to ICC</b>	212	100%	100 %	45 %	32 %	39 %	25 %
<i>New eXperience</i>	192	100%	192	69	52	63	44
<b>% of tasks with relevance to ICC</b>	192	100%	100 %	36 %	27 %	33 %	23 %
<i>Targets</i>	409	100 %	409	223	177	200	90
<b>% of tasks with relevance to ICC</b>	409	100%	100 %	54 %	43 %	49 %	22 %

Table 4.9: Representation of tasks with relevance to the different objectives of ICC

As seen from Table 4.9, all of the tasks which have been investigated can be said to be relevant to the development of *savoir*. This is due to the fact that at some level, by having pupils perform tasks using the English language, all the different types of tasks have potential in developing “knowledge of the processes and interaction at individual and societal levels” (Byram 1997, p. 35). As stated, tasks which focus on comprehension carry little potential of developing aspects of ICC other than *savoir*, thereof the promotion of “knowledge about social groups and their cultures in one’s own country, and similar knowledge of the interlocutor’s country” (p. 35), although in order for pupils to develop a change in attitudes and skills, more and deeper involvement with the prose fiction material is necessary.

As “[l]anguage is not only communication, but equally important, (...) an expression of culture”, it “differs from other artefacts of culture in that it can be used to express itself about itself” (Fenner, 2000, p. 144). When arguing that language is culture, every interaction with the English language can therefore be said to enhance cultural knowledge (*savoir*). Consequently, any task which makes pupils engage with the English language is of relevance to the development of ICC in its widest sense. However, a lower number of tasks can be said to promote the other objectives, as these require further engagement with the cultural material.

The percentage of tasks which can be said to possibly promote *savoir être* ranges from 36 % in *New eXperience* to 54 % in *Targets*. This result correlates to *New eXperience* including a lower percentage of reflection tasks than the other two textbooks, which are, as stated in subchapter 2.8.8, more likely to engage pupils more and are therefore more likely to develop a change in attitudes. The percentage of each textbook in relation to the promotion of *savoir être* could have been higher if the textbooks had included more tasks based on reflection and discussion, but also arguably tasks related to role playing which is the type of tasks which is by far the least implemented in all three textbooks.

As stated, *savoir comprendre* relates to the capacity to interpret and relate cultures. Due to the fact that many reflection tasks ask pupils to interpret prose fiction texts as well as often relating aspects of them to the pupils’ own cultures, the number of reflection tasks is also of direct relevance as to whether tasks promote *savoir comprendre*. Because *New eXperience* has the lowest number of reflection tasks, the textbooks also has the lowest percentage (27%) of tasks which may promote this objective. In relation to this objective, *Targets* once again has the highest percentage. The textbook ends up at a total of 43 % tasks which can be said to promote *savoir comprendre*, due to a significant focus on analyzing and interpreting literature. Once more, *Access* is placed in the middle of the scale, reaching a total of 32 %.

The objectives of *savoir apprendre* and *savoir faire*, as discussed in subchapter 2.3.2, relate to skills of discovery and interaction. In this investigation, due to the fact that one can speak of intercultural dialogic interaction between pupils’ own voices, and those voices which are encountered in different narratives, interaction with other cultures has been interpreted as also meaning interaction with the texts. Because of this, many tasks promote both *savoir comprendre* and *savoir apprendre/faire* as both skills of interpreting and relating, as well as discovery and interaction with the text are needed for them to be completed. This meant that in the analysis, many tasks overlapped within this categorization. However, also *discussion*

*tasks* have been an influence on the total percentages of tasks which may promote the objectives of *savoir apprendre/faire* in Table 4.9.

As stated in subchapters 2.8.9 and 2.8.10, in completing such tasks in collaboration with peers, pupils' views might be challenged, and, as a result, pupils can end up with an altered or broadened understanding of the topic in question (Aase 2005, pp. 115-117), as well as of their peers or other participants in the conversation, and ultimately the cultural diversity which is present in such a conversation. Also, as stated by Fenner (2001), listening to other learner's views can "enhance their own understanding of the text" (p. 30). Due to having included a higher percentage of discussion tasks, as seen from Table 4.9, *New eXperience* reaches a higher percentage in relation to tasks which may promote *savoir apprendre/faire* than in relation to the development of *savoir comprendre*, although it still has a lower percentage than the other two textbooks. Despite having fewer *discussion tasks*, it is *Targets*, with a percentage of 49 % which includes the highest number of tasks with potential of promoting yet another objective. This is due to the fact that when pupils are asked to analyze literature, they also rely on skills of discovery and interaction with the texts.

The present investigation reveals that it is in relation to the development of the objective *savoir s'engager* that the textbooks are closest in percentages. As seen from Table 4.9, *Access* reaches a total of 25 %, yet is closely followed by *New eXperience* with a total of 23 %, and lastly *Targets* with a percentage of 22 %. The number of tasks which carries potential in relation to this objective of the development of ICC is the lowest compared to tasks which can be connected with the other objectives in all the three textbooks. One central find is how *New eXperience* has the lowest number of reflection tasks (35 %), yet because the reflection tasks which have been included generally challenge pupils more than those in the other textbooks, this textbook includes a slightly higher percentage of tasks which can develop *savoir s'engager*. However, in relation to the development of *savoir comprendre* and *savoir apprendre/faire*, the other two textbooks show more potential as they include more reflection tasks which require active engagement, and in-depth study than the tasks in *New eXperience*.

Arguably, the textbooks could have benefited from including more tasks which encourages pupils to reflect critically on the values, beliefs, and behaviors of their own society through comparison with other foreign societies. In carrying out tasks which can be connected with the development of *savoir s'engager*, pupils must draw on both intercultural skills and

attitudes. As this objective can be said to build on the other objectives, it is of special importance.

As stated up until this point, the development of ICC is not solely related to becoming culturally knowledgeable, as might have been a focus in earlier foreign language teaching. The objective of *savoir s'engager* plays an important role in relation to pupils developing respect and tolerance towards cultures which they do not necessarily identify with. In order to build such respect and tolerance, tasks could therefore ask for pupils' personal opinions related to prose fiction texts, as this does not only lead to realizations and awareness about foreign cultures, but the pupils' own cultures as well. Therefore, to create tasks with a larger focus on pupils' affective responses to the prose fiction texts and the cultures they represent could be beneficial in relation to the development of the objective *savoir s'engager*, as well as the development of ICC in general. This is evident as *New eXperience* has the lowest percentage of reflection tasks (35 %), yet still has a higher percentage of tasks which may promote *savoir s'engager* than *Targets*. This shows that often quantity does not necessarily equal quality, and that one can identify differences in potential by looking specifically at what is asked for and how it is asked. Therefore, in this respect, despite *Targets* having a higher percentage of reflection tasks, which, as stated throughout this thesis, can be positive in relation to the development of ICC, it is still important also to look for variety within such a categorization.

However, it is important to note that “[t]he difficulty with any modelling is that, inevitably, it involves some form of categorization or breaking down into parts” (Sercu, 2010, p. 53), which might not be really suitable in relation to the development of ICC as it should, as stated in subchapter 2.3.3, be viewed as a process. So, although it is possible to divide ICC into different constituents, it is important to view it as a continuous process, especially so that “the learner continues to learn, change, evolve, and become transformed with time” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 7). After all, “to be intercultural involves the continuation of intercultural learning through experience and critical reflection” (Sercu, 2010, p. 56), and there can therefore “be no final end point at which the individual achieves the intercultural state, but rather to be intercultural is by its very nature an unfinishable work in progress of action in response to new experiences” (p. 56).

#### **4.10 Chapter summary**

Up until this point, the findings of the present investigation have been presented and discussed. Throughout, the subordinate research questions have been discussed, as well as all parts of the discussion being directed at answering the primary research question of this thesis, which is how textbook tasks potentially promote the development of ICC. Subchapters 4.1-4.7 have gone into detail about how different types of tasks can carry different potential in developing pupils' ICC, and, dependent on what kind of task it is, how this affects how Byram's *savoirs* are represented. Also, to what extent the different types of tasks are represented in each textbook has been discussed, as this affects the overall potential of the tasks in each textbook in relation to the development of ICC.



## **Chapter 5: Conclusions, Limitations and Further Research**

### **5.0 Introduction**

This final chapter of the thesis revisits the research question, theoretical background and methods upon which it has been based, as well as concluding the research findings. Possible limitations to the present investigation are discussed in subchapter 5.2. Lastly, the implications of this study are explored in relation to further research.

### **5.1 Conclusions**

The focus of the present thesis has been to investigate how textbook tasks linked to prose fiction texts potentially promote the development of ICC. Such an endeavor was motivated by the increasing importance of cross-cultural communication in the globalized world of 2016, where the English language is found at the very center. The strong position textbooks and tasks hold in foreign language education influenced the choice of subject matter for this thesis. Due to the opinions among scholars and educators of how working with fiction can be beneficial in relation to the development of ICC, tasks linked to prose fiction were the focal point of the research.

Chapter 2 of this thesis presented the theoretical background to the present investigation. Here, the concept of ICC as defined by Michael Byram was discussed. Alongside this discussion, various principles as given by The Norwegian Core Curriculum (1996), The Knowledge Promotion (2006/13) and the *Common European Framework of References for Languages* (2001) were introduced. Also, as the thesis has dealt with prose fiction tasks, it was necessary to look into literary theory, with a focus upon reader-response theory as defined by Wolfgang Iser and Louise M. Rosenblatt, respectively. In order to discuss differences in task types, a theoretical foundation of tasks was needed, particularly the concepts presented by Tim Ellis, Virginia Samuda and Martin Bygate. Based on whether the tasks were open or closed, efferent or esthetic, they were grouped into five categories: comprehension tasks, reflection tasks, discussion tasks, role-playing tasks, as well as linguistic tasks, although the final category was part of the discussion related to the use of literature as a tool.

As discussed in chapter 3, the data is both qualitative and quantitative. The present investigation therefore has a mixed method design which hopefully offers a complete understanding of the study. The subsequent chapter presented the discussion of the collected qualitative and quantitative data aimed at answering the research questions.

The research presented in this thesis has shown that various types of tasks carry different potential in developing pupils' ICC, and that this potential is affected by tasks being either efferent or esthetic, as well as being open or closed. Reflection tasks and role-playing tasks, due to being open and esthetic, can develop all the *savoirs*, whereas comprehension and linguistic tasks, due to being closed and efferent, mostly carry potential in relation to developing *savoir* (cultural knowledge). Discussion tasks vary in potential, as the research has shown that such tasks can be open or closed, as well as efferent or esthetic. Consequently, the inclusion of different task types is of direct relevance to whether some *savoirs* are more widely represented than others in the material. The research findings also showed that the objective which tasks promote the most is *savoir*. In all the three textbooks, a lower number of tasks promote the other objectives, which is due to how such development requires further engagement with the cultural material. The tasks which promote *savoir s'engager* make up the smallest number in all the three textbooks. As presented throughout chapter 4, there are evident differences between each textbook when it comes to representation of task types, and therefore also which of the *savoirs* that is most widely represented.

A central find in the investigation is that there is a surprisingly high number of tasks which are either not connected at all, or only connected by topic, to the texts to which they are linked in all the three textbooks. Naturally, if tasks are meant to foster reflection related to the texts as cultural artefacts, and thereby potentially develop pupils' ICC, they will need to focus on the texts. As many tasks are included that show no connection with the texts, or the focus is placed on checking for comprehension, a lot of the potential of working with prose fiction texts is lost.

Another interesting find is that the number of tasks which explicitly use terminology related to culture is very low, which may lead to pupils and teachers being unaware of how fictional texts are cultural artefacts. To provide pupils with a more nuanced understanding of cultures, to make them understand how foreign cultures are not only something to be encountered on trips to foreign destinations, but are, metaphorically speaking, also present in the textbooks

resting in their very own hands, can lead to pupils experiencing greater motivation to read more. Thus, this would not only be beneficial to the development of ICC, but to other aspects of EFLL/EFLT as well.

To conclude, in relation to pupils developing ICC through tasks, it is important to state the importance of tasks being open and esthetic, and that they encourage pupils to actively engage with the texts so that an intercultural dialogue can occur. In this respect, tasks which foster reflection have been proven to be most effective. If the goal is for pupils' attitudes and values to become altered and broadened, tasks need to go beyond the surface level of a text and exceed the development of declarative, cultural knowledge, which are the focuses of comprehension and linguistic tasks. However, as the highest percentage of tasks which may promote *savoir être* is 56 % (*Targets*), just over half the tasks, suggests that there is still a lot of potential in relation to creating tasks which are better suited to develop pupils' ICC. This is also true in relation to the other objectives of ICC, *savoir s'engager* especially. In this respect, by including more open and esthetic tasks which are, as shown, better suited to promote the development of ICC, this potential of the tasks in all three textbooks can be increased.

Overall, the hypothesis of this study (see chapter 1.8) is partly confirmed. This is due to all the three textbooks including what can be deemed a significant amount of comprehension tasks, and also a large number of linguistic tasks, all of which can be said to fill up space in the textbooks which could have been devoted to more reflection tasks. At least, one can say that if such tasks take the place of other tasks which carry more potential in relation to the development of ICC, for instance, reflections tasks, it is problematic. After all, as proven throughout this thesis

[t]he intercultural is manifested through language in use, through interpreting and expressing meaning across cultural boundaries in dialogue with self and others, drawing on awareness and knowledge gained through previous experience, recognising the possibility of multiple interpretations of messages and the culturally embedded nature of meaning. Understanding can only come from interpersonal dialogue and external observation of the self and other (Sercu, 2010, p. 55).

Throughout, this thesis has discussed and shown how textbook tasks to a varying degree promote the development of ICC. It has argued how the number of tasks which carry more potential in relation to the development of ICC can be increased when crafting textbooks in the subject of English in VG1. The present study has also revealed that textbooks include a large number of tasks which are not focused on the texts which they precede, occur alongside

or follow, proposing that a lot of the suggested potential of working with prose fiction texts in relation to the development of ICC is not fully taken advantage of. Having investigated this topic, it is hoped that EFL teachers as well as EFL-textbook writers can become more aware of the importance of pupils developing ICC. Another hoped for outcome is that the design of tasks, and what benefits they can bring to EFL-teaching and learning, will receive more attention.

## **5.2 Limitations**

It is a limitation to the present research that it does not investigate what happens when pupils carry out the tasks in class. Although a task being designed in a way which in theory can promote the development of ICC, there is no guarantee of this happening, as that depends on several other factors. Ultimately, this is a complex topic, worthy of being the focal point of a thesis of its own.

Also, the present thesis does not account for the appropriateness of the prose fiction texts themselves in relation to the development of ICC, in which factors such as cultural representation and literary quality play an important part. Additionally, it is a limitation that the present thesis only investigates a selection of task material from each textbook, and not all the tasks.

## **5.3 Further research**

As mentioned above, it would be beneficial to investigate how tasks are carried out by pupils in the classroom, and whether implications suggested by a theoretical study like this matches what actually happens in the EFL-classroom. Also, as new textbooks continue to be published, it is important to keep the investigation going. After all, new does not necessarily mean better. Lastly, in connection with tasks in general and the development of ICC, it might be interesting to look at how the use of computers and the Internet in EFLT/EFLL can offer great possibilities in terms of communication across cultures, and hence possibly influence pupils' development of ICC. Hopefully this thesis will motivate other scholars to continue researching this important topic.

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### **Figures:**

Figure 1: <http://www.f.waseda.jp/norm/literary%20criticism%2011/hall.pdf>

Figure 2:

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## Appendix 1: Types of tasks in *Access* (2014)

Fictional Texts <i>Access</i> (2014)	Types of tasks						
	Total amount of tasks	% of total	Comprehension tasks	Reflection tasks	Discussion tasks	Role-playing tasks	Language tasks
“True Love” (p. 120-124)	72	34 %	14	22	9	0	46
“The Luncheon” (p. 130-134)	34	16 %	8	6	15	1	19
“Powder” (p. 139-142)	15	7 %	5	9	2	0	0
“Blackout” (p.153-156)	32	15 %	12	19	13	0	21
“The Man to Send Rain Clouds” (p. 240-246)	21	10 %	1	10	9	0	10
“The Homecoming” (p. 249-252)	16	8 %	7	9	6	0	0
“The Whale Rider” (p. 265-272)	22	10 %	0	9	5	0	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>120</b>
<b>Total in %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>22 %</b>	<b>40 %</b>	<b>28 %</b>	<b>0,5 %</b>	<b>57 %</b>

## Appendix 2: Types of tasks in *New eXperience* (2009)

	Types of tasks						
<b>Fictional Texts</b> <i>New eXperience</i> (2009)	<b>Total amount of tasks</b>	<b>% of total</b>	<b>Comprehension tasks</b>	<b>Reflection tasks</b>	<b>Discussion tasks</b>	<b>Role-playing tasks</b>	<b>Language tasks</b>
“We’re Back!” (p. 9-12)	27	14 %	16	3	1	0	8
“Beginner” (p. 18-20)	44	23 %	6	12	16	0	26
“Snow” (p. 23-25)	32	17 %	6	3	0	0	23
“They’re Made out of Meat” (p.56-59)	11	6 %	2	8	3	0	0
“Love Poem” (p. 290)	12	6 %	2	10	12	0	0
“The World of Dickens” (p. 296-299)	18	9 %	6	12	3	1	0
“Her First Ball” (p. 302-309)	23	12 %	7	14	6	1	4
“The Smile” (p. 324-330)	25	13 %	11	6	4	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>Total in %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>29 %</b>	<b>35 %</b>	<b>23 %</b>	<b>2 %</b>	<b>33 %</b>

### Appendix 3: Types of tasks in *Targets* (2015)

Fictional Texts <i>Targets</i> (2015)	Types of tasks					
	Total amount of tasks	Comprehension tasks	Reflection tasks	Discussion tasks	Role-playing tasks	Language tasks
“Thank You, Mam” (p. 157-160)	30	10	11	3	0	10
“Looking for Alaska” (p. 178-182)	41	1	26	17	0	15
“This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona” (p. 191-202)	61	2	39	10	0	20
“The Moose and the Sparrow” (p. 209-214)	66	11	18	18	0	27
“The Custom” (p. 217-218)	26	7	9	7	0	6
“Brackley and the Bed” (p. 228-232)	24	8	10	0	1	7
“I Can Be Someone” (p. 238-241)	14	3	10	6	0	0
“The Cracked, Pink Lips of Rosie’s Bridegroom” (p. 247-249)	28	0	20	6	0	8
“Catching a Ride” (p. 263-266)	67	2	27	4	0	23
“Butterflies” (p. 275)	19	3	15	0	0	1

<b>“Good Advice Is Rarer than Rubies” (p. 282-286)</b>	33	8	15	7	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>108</b>
<b>Total in %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>13 %</b>	<b>49 %</b>	<b>19 %</b>	<b>0,2 %</b>	<b>26 %</b>



**Appendix 4: Tasks which may promote the different objectives of ICC in *Access* (2014)**

Fictional Texts <i>Access</i> (2014)	Objectives of ICC						
	Total amount of tasks	% of total	<i>Savoir</i>	<i>Savoir être</i>	<i>Savoir comprendre</i>	<i>Savoir apprendre/ faire</i>	<i>Savoir s'engager</i>
“True Love” (p. 120-124)	72	34 %	72	22	18	20	9
“The Luncheon” (p. 130-134)	34	16 %	34	17	7	17	5
“Powder” (p. 139-142)	15	7 %	15	8	7	7	7
“Blackout” (p.153-156)	32	15%	32	19	11	12	11
“The Man to Send Rain Clouds” (p. 240-246)	21	10 %	21	10	10	10	9
“The Homecoming” (p. 249-252)	16	8 %	16	10	9	10	5
“The Whale Rider” (p. 265-272)	22	10 %	22	9	6	6	7
<b>Total</b>	212	100%	212	95	68	82	53

**Appendix 5: Tasks which may promote the different objectives of ICC in *New eXperience* (2009)**

Fictional Texts <i>New eXperience</i> (2009)	Dimensions of ICC						
	Total amount of tasks	% of total	<i>Savoir</i>	<i>Savoir être</i>	<i>Savoir comprendre</i>	<i>Savoir apprendre/ faire</i>	<i>Savoir s'engager</i>
“We’re Back!” (p. 9-12)	27	14 %	27	3	2	3	2
“Beginner” (p. 18- 20)	44	23 %	44	11	10	11	11
“Snow” (p. 23-25)	32	17 %	39	1	1	1	0
“They’re Made out of Meat” (p.56-59)	11	6 %	13	8	3	4	5
“Love Poem” (p. 290)	12	6 %	12	12	12	12	12
“The World of Dickens” (p. 296- 299)	18	9 %	18	13	8	11	3
“Her First Ball” (p. 302-309)	23	12 %	23	13	10	13	7
“The Smile” (p. 324-330)	25	13 %	25	8	6	8	4
<b>Total</b>	192	100%	192	69	52	63	44

**Appendix 6: Tasks which may promote the different objectives of ICC in *Targets* (2015)**

	Dimensions of ICC					
<b>Fictional Texts <i>Targets</i> (2015)</b>	<b>Total amount of tasks</b>	<i>Savoir</i>	<i>Savoir être</i>	<i>Savoir comprendre</i>	<i>Savoir apprendre/faire</i>	<i>Savoir s'engager</i>
“Thank You, Mam” (p. 157-160)	30	30	11	11	11	4
“Looking for Alaska” (p. 178-182)	41	41	26	16	18	18
“This Is What It Means to Say Phoenix, Arizona” (p. 191-202)	61	61	38	33	35	12
“The Moose and the Sparrow” (p. 209-214)	66	66	27	25	26	11
“The Custom” (p. 217-218)	26	26	14	9	14	10
“Brackley and the Bed” (p. 228-232)	24	24	11	9	11	5
“I Can Be Someone” (p. 238-241)	14	14	13	8	11	7
“The Cracked, Pink Lips of Rosie’s Bridegroom” (p. 247-249)	28	28	20	19	19	5
“Catching a Ride” (p. 263-266)	67	67	32	20	24	6
“Butterflies” (p. 275)	19	19	15	13	15	4
“Good Advice Is Rarer than Rubies” (p. 282-286)	33	33	16	13	15	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Total in %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>100 %</b>	<b>54 %</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>49 %</b>	<b>22 %</b>

## **Appendix 7: List of Abbreviations**

CC: Communicative competence

CEFR: The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages 2001

EFL: English foreign language

EFL: English foreign language learning

EFLT: English foreign language teaching

IC: Intercultural competence

ICC: Intercultural communicative competence

ID: Intercultural dialogue

LK06/13: The Knowledge Promotion 2006/13

L2: Second language