The Link Between Multilingualism and Intercultural Competence in Language Learning

An Empirical Investigation in Norwegian Secondary Schools

Irina Tiurikova

Thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)
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Abstract in English

This article-based PhD thesis is part of the Ungspråk project, a mixed methods research study exploring students' multilingualism and multilingual identity in lower secondary schools in Norway. Investigating the intersection of multilingualism and the intercultural dimension in language education, the present study seeks to answer the following research questions: *To what extent are multilingualism and intercultural competence interconnected in secondary school language learning?* and *How can this interconnection be explored in this specific context?*

The first three articles focus on the theoretical and methodological aspects of the study. In introducing the mixed methods design of the overall Ungspråk project, Article 1 explores, among other issues, ways of studying the link between multilingualism and intercultural competence in the context of language learning in Norwegian secondary schools. The publication suggests applying a two-fold approach that includes a quantitative exploration of this link in school students and a qualitative study of teachers' views on the interconnection between the elements in the Foreign Language subject. Moreover, the article addresses theoretical issues regarding such an investigation and highlights the need to conceptualize multilingualism, especially in the Norwegian secondary school context, as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that can be associated with various factors (e.g., learning additional languages at school, migration background, knowledge of dialects and language variations, and receptive multilingualism). The publication also indicates the need to develop a research instrument that can help explore students' multilingualism in its complexity and relation to various factors.

Article 2 discusses the development and process of validating such an instrument. This publication introduces the electronic quantitative questionnaire Ungspråk, which was developed specifically for the purposes of the Ungspråk project. Focusing on students' multilingualism, this newly developed tool enables the exploration of many other factors that can potentially shed light on the nuances of students' multilingualism. Among these factors, the questionnaire examines students' open-mindedness, thus

allowing for the investigation of the potential link between students' multilingualism and intercultural competence.

Article 3 provides a critical analysis of the Ungspråk questionnaire and four other quantitative questionnaires that have been used in language learning research to explore students' intercultural competence. It examines how and to what extent these tools have addressed the problematic perspective of cultural differentialism, which has been broadly criticized in theoretical research. The publication discusses some negative implications of the use of methodological tools that can reproduce cultural differentialism, such as the fostering of stereotypes among participants and the provision of unreliable research results. In addition, it suggests how researchers can avoid replicating this problematic perspective in future empirical studies.

The fourth and fifth publications introduce the empirical findings of the PhD project and provide insights into the link between multilingualism and the intercultural dimension in secondary school language learning. Article 4 explores how students' multilingualism, especially associated with learning additional (L2 English and L3 Spanish/German/French) languages at school, can be connected to open-mindedness. Based on the empirical data collected through the Ungspråk questionnaire from 593 students, the article suggests that there can be a particular link between students' open-mindedness and the following factors: learning an L3 (Spanish/German/French) rather than only L2 (English) at school, students' self-identification as multilingual, and friendship with peers whose home languages include those other than Norwegian. These results suggest that the development of students' multilingualism and multilingual identity through learning additional languages at school can potentially be important in promoting students' intercultural competence.

The fifth publication, a book chapter, examines teachers' views on multilingualism, intercultural competence, and the interconnection between the two as elements of the Foreign Language subject. The study draws on data from semi-structured interviews with six foreign language teachers working in Norwegian schools. It reveals that educators consider a foreign language classroom to be a perfect space for promoting students' intercultural competence and multilingualism in interconnection. However, the understanding of this interconnection depends entirely on teachers' views

of the elements as separate phenomena. The study underlines the need to offer clear definitions of key concepts in policy documents and to provide teachers with practical guidelines on how the elements can be implemented in tandem in a foreign language classroom.

Abstract in Norwegian

Denne artikkelbaserte doktorgradsavhandlingen er en del av Ungspråk-prosjektet, en forskningsstudie som undersøker elevers flerspråklighet og flerspråklige identitet på ungdomsskoler i Norge. Doktorgradsprosjektet har som hovedmål å utforske sammenhengen mellom flerspråklighet og den interkulturelle dimensjonen i språkopplæringen. Følgende forskningsspørsmål ble formulert: *I hvilken grad er flerspråklighet og interkulturell kompetanse sammenkoblet i språkopplæringen på ungdomstrinnet?* og *Hvordan kan denne sammenkoblingen utforskes i denne spesifikke konteksten?*

De tre første artiklene setter søkelys på teoretiske og metodologiske aspekter. Artikkel 1 introduserer Ungspråk-prosjektets flermetodiske tilnærming og drøfter blant annet ulike måter å studere koblingen mellom flerspråklighet og interkulturell kompetanse i språkfagene i norske ungdomsskoler. Publikasjonen foreslår en todelt tilnærming som inkluderer en kvantitativ utforskning blant skoleelever og en kvalitativ studie av lærernes syn på koblingen mellom flerspråklighet og interkulturell kompetanse i fremmedspråksfaget. I tillegg diskuterer artikkelen teoretiske spørsmål og fremhever behovet for å forstå flerspråklighetsom et komplekst og mangefasettert fenomen som kan være assosiert med forskjellige faktorer (f.eks. språklæring i skolen, migrasjonsbakgrunn, kunnskap om dialekter og språkvariasjoner og reseptiv flerspråklighet). Publikasjonen indikerer også behovet for å utvikle et forskningsinstrument som kan bidra til å utforske elevenes flerspråklighet i dets fulle kompleksitet og i forbindelse med forskjellige faktorer.

Artikkel 2 diskuterer utviklings- og valideringsprosessen til et slikt instrument. Publikasjonen introduserer det elektroniske kvantitative spørreskjemaet Ungspråk som ble utviklet til Ungspråk-prosjektet. Med fokus på elevenes flerspråklighet, gir det nyutviklede verktøyet muligheter til å utforske faktorer som kan belyse nyansene i elevenes flerspråklighet. Blant disse faktorene undersøker spørreskjemaet elevenes åpenhet og toleranse for andre sine meninger, og muliggjør dermed utforskning av den potensielle koblingen mellom studentenes flerspråklige og interkulturelle kompetanse.

Artikkel 3 analyserer Ungspråk-spørreundersøkelsen og fire andre kvantitative spørreundersøkelser som har blitt brukt i forskning for å studere elevers interkulturelle kompetanse. Artikkelen undersøker hvordan og i hvilken grad spørreundersøkelsene har håndtert kulturell differensialisme, som har blitt sterkt kritisert i teoretisk forskning. Artikkelen fastslår at dette perspektivet fremdeles finnes i flere forskningsinstrumenter og diskuterer noen negative implikasjoner av bruken av slike verktøy. For eksempel kan de fremme stereotyper blant deltakerne og gi upålitelige forskningsresultater. I tillegg foreslår artikkelen hvordan forskere kan unngå dette problematiske perspektivet i fremtidige empiriske studier.

De to neste publikasjonene introduserer de empiriske funnene fra doktorgrad-prosjektet og gir innsikt i sammenhengen mellom flerspråklighet og den interkulturelle dimensjonen i språklæring på ungdomsskolen. Artikkel 4 utforsker hvordan elevenes flerspråklighet, spesielt assosiert med å lære flere (engelsk og fremmedspråk) språk på skolen, kan kobles til elevers åpenhet. Basert på de empiriske dataene som er samlet inn gjennom Ungspråk-spørreundersøkelsen fra 593 studenter, antyder artikkelen at det kan være en særlig kobling mellom studentenes åpenhet og følgende faktorer: læring av fremmedspråk i stedet for bare engelsk på skolen, elevenes selvidentifisering som flerspråklige og vennskap med jevnaldrende som har andre hjemmespråk enn norsk. Disse resultatene antyder at utviklingen av elevenes flerspråklighet og flerspråklige identitet gjennom å lære flere språk på skolen kan være viktig for å fremme elevenes interkulturelle kompetanse.

Bokkapittel 5 undersøker lærernes syn på flerspråklighet, interkulturell kompetanse og forbindelsen mellom disse to i faget Fremmedspråk. Studien analyserer datamateriale fra semistrukturerte intervjuer med seks fremmedspråkslærere som jobber på norske ungdomsskoler. Analysen viser at lærere ser på fremmedspråksfaget som et perfekt rom for å fremme studentenes interkulturelle kompetanse og flerspråklighet i sammenheng. Forståelsen av denne sammenhengen er imidlertid avhengig av lærernes syn på elementene som separate fenomener. Studien understreker behovet for å tilby klare definisjoner av sentrale konsepter i utdanningsdokumenter og å gi lærere praktiske retningslinjer for hvordan elementene kan undervises "i tandem" i faget Fremmedspråk.

List of Publications

List of publications comprising the PhD thesis

Article 1: Haukås, Å., Storto, A., & Tiurikova, I. (2021). The Ungspråk project: Researching multilingualism and multilingual identity in lower secondary schools. *Globe: A Journal of Language, Culture and Communication*, *12*, 83-98. https://doi.org/10.5278/OJS.GLOBE.V12I.6500

Article 2: Haukås, Å., Storto, A., & Tiurikova, I. (2021). Developing and validating a questionnaire on young learners' multilingualism and multilingual identity. *The Language Learning Journal*, 1-16. https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2021.1915367

Article 3: Tiurikova, I. (2021). Researching intercultural competence in language learners: Gaps between theory and methodology. *Intercultural Communication Education, 4*(2), 122-136. https://doi.org/10.29140/ice.v4n2.437

Article 4: Tiurikova, I., Haukås, Å., & Storto, A. (2021). The link between multilingualism, language learning and open-mindedness in secondary school students in Norway. *Nordic Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, 9*(2), 1-24. https://doi.org/10.46364/njltl.v9i2.945

Book chapter 5: Tiurikova, I., & Haukås, Å. (2022). Multilingualism, intercultural competence, identity, and their intersection: Foreign language teachers' perspectives. In R. Fielding (Ed.), *Multilingualism, identity and interculturality in education: International perspectives* (pp. 41-65). Springer. Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-19-5848-9_3

List of publications not included in the PhD thesis

Storto, A., Haukås, Å., & Tiurikova, I. (2023). Visualising the language practices of lower secondary students: outlines for practice-based models of multilingualism. *Applied Linguistics Review*. https://doi.org/10.1515/applirev-2022-0010

Haukås, Å., Storto, A., & Tiurikova, I. (2022). School students' beliefs about the benefits of multilingualism. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*. https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2022.2075001

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Due to mobility and other processes of globalization, European societies have become increasingly diverse. Intercultural contacts both across and within countries and social groups often demand the knowledge of several languages and the ability to navigate diversity. Corresponding to these global tendencies, language education in the 21st century has recognized the importance of promoting individual multilingualism and intercultural competence (hereafter IC) in language learners. Internationally and locally, these aspects have been stated as key elements of language education in policy documents and in school curricula. In 2001, *The Common European Framework of References for Languages* (hereafter CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2001, 2018, 2020) introduced the concept of plurilingual[1] and pluricultural competence, referring to the ability of language learners to draw upon all their linguistic and cultural resources and experiences in order to fully participate in intercultural interactions (see section 2.4.1 of this synopsis). At the local level in Norway, multilingualism and IC are considered as two of the four core elements of language learning in the Curriculum for Foreign Languages[2] (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [hereafter NDET], 2019a). Similarly, the importance of developing intercultural understanding and the orientation towards multilingualism as a resource are emphasized in the curricula for Norwegian (NDET, 2019b) and English (NDET, 2019c) (see sections 2.2.1 and 2.3.1 for details). In addition, the Norwegian Core Curriculum—the central document offering guidelines for teaching in all school subjects—emphasizes that multilingualism is a resource and that preparing students to "participate in a diverse society" and "to live together with different perspectives, attitudes and views of life" constitute a school's primary task (NDET, 2017, p. 7)

Besides the emphasis on the importance of multilingualism and IC, policy documents and pedagogical approaches in the field of language learning either explicitly

[1] The CEFR distinguishes between the terms *multilingualism* and *plurilingualism*, with the former referring to linguistic diversity in a society and the latter to the linguistic repertoire of a person. In this work, I use the term multilingualism as an umbrella term, clarifying, when necessary, if it refers to a person or a society.
[2] In Norway, the Foreign Language subjects typically refer to Spanish, German, French, and other modern languages, which are for most students their second (after English) additional language studied at school (see section 2.1 for details).

(e.g., the CEFR) or implicitly (e.g., the Norwegian Curriculum for Foreign Languages) suggest that both elements are interconnected (see sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2). In fact, by introducing a unified *plurilingual and pluricultural competence*, the CEFR has indicated that both components constitute the same skill and are thus intertwined. This link between multilingualism and IC has also been reflected in theoretical research and pedagogical approaches in language education (see sections 2.4.1 for details).

However, quite surprisingly, the interconnection between multilingual and intercultural dimensions remains rarely explored *empirically* in language education research, although the field represents a fruitful ground for such investigation. As will be shown in section 2.4.3.1, the relevant studies exploring the link between multilingualism and IC in school students have predominantly focused on multilingualism associated with students having a migration background. Other forms of multilingualism that are present in the school context, such as multilingualism developed through learning additional languages at school, have rarely been investigated in relation to students' IC. Moreover, little is known about language teachers' views on the link between these two elements in language subjects (will be elaborated in section 2.4.3.2). As teachers play a crucial role in the implementation of educational strategies and curricula, their views are particularly important and need to be further explored.

One possible reason for the lack of empirical studies on the link between multilingualism and IC in language education research may be the traditional association of the term *multilingual*, especially in political and public discourses, with people who have a migration background (Haukås, 2022). This interpretation of the term overlooks a significant group of people who become multilingual through learning additional languages at school or elsewhere. It concerns school students in particular, many of whom are only in the process of *becoming* multilingual through learning foreign languages at school and who, due to the above-mentioned association, may neither be considered by others nor consider themselves as multilingual. Another reason is likely the absence of comprehensive methodological instruments in the field that would allow for the exploration of secondary school language learners' multilingualism and IC in interconnection. Available quantitative instruments typically explore the elements as

either separate phenomena—for instance, the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001) and Multiteach (Calafato, 2020)—or as inextricable parts of the same competence—for example, the Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence Scale (Galante, 2022). Moreover, the available tools, such as those mentioned above, are often geared to explore linguistic repertoires and IC in adults. The research tools with such focuses consequently fail to account for the particularities of multilingualism acquired through language learning in the school context.

1.1. Aims of the PhD project

The above-mentioned concerns shaped the goal of this PhD project, which was to investigate the link between multilingualism and IC in the context of language education in Norwegian lower secondary schools (8-10 grades). However, such investigation first required the clarification of the key concepts, as well as the development of an appropriate methodology that could take into account the specifics and multiple facets of students' multilingualism in the school context. Consequently, the aim of the PhD project was three-fold.

First, the study aimed to consider meaningful ways by which the link between multilingualism and the intercultural dimension in language learning can be explored in the context of secondary schools (Article 1). In addition to the discussion on methodological issues, this included defining theoretical approaches to the key concepts. Regarding multilingualism, the present study stemmed from the assumption that *all* secondary school students in Norway, in as much as they learn additional languages at school, can be considered multilingual (will be elaborated on in sections 1.3 and 2.1). This broader approach to students' multilingualism aimed to reflect the complexity of students' linguistic repertoires in a school context and, consequently, to provide new insights in language education research in general and in research on multilingualism in particular.

Second, the project aimed to introduce a new quantitative tool, the Ungspråk questionnaire, which was developed specifically to explore school students' multilingualism in its interconnection to various factors, including IC. In addition, the

study sought to ensure the robustness and sustainability of the suggested instrument. It provided an overview of validation procedures which had been implemented in the development of the Ungspråk questionnaire (Article 2) and suggested a comparative analysis of the newly developed instrument with other quantitative questionnaires examining IC in language learners (Article 3).

Third, drawing on the quantitative data collected through the Ungspråk questionnaire (Article 4) and the qualitative data gathered through interviews with teachers (Article 5), the PhD project aimed to provide new insights into the link between multilingualism and the intercultural dimension in the context of secondary school language learning. Exploring the link between the elements in young learners, the quantitative part indicated which of the factors related to multilingualism can be particularly connected to students' intercultural attitudes. The subsequent qualitative data revealed to what extent foreign language teachers perceive multilingualism and IC as interconnected in their subject and how teachers' views on both elements as separate phenomena influence the understanding of this interconnection (Article 5). These specific findings will be elaborated in Chapter 4 of this synopsis.

With these aims in mind, I intended that my study would contribute to the field of language education research by initiating new discussions and suggesting new research directions. I also hoped that it would provide useful insights for policy makers, language teachers, and teacher educators.

1.2. Research questions and objectives. Overview of the publications

Stemming from the above goals, the PhD project aimed to answer the following main research questions:

To what extent are multilingualism and IC interconnected in secondary school language learning? How can this interconnection be explored in this specific context?

To answer these research questions, I set five specific objectives:

1. To suggest ways of exploring the link between students' multilingualism and IC, with a specific focus on the context of language learning in Norwegian secondary schools;

2. To develop and ensure the validity of a quantitative questionnaire that allows for the study of the link between students' multilingualism and IC in the context of secondary school;
3. To provide a critical analysis of the newly developed tool and other quantitative questionnaires examining IC in language learners;
4. To examine to what extent open-mindedness, considered a key element of students' IC in language learning, can be linked to various factors related to students' multilingualism; and
5. To investigate how teachers of foreign languages in secondary schools in Norway understand multilingualism and IC and to what extent they see these elements as interconnected in the Foreign Language subject.

Through the first three objectives I aimed to address the theoretical and methodological issues related to the research question *How can the interconnection between multilingualism and IC be explored in the context of secondary school language learning?* The last two objectives aimed to collect empirical data and thus to answer the question *How and to what extent are multilingualism and IC interconnected in secondary school language learning?*

The thesis comprises four articles published in international peer-reviewed scientific journals and a book chapter, each focusing on a particular objective presented above. Table 1 provides a systemized overview of these publications and shows which task each publication addressed.

Table 1

Overview of the Research Objectives and the Peer-Reviewed Works Comprising the PhD Thesis

Research question	*How can the interconnection between multilingualism and IC be explored in the context of secondary school language learning?*			*How and to what extent are multilingualism and IC interconnected in secondary school language learning?*	
Research objective	To suggest ways of exploring the link between multilingualism and IC, with a specific focus on the context of language learning in Norwegian secondary schools	To develop and ensure the validity of a quantitative questionnaire that facilitates the study of the link between students' multilingualism and IC in secondary school	To provide a critical analysis of the newly developed tool and other quantitative questionnaires examining IC in language learners	To examine to what extent open-mindedness, considered a key element of students' IC in language learning, can be linked to various factors related to students' multilingualism	To investigate how teachers of foreign languages in secondary schools in Norway understand multilingualism and IC and to what extent they see these elements as interconnected in the Foreign Language subject
Publication	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3	Article 4	Book chapter 5
Authors	Haukås, Storto, Tiurikova	Haukås, Storto, Tiurikova	Tiurikova	Tiurikova, Haukås, Storto	Tiurikova and Haukås
Title	The Ungspråk project: researching multilingualism and multilingual identity in lower secondary schools	Developing and validating a questionnaire on young learners' multilingualism and multilingual identity	Researching IC in language learners: gaps between theory and methodology	The link between multilingualism, language learning, and open-mindedness in secondary school students in Norway	Multilingualism, IC, identity, and their intersection: Foreign language teachers' perspectives
Year	2021	2021	2021	2021	2022
Publication channel	*Globe: A Journal of Language, Culture and Communication*	*Language Learning Journal*	*Intercultural Communication Education*	*Nordic Journal of Language Teaching and Learning*	*Multilingualism, Identity and Interculturality in Education: International Perspectives*. R. Fielding (Ed.). Springer
Content	Overview of the Ungspråk project	Development and validation of the Ungspråk questionnaire	Critical evaluation of five quantitative questionnaires studying IC, including the Ungspråk questionnaire	Presentation of the quantitative findings	Presentation of the qualitative findings

1.3. The PhD thesis and its place in the Ungspråk project

The present PhD study was initiated and conducted within the Ungspråk[3] project (2018-2022), a mixed methods study carried out at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of Bergen and led by Prof. Åsta Haukås. The Ungspråk project began in cooperation with Strand 4 of the cross disciplinary project *Multilingualism: Empowering Individuals, Transforming Societies* (MEITS), conducted by the University of Cambridge (with strand leader Dr. Linda Fisher, Faculty of Education). Both projects aimed to raise awareness of and explore school students' multilingualism and multilingual identity, with the latter being referred to as a person's explicit self-identification as multilingual because of an awareness of this person's linguistic repertoire (Fisher et al., 2020, p. 449). While the MEITS project has explored these concepts in the UK context, the Ungspråk project focused on secondary school students' multilingualism and multilingual identity in Norway. Pursuing the same goal, the projects, however, gradually diverged. Addressing research needs in our own context, Norway, members of the Ungspråk team saw it necessary to develop new lines of theoretical and empirical research on students' multilingualism.

The Ungspråk project stemmed from a specific interest in the Norwegian context, where *all* secondary school students can be considered multilingual. The linguistic diversity of Norway includes the national languages, Norwegian and Sami (a group of languages spoken by indigenous minorities). Moreover, people living in Norway typically speak local dialects, and all children, in addition to using their own dialects, learn two standard variations of written Norwegian—Bokmål and Nynorsk. Most speakers of Norwegian can also be referred to as receptive multilinguals (Zeevaert, 2007), which means that they can understand, although to different extents, other Scandinavian languages, such as Swedish and Danish. In addition, school students can learn up to two new languages at school, including English, which is compulsory for all students, and an optional second additional language (elaborated upon further in section 2.1). Furthermore, migration to Norway enriches the linguistic landscape of the

[3] The term Ungspråk consists of the words *ung* and *språk*, which in Norwegian mean "young" and "language(s)," respectively. As the word *språk* can reflect both singular and plural forms, this non-transparent word included in the name of the project implies that students in Norway may know either one or several languages and thus have diverse linguistic repertoires.

country and linguistic diversity in Norwegian schools. This rich linguistic diversity of the Norwegian context was the foundation for the Ungspråk project and informed our interest in exploring students' multilingualism in Norwegian secondary schools.

The Ungspråk project was initially designed as a three-phase longitudinal study covering the following research areas: (1) students' multilingualism and multilingual identity, (2) the intersection of multilingualism and the intercultural dimension in language education, and (3) the ethical issue of research *for* and *with* participants of a study (see Article 1 for details). The first area of interest involved the collaborative work of three scholars engaged in the Ungspråk project: Prof. Åsta Haukås, PhD candidate André Storto, and the author of the present thesis, PhD candidate Irina Tiurikova. The Ungspråk questionnaire became the main product of this collaboration and the main quantitative research instrument of the overall project. The questionnaire was developed based on a tool designed within the MEITS project, however, with several changes which reflected our research objectives. For instance, while the MEITS questionnaire includes the exploration of students' metaphors to examine their attitudes towards language learning, the Ungspråk questionnaire allows for the exploration of students' beliefs about multilingualism, their future self-images as multilingual and open-mindedness (see Article 2 for details). Initially, we planned to use the questionnaire twice: in the first and third phases of the project to study students' multilingualism and self-perception as multilingual in a longitudinal perspective. However, due to COVID-19 restrictions, the third phase was not implemented.

Our collaborative work on the questionnaire was particularly important. It allowed us to share our understandings of the theoretical approaches and key concepts underlying the research and ultimately to develop a common perspective. For me, the experience of joint work in our international and multilingual research team was especially valuable. Although I explored IC and open-mindedness in our participants, our collaboration also gave me rich opportunity to reflect on my own openness to new perspectives and to learn from my colleagues.

In the second phase of the project, the PhD candidates focused on specific areas within Ungspråk, which were further developed into individual PhD projects. Being interested in the ethical issues of research and the use of technologies in the language

classroom, my colleague André Storto focused on the third area of interest, exploring how the research findings of the Ungspråk project can be meaningfully presented to young participants. Storto proposed an innovative digital tool which, in addition to increasing participants' engagement in research, can help enhance students' awareness of their own multilingualism and multilingual identity when applied in a classroom (see Storto, 2023). My main responsibility was the second research area of the Ungspråk project, which focused on the interconnection of multilingualism and the intercultural dimension in language education. Key points explaining how I addressed this topic in my PhD study will be elaborated further in this synopsis. In terms of methodology, I also had the main responsibility of designing the qualitative investigation of teachers' views on the link between multilingualism and IC in foreign language learning, although this part of the study was conducted in collaboration with my supervisor, Prof. Åsta Haukås.

Chapter 2: Theoretical and Empirical Background

This chapter clarifies the main concepts of the research project and the relationship between them. Starting with the notions of L1, L2, L3 learning, the chapter defines the context of the study, which is language education in Norwegian secondary schools. Further, it proceeds by clarifying the two key concepts: multilingualism (section 2.2) and IC (section 2.3). The corresponding sections consider how these phenomena have been addressed in previous theoretical and empirical research, as well as how they were presented in the Norwegian Core Curriculum LK20 (NDET, 2017) and curricula for the main language subjects (NDET, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c). Section 2.4 addresses theoretical and empirical research focusing on the interconnection between multilingualism and IC. The provided literature review shows potential gaps in the previous research that the present study aimed to address. It is also important to emphasize that the above issues will be discussed with a focus on the Norwegian context, as it represents a particular interest of the present study and the encompassing research project, Ungspråk (see section 1.3). The final section (2.5) summarizes the chapter.

2.1. Clarification of the contextual framework: the concepts of L1, L2, L3 and foreign language learning in the Norwegian context

The present study is contextualized in the field of language education at secondary school. As relevant concepts of *L1, L2* and *L3* can have different connotations, it is necessary to clarify what they mean within the Norwegian school system and, consequently, how they were applied in the current study.

Scholars (e.g., see Hammarberg, 2010 for further discussion) distinguish different ways of understanding the terms L1, L2, and L3 in research on multilingualism and language learning. The traditional model suggests using the terms to mark a person's languages acquired chronologically, where L1 refers to a first language usually acquired during infancy, L2 to a second language, and L3 to a third language that a person encounters in life. Another model stems from the idea that language learning is a complex and dynamic process and that languages are always interconnected rather than separated in different compartments in our brain (e.g., Cenoz et al., 2001; Hufeisen,

2018). This model is based on a dichotomy of L1 and L2, where L1 refers to a person's language(s) acquired during infancy and L2 to language(s) acquired after a certain age. According to this dichotomy, a person can have several L1s and L2s. The introduction of the term L3 aims to distinguish the case of any further language acquisition and shows the complexity of the relationship and hierarchy of languages in a person's repertoire. Hammarberg (2010) argued that this latter model gives a more adequate representation of the relationship between languages, emphasizing that learning an L3 is always enriched by the knowledge of L2 and previous experience of learning a non-native language (see also, for example, Jessner, 2008 and De Angelis, 2007 for further discussion).

Within this study, I use the terms L1, L2, and L3 to reflect a chronological order of students' encounters with languages they learn in secondary schools in Norway. *L1* refers to Norwegian as a first language[4] learned at school and which is the main medium of instruction. *L2* refers to English, which is a compulsory subject during the 10 years of mandatory school education (grades 1-10). In fact, English is the first *foreign* language studied at school, although it is not directly referred to as such in the curricula (will be elaborated further). Students start learning English (L2) in the first grade, simultaneously with Norwegian (L1). However, the English (L2) subject has significantly fewer hours of instruction in comparison to Norwegian (L1) at all levels of education (for instance, 222 and 398[5] hours, respectively, at the level of lower secondary, i.e., grades 8-10). *L3* thus refers to additional foreign languages which students can choose to learn from grade 8. These are typically Spanish, German, and French (in order of popularity, according to Statistics Norway, 2021). Each year, a relatively high number of students choose to study a second foreign language (L3) at school. In 2021, that percentage was around 74%. The remaining group took either extra classes in Norwegian, English, math, or the more vocationally oriented *arebeidslivsfag* (Buckholm, 2022). Applying the linear chronological approach, however, I do not

[4] In certain cases, which were not considered in this study, L1 can also refer to other languages. For example, school students within the Sami administrative area can choose between Norwegian as a first language and Sami as a first language (see, e.g., Szilvási, 2016 for further details). Another example is English, which can be L1 and the medium of instruction in international schools.

[5] 284 hours applies to students who have Sami, Swedish, or Finnish as their second language (NDET, 2019c).

intend to promote a linear model of language learning, but rather seek to reflect the structure of language education in the Norwegian school context.

It is important to emphasize, however, that this linear approach may reflect neither the real chronological sequence of languages nor the relationship between languages in students' language repertoires. Students with minority backgrounds may have several home languages (L1s), including languages other than Norwegian. For example, children from Sami groups can have Norwegian and Sami languages as their L1s, study English as their L2, and study Spanish as their L3. Similarly, English can also be a home language (L1) for some students with immigrant backgrounds, including those from the Philippines or the UK. Consequently, Norwegian can be their L2 or an additional L1, depending on the parents' backgrounds. In recent decades, the diversity and complexity of individual linguistic repertoires has been especially enriched due to migration processes. According to Statistics Norway (2022b), 18.9% of the total population are immigrants or Norwegian born children of immigrant parents. This means that students may also have other languages as their L1s, such as Polish, Somali, and Arabic. Furthermore, an L3 studied at school can, chronologically, be an L4 or L5 for some students. Nevertheless, in the Norwegian school context, Norwegian will typically be a first school language (L1), English will be L2, and Spanish, German, or French will be L3 for all students regardless of their linguistic backgrounds.

It is also important to highlight that while English (L2) and Spanish, German, and French (L3) can be considered foreign languages in Norwegian schools, the subject Foreign Language refers only to L3 languages, while English is referred to as English subject. The present study follows the use of terms suggested in the Norwegian curricula and relates the name of the discipline "Foreign Language subject" only to L3 languages (Spanish, German, and French). Following this logic, further in the text, the terms *foreign languages* and *foreign language learning* will refer to additional languages (L3) studied in Norwegian schools after L1 (Norwegian) and L2 (English) and which are not considered to be official languages in Norway.

2.2. Multilingualism

The current section discusses various theoretical approaches to multilingualism and clarifies how this phenomenon was addressed in this study. It proceeds with an analysis of how the concept was presented in the Norwegian Core Curriculum (LK20) (NDET, 2017) and language subject curricula (NDET, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c), showing potentially problematic issues for understanding multilingualism and implementing multilingual pedagogy in practice. Further, the section discusses previous research on multilingualism in school settings, focusing on two major topics: language learners' multilingualism and teachers' views on multilingualism. As was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, attention is paid primarily to research exploring multilingualism in the Norwegian context, which is the focal context of the present study.

2.2.1. Defining multilingualism

Multilingualism is "a complex, vibrant and ever-intriguing phenomenon" (Aronin, 2019, p. 3) which can be defined in different ways. In a broader sense, scholars (Aronin, 2019; Cenoz, 2013; Kemp, 2009) distinguish individual and societal multilingualism, with the former referring to the variety of languages in a person's language repertoire and the latter to the diversity of languages in a society. This distinction between the two forms of multilingualism has also been emphasized in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2018, 2020), the framework document suggesting general guidelines for teaching and learning languages in European countries. The document considers the knowledge of several languages as a resource and defines multilingualism as:

> the ability to use languages for the purpose of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent, has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 168)

It is worth mentioning that the CEFR uses the term *plurilingualism*, which is often applied as a synonym for individual multilingualism, especially in Francophone literature and in documents of the European Union (Aronin, 2019).

Distinguished from its societal form, individual multilingualism, however, can also have different definitions. Scholars (e.g., Cenoz, 2013; Edwards, 2019) suggest that each conceptualization of individual multilingualism stems from a particular criterion, or criteria, used to identify a person as multilingual. Among these criteria, researchers name the number of languages in one's language repertoire, what is considered a language, proficiency in languages, and frequency of their use (also discussed in Article 1). In terms of the number of languages, Aronin (2019), for instance, used individual multilingualism to refer to the use of three or more languages, distinguishing it from *bilingualism*, the use of two languages. This distinction between multilingualism and bilingualism stems from the assumption that learning an additional third or further language is always different from learning a second one, as it involves increased metalinguistic awareness and previous experience of learning a non-native language (De Angelis, 2019). Other scholars (Cenoz, 2013; Edwards, 2019; Franceschini, 2011), however, suggest that having two languages in one's language repertoire is sufficient to be considered multilingual. As for the concept of language, scholars (Haukås, 2022; Wei, 2018) also raise the issue of whether knowledge of dialects, language variations, or language modalities (e.g., sign language) should also be counted when identifying someone as multilingual. Many studies on multilingualism (e.g., Dewaele & Stavans, 2014) still tend to apply the traditional approach to language and associate it with a nation-state (e.g., French and Spanish). However, some recent studies (e.g., Haukås et al., 2021; Wei, 2018) promote a broader definition of this concept and argue that all varieties of language—dialects, sociolects, and so forth—can be "equally complex, regularly patterned," like standard language variations (Schilling, 2014, p. 322). In terms of proficiency, researchers (Calafato, 2021; Cenoz, 2013) also distinguish different positions. While the maximalist approach (e.g., Braun, 1937) requires that one have advanced proficiency in languages to be identified as multilingual, the minimalist approach considers this requirement difficult to achieve (see, e.g., Fisher et al., 2020) and emphasizes that language proficiency constantly varies (e.g., Council of Europe,

2001). Some definitions also emphasize *the use* of multiple languages rather than *the knowledge of* as an important criterion. For instance, the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001) relates multilingualism to the ability *to use* languages for communication.

Focusing on particular criteria, some of the above-mentioned approaches may create limitations for research. For instance, the definitions emphasizing advanced proficiency and the use of multiple languages rather than knowledge can be problematic in language education research exploring multilingualism in the school context. These perspectives can exclude students who are only in the process of learning their additional languages, as young learners may not yet have achieved a high level of proficiency in the languages they learn at school. Moreover, they may not have an opportunity *to use* these languages outside the classroom. The requirement of advanced language knowledge may also ignore a person's receptive multilingualism (Zeevaert, 2007). In addition, the focus on only standard variations of languages in the language repertoire can also ignore the variety of dialects, other language variations, and modalities that a person may know.

The present study stemmed from Cenoz's (2013) holistic approach to multilingualism. Following the definition coined by the Ungspråk team, the study defined multilingualism as "the dynamic and integrated knowledge and/or use of more than one language or language variety" (Haukås et al., 2021). In terms of the criteria (number of languages, proficiency, use versus knowledge, and understanding of language), this definition suggests a minimalist threshold for being considered multilingual and thus allows for the exploration of various forms of multilingualism in the school context. In contrast to some political and academic discourses, which associate the term multilingual with people who have immigrant backgrounds (see Haukås, 2022 for further discussion), this conceptual framework is inclusive towards the multilingualism of different groups. Besides the multilingualism of students with minority language backgrounds who may have various home or heritage languages, the suggested approach allowed the exploration of the multilingualism of *all* students who develop their knowledge of multiple languages through learning additional languages in the school context.

2.2.2. Defining multilingualism in Norwegian language subject curricula

The promotion of individual multilingualism and the appreciation of language diversity in Norwegian society have been considered among the core principles of school education in Norway. The goal of promoting individual multilingualism has been emphasized in several key documents, including the National Core Curriculum (LK20) (NDET, 2017), which is the central document providing guidelines for teaching at all levels of school education, as well as curricula in the main language subjects of schooling (Norwegian, English, Foreign Languages). All four documents reflect the European language policies of celebrating multilingualism stated in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2018, 2020), and promote "multilingualism-as-a-resource" orientation in school education (Myklevold & Speitz, 2021). Providing a general ideological and normative orientation, the LK20 states that "being proficient in a number of languages is a resource, both in school and society at large" (NDET, 2017, p. 7). Following this assumption, language subjects curricula emphasize different aspects of multilingualism (Myklevold & Speitz, 2021). The Curriculum for Norwegian (L1) connects multilingualism to the promotion of the linguistic and cultural identity of students and focuses on the diversity of variations of Norwegian, which includes Bokmål and Nynorsk (NDET, 2019b). Further, the Curriculum in English (L2) emphasizes the enhancement of students' metalinguistic awareness and ability to see similarities and differences between languages (NDET, 2019c).

Implying that students already know Norwegian and English, the Foreign Language (L3) subject curriculum highlights students' previous experience in language learning and emphasizes the multilingualism of *all* students:

> In the encounter with the foreign-languages subject, the pupils are already multilingual and have extensive language-learning experiences from various contexts. By transferring their linguistic knowledge and language learning experiences from other languages they know and are familiar with, learning becomes more effective and meaningful. (NDET, 2019a, p. 3)

Reflecting the "multilingualism-as-a-resource" orientation (de Jong et al., 2019), the Curriculum for Foreign Languages, like the other above-mentioned documents, considers multilingualism to be undoubtably beneficial for students (see, for example, Haukås et al., 2022 for further discussion) by linking it to increased metalinguistic and language learning awareness. In addition to cognitive benefits, the document relates multilingualism to the promotion of IC, which will be discussed in detail in section 2.4.2. However, what differentiates this document from LK20 and the other language subject curricula is an explicit emphasis on students' identification as multilingual.

Nevertheless, despite the endorsement of the resource-orientation towards multilingualism, the key documents contain several gaps which can impede the promotion of students' multilingualism and multilingual pedagogy in practice (Haukås et al., 2022; Kjelaas & van Ommeren, 2019; Myklevold & Speitz, 2021). First, the documents do not provide any clear conceptualization of the phenomenon. As illustrated earlier in this section, each document emphasizes different aspects of multilingualism, thus making it more difficult to understand and operationalize it in a coherent and systematic way (Myklevold & Speitz, 2021). Scholars argue that without a clear definition, the concept remains "at the level of buzzwords and lack[s] any concrete applications" (Kalaja & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2020, p. 7). Consequently, the main responsibility for conceptualizing multilingualism and implementing it in practice transfers to teachers and students (Myklevold & Speitz, 2021). Second, while celebrating multilingualism, none of the documents provides any guidelines as to how multilingualism is supposed to be utilized as a resource in the classroom. Moreover, the curricula also lack clarity if the resource-orientation takes into account a hierarchy of languages. The latter often implies that foreign languages learned as L3 at school are considered more prestigious than the languages of minority groups (Dahl & Krulatz, 2016; Myklevold & Speitz, 2021; Vikøy & Haukås, 2021). In addition, it remains unclear what the curricula suggest considering as language and whether the definition of this concept coincides in all four documents (see section 2.2.1). For instance, it is not obvious if, in considering all students to be multilingual, the Curriculum for Foreign Languages (L3) also includes language dialects and standard variations of Norwegian, as is implied in the Curriculum for Norwegian. In leaving many aspects of

multilingualism untreated, the documents thus create room for various interpretations and a lack of clarity regarding the ways of implementing multilingualism in practice.

2.2.3. Previous research on multilingualism in school settings

2.2.3.1. Research on language learners' multilingualism in school settings

As illustrated in the previous section, the Norwegian Core Curriculum (NDET, 2017) and the curricula in language subjects consider individual multilingualism an advantage for students and society. While none of the documents explains why and how multilingualism is to be considered and implemented as a resource, evidence confirming the benefits of multilingualism can be found in numerous studies exploring this phenomenon. Scholars found that, in the context of language learning, multilingualism seems to be positively linked to increased metalinguistic awareness and a more efficient use of language learning strategies (Cenoz, 2020; Jessner, 2008; Kemp, 2007). Several studies (Dewaele & Wei, 2012; Fielding, 2021) also suggested that multilingualism can be positively connected to the development of students' IC and psychological traits related to intercultural understanding (discussed further in sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.3). In addition, multilingual students seem to have greater cognitive flexibility, creativity, and episodic and semantic memory (see Monnier et al., 2022 and Antoniou, 2019 for an overview of cognitive advantages). Scholars (Armstrong & Rogers, 1997; Rutgers et al., 2021) also found that multilingualism and students' self-identification as multilingual can be connected to better academic performance in non-language subjects. In their overviews of research exploring individual multilingualism, scholars (e.g., Berthele, 2021; Haukås et al., 2022) nevertheless forewarn that most studies stem from different definitions of multilingualism (some of them were discussed in section 2.2.1) and focus on different groups of multilinguals, such as those regarding age, national context, or migration background.

In the context of Norwegian school education, multilingualism has been explored mainly in two forms: in its association with students' minority (most often migration) background or, more rarely, in association with acquiring multilingual skills through learning further languages in the school context. The multilingualism of students with

migration backgrounds was explored primarily in relation to learning Norwegian and students' integration in the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classroom (see, for example, Krulatz et al., 2018; Neokleous & Krulatz, 2018). Scholars (Olaussen & Kjelaas, 2021) have indicated that when explored in relation to learning Norwegian, minority students' multilingualism is often presented as a challenge and is associated with having poor linguistic and academic skills (see, for example, Dalen & Rygvold, 2006; Green & Iversen, 2022; Rygvold & Karlsen, 2017). In contrast to being or becoming multilingual through learning modern languages at school, this form of multilingualism has generally been seen as less prestigious and even problematic, especially in political discourses (Haukås et al., 2022; Kjelaas & van Ommeren, 2019; Vikøy & Haukås, 2021). Olaussen and Kjelaas (2021) indicated that it is primarily a diverse cultural background, and not a rich linguistic repertoire, that has been highlighted as a resource, with students' mother tongues being considered only as a *tool* for learning Norwegian.

Contrary to studies on Norwegian as a Second Language, recent research on English as a Second Language has pursued the resource-orientation on minority students' multilingualism. Exploring how immigrant students use their home languages in the English classroom, Iversen (2017) found that, for many learners, their home languages are a resource in learning English. For example, they use their mother tongues for translating and receiving support from peers and parents, and as a means to understand English through finding grammatical similarities between their home languages and English. In addition, Krulatz and Iversen (2020) found that being able to use their whole language repertoires in the English classroom can be a resource for immigrant students as this can increase their self-confidence.

Often associated with minority students and their learning of Norwegian or English, multilingualism, however, has rarely been the focus of studies on L3 learning in Norwegian schools. Among the few scholars to explore students' multilingualism as associated with learning additional languages at school, Haukås (2015) compared the use of learning strategies by learners of two (Norwegian as L1 and English as L2) and three languages (including German as an L3) in Norwegian secondary schools. Surprisingly, the research showed that, although they studied more languages, L3

learners tended to use significantly fewer learning strategies and applied them less frequently than did L2 learners. Further, Myklevold (2022) suggested that the explicit operationalization of multilingualism and the application of multilingual pedagogy in the L3 classroom can be a factor significantly enhancing all students' awareness and use of learning strategies for studying their L3.

Although both minority and majority students' multilingualism have been explored in the Norwegian context, research investigating them simultaneously is surprisingly scarce. One example of a combined approach is Holst's (2018) study, which explored the link between students' multilingualism and language awareness in Norwegian schools. Among various factors related to students' broader language awareness, Holst considered knowledge of languages in addition to those studied at school, which could in some cases indicate students' minority background. However, as neither the use of these additional languages nor how students had acquired them was clarified, it seems that multilingualism was considered rather as a homogeneous phenomenon, with no clear distinction made between its different forms.

Scholars of the Ungspråk project, including the author of the present PhD study, on the contrary, aim to integrate a comprehensive approach to multilingualism. We emphasize that multilingualism is a multifaced phenomenon and in such a diverse context as Norwegian schools can be associated with different aspects of language knowledge, including receptive multilingualism, knowledge of dialects and language variations, learning additional languages at school, *and*, rather than exclusively, minority background. For instance, this perspective has been reflected in Haukås (2022) and Storto (2023), who investigated students' views on their own multilingualism. In addition, Haukås et al. (2022) explored how students' beliefs about multilingualism can be connected to their language backgrounds. Separating two groups of students—those with only Norwegian as their home language and those who (in addition) may have other languages as their native or home languages—we found that most students shared positive beliefs about multilingualism, regardless of their minority or majority language backgrounds. This perspective on students' multilingualism as a multifaceted phenomenon was pursued in the present PhD study. More specifically, the study focused on two forms of multilingualism in the Norwegian school context: multilingualism

related to students' migration background and multilingualism related to language learning at school.

2.2.3.2. Research on teachers' views on multilingualism in the Norwegian context

Previous research (e.g., Burner & Carlsen, 2022; Calafato, 2020, 2021; Haukås, 2016) exploring language teachers' views on multilingualism in the Norwegian school context showed that most educators mainly share the "multilingualism-as-a-resource" orientation stated in the curricula (see section 2.2.2). However, as the official documents lack any clear definitions or practical guidelines, teachers often feel insecure as to how to interpret and implement this concept in relation to their practice (Myklevold & Speitz, 2021). Scholars (Lorenz et al., 2021; Tishakov & Tsagari, 2022) revealed that, along with the general resource-orientation towards multilingualism, English teachers often tend to persist in a *mono*lingual approach in their practice, suggesting that target languages should be the only media of instruction in language classrooms. Moreover, Calafato (2021) noted that many foreign language teachers with positive beliefs about multilingualism exhibited a preference towards native speakerism in language learning. They suggested that learning a new language with a native speaker, who is considered to be more knowledgeable, is more authentic than learning it with a non-native teacher.

Other studies (Burner & Carlsen, 2022; Calafato, 2021; Dahl & Krulatz, 2016; Haukås, 2016; Myklevold, 2021; Vikøy & Haukås, 2021) confirmed that teachers often have limited knowledge of how to implement a multilingual pedagogy, and consequently struggle to carry this over into their practice. In Krulatz and Dahl (2016), only 5% of teachers believed they were sufficiently qualified to apply a multilingual pedagogy in the classroom. In Pran and Holst (2015), only three out of ten teachers reported that they had ever implemented multilingual pedagogies. Calafato (2021) also showed that language teachers apply multilingual pedagogy quite sporadically, although there is a clear tendency among those who teach more than one additional language to use multilingual teaching more often.

In addition, scholars revealed differences in teachers' views regarding their own and students' multilingualism. While acknowledging the benefits of being multilingual

for their own language learning, foreign language (L3) teachers in Haukås (2016) did not necessarily see how multilingualism could be beneficial for their students in language learning. Similarly, in Lorenz et al. (2021), teachers did not see how multilingualism could be used as a source in the classroom, with the important difference that teachers in this study did not even seem to be aware of their students' linguistic repertoires. Exploring teachers' awareness of and views on students' multilingualism, Dahl and Krulatz (2016) raised the important issue of differences in teachers' attitudes towards various forms of multilingualism. They argued that the languages of students with minority backgrounds often remain perceived within a "language-as-a-problem" orientation (Ruíz, 1984) and tend to be ignored in the classroom.

In parallel with Myklevold and Speitz (2021), who criticized the multilingual turn in the recent Norwegian Curriculum Reform for its lack of practical support and guidelines, the language teachers in Calafato (2021) noted low support in government efforts to promote multilingual pedagogy in practice. Revealing the gap between policies celebrating multilingualism and the lack of guidelines for its practical implementation, scholars (Calafato, 2021; Myklevold & Speitz, 2021; Vikøy & Haukås, 2021) have indicated the need to develop practices (e.g., additional seminars, trainings) and materials that might help teachers understand how students' multilingualism can be perceived and used as a resource in language learning.

2.3. Intercultural competence

This section focuses on the concept of IC. Similar to section 2.2, it provides an overview of theoretical approaches to the concept, analyzes how it was presented in the Norwegian curricula, and discusses previous research on students' IC and teachers' views on the concept. Moreover, the section includes an additional part which explains the concept of open-mindedness and why it was used when exploring students' IC in this study. As earlier, the literature review of empirical research mainly focuses on studies that have explored IC in the Norwegian context.

2.3.1. Defining intercultural competence in language education research

Scholars (Holliday, 2010; Kramsch, 2009) suggest that there are at least two main approaches to defining IC in language education research, each stemming from a particular definition of culture. The first approach derives from modernist views that associate culture with a nation. This approach originates from the 18th and 19th century European tradition of seeing the world as composed of separate nation-states, each having a particular national culture rooted in a common history and related to a common standard national language (see e.g., Herder, 2002). In language education, this idea grew to be reflected in a strong connection between a target language and its national cultural "context" (Holliday, 2009). For example, in English language education, learning English has traditionally been connected to learning about British or American culture, history, and a standard way of speaking. According to this approach, when promoting students' IC emphasis should be placed on learning about "cultural" and historical facts and "cultural" differences between nations to teach learners how to behave appropriately in communication with people from different cultural, that is *national*, contexts. This approach is now considered naïve and problematic. Scholars (Dervin, 2010; Holliday, 2010; Kramsch, 2009) have criticized it for fostering essentialist views—that is, for considering national cultures as the only markers of identity in intercultural communication, and thus for focusing exclusively on oversimplified and often stereotyped national differences, while ignoring the complexity of people's identities.

The second, and more recent, approach to IC stems from the notion of culture as a dynamic process of constructing and constantly reconstructing symbolic meanings, or narratives, by a group of people who share these meanings (Benhabib, 2002; Holliday, 2009, 2010; Kramsch, 2009). These narratives define people's identities, interpretations of the world, common histories, and practices. Thus, culture is understood as a socially constructed phenomenon that is unrelated to objective knowledge. This approach also suggests that, as people can simultaneously belong to several socio-cultural groups sharing different meanings, the boundaries between cultures are increasingly blurred and negotiable. Instead of a national culture, the notions of identity and social diversity become central in interpreting IC. All people, whether they belong to ethnic or national

cultural majorities or minorities, are seen as diverse in many ways, regarding, for example, their gender, class, age, linguistic repertoire, and professional experiences. Within this view, national culture becomes only one of many possible factors contributing to one's identity. Following this non-essentialist paradigm, scholars (Dervin, 2010; Hoff, 2014; Holliday, 2009, 2010; Kramsch, 2009) refer to IC as the capacity to acknowledge the complexity and multidimensionality of people's identities across and within national borders, rather than learning about national differences. Moreover, some scholars (e.g., Hoff, 2019) promoting this new paradigm in intercultural and language education refuse to see agreement or compromise as the main goal of intercultural communication. Rather, they emphasize that IC implies the capacity to navigate conflicts, contradictions, and ambiguities in increasingly diverse societies.

This recent approach also suggests considering IC as an ongoing, dynamic, lifelong developmental process, rather than being related to a body of skills or knowledge that can be achieved and assessed (Dervin, 2010; Hoff, 2019, 2020). Following this view, some scholars have rejected (Fielding, 2021) or criticized (Hoff, 2014) use of the term "competence" because of its strong association with a fixed end-state. They have instead suggested using the notion of intercultural understanding (Fielding, 2021; Perry & Southwell, 2011). Nevertheless, the term competence persists in the field and is often used in a generic way, regardless of scholars' theoretical positions. For instance, it is used in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2020), the Norwegian Foreign Language subject curriculum (NDET, 2019a), and other policy documents and research studies (e.g., Haukås et al., 2021; Hoff, 2019). The current study also uses the term IC as a generic term (section 2.3.4. contains further discussion on how students' IC will be explored in the present study).

Given the fundamental difference between the two paradigms, it is important to clarify that this research project stemmed from the non-essentialist approach to understanding IC. When operationalizing IC in the Ungspråk project, we referred to Dypedahl's (2019) definition, which considers IC as "the ability to relate constructively to people who have mindsets and/or communication styles that are different from one's own" (Dypedahl, 2019, p. 102). By choosing this definition, we aimed to emphasize that people's identities in intercultural communication do not relate exclusively to their

nationalities, but rather encompass many other factors, creating both similarities and differences in views, opinions, and ways of thinking and acting. Consequently, we considered the aim of promoting IC in the development of students' ability "to relate constructively"; in our interpretation, that means to be open to and navigate complexity and diversity in intercultural communication. This conceptualization of IC implicitly suggests the importance of developing students' open-mindedness, which will be discussed further in section 2.3.4.

2.3.2. Defining intercultural competence in the Norwegian Core and language subjects curricula

The National Core Curriculum (NDET, 2017) and curricula for the language subjects (NDET, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c), either explicitly or implicitly, consider IC an integral part of school education. Without using the term IC, the Core Curriculum (NDET, 2017) includes the intercultural dimension as a significant element of several core values of school education. As regards such values as human rights and dignity and democratic values and participation, the document underlines the importance of acknowledging and appreciating linguistic and cultural diversity within Norwegian society and across national borders. Recognizing that "the population is more diversified than ever before" and that "the world is coming closer together" (p. 8), the curriculum stresses the importance of developing students' language skills and (inter-)cultural understanding. The document states that, in a changing world of increased diversity, the aim of school education is to prepare students to "live together with different perspectives, attitudes and ways of life" (p. 7). Moreover, the document pays particular attention to the development of students' own identities and suggests that students develop their own linguistic and cultural identity through learning and understanding a diversity of ideas, values, and traditions.

Different aspects of the intercultural dimension that cuts across the Core Curriculum get reflected in various subject curricula, and especially in the curricula for the main language subjects. Stating that Norwegian is an important subject when it comes to the development of students' *cultural understanding*, the Curriculum for Norwegian emphasizes the development of students' own identity. Providing "an insight

into the rich and diverse language and cultural heritage in Norway" (p. 2), and introducing students to different forms of expressions, the subject aims to contribute to students' understanding of their own cultural and linguistic backgrounds and the diversity around them.

The Curriculum in English emphasizes the role of English as the lingua franca of the modern world (Heggernes, 2022; Speitz & Myklevold, 2022). It suggests that the subject gives pupils "the foundation for communicating with others, both locally and globally" (NDET, 2019c, p. 2), and thus helps the pupils to "develop an intercultural understanding of different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns" (NDET, 2019c, p. 2). In comparison to the Curriculum for Norwegian, this document goes further by stressing the need to develop students' awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity not only within, but also across, borders. Similar to the Curriculum for Norwegian, the English curriculum highlights the significance of identity negotiation and emphasizes the role of students' reflection for developing IC and in understanding the identities of the self and others: "By reflection on … different types of texts in English, the pupils … develop intercultural competence … [and thus] build the foundation for seeing their own identity and others' identities in a multilingual and multicultural context" (NDET, 2019c, p. 3). It is interesting to note that, along with the term *intercultural understanding*, the document also uses the term *IC* (see discussion on the use of the term "competence" in section 2.3.1). However, the document considers IC as only a component within one of the core elements of the subject, *Working with texts in English*.

The only document that explicitly mentions the concept of IC, and moreover considers it a core element of the subject, is the Curriculum for Foreign Languages. The document associates IC with:

> Knowledge about and an explorative approach to other languages, cultures, ways of life and ways of thinking open for new perspectives on the world and ourselves. Intercultural competence means developing curiosity about, insight into and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity, both locally and globally, to interact with others. (NDET, 2019, p. 2)

To a certain extent, this description unifies all of the aspects of IC that have been mentioned in the other, previously considered documents. It mentions the understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity, differences in ways of living and thinking, "both locally and globally," that is, within and across borders. In addition, the document emphasizes opening up for "new perspectives on the world and ourselves" (p. 2), suggesting that reflection on identity plays an integral role in the enhancement of students' intercultural understanding.

In their coverage of the different aspects of IC, however, none of the documents provides a clear definition of IC, if they provide any definition at all. Instead of offering instructions that can be used by practitioners in the field to understand what the concept includes, what aspects and by what means they are to be promoted in the classroom, the documents instead refer to certain ideas that may resonate with different, even conflicting approaches to IC (see section 2.3.1). For instance, the emphasis on promoting students' "understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity" does not specify how and to what extent teachers should integrate reflection on the *similarities* between people and national contexts rather than only differences. It is also not clear which dimensions of identity should be reflected upon and integrated in language subjects—whether this should also include reflection on the gender and age of the self and the other, or only on the interlocutors' linguistic and cultural backgrounds (see also Heggernes' [2022] criticism of the Curriculum in English [NDET, 2019c]). As illustrated in section 2.3.1, the concept can have multiple and varying interpretations, ranging from theoretically simplistic and potentially harmful essentialist positions to non-essentialist views which may call into question the very definitions of culture and intercultural encounters (see, for example, Council of Europe, 2016). Given the variety of interpretations, it is likely that teachers will have different understandings of the concept. Without providing clear definitions, the documents thus transfer the responsibility to conceptualize and implement IC in practice to practitioners in the field.

As in the case of multilingualism, the documents also fail to provide clear guidelines on how IC is to be developed in the classroom. Although the Curriculum for Foreign Languages is the only document that explicitly mentions IC among its core

elements, the Curriculum in English is the only language subject curriculum which suggests how the promotion of IC can be integrated in language learning. The document considers work on a text in English to be an intercultural encounter which, included in the learning process, may help develop students' understanding of "different ways of living, thinking and communication patterns," and a means to open new perspectives on the world and themselves (NDET, 2019c, p. 2). However, the document does not clarify how this work can be carried out in the classroom, although language education research does provide examples of specific practices (e.g., Heggernes, 2021; Hoff, 2016, 2019; Ibrahim, 2020).

2.3.3. Previous research on intercultural competence in school settings

2.3.3.1. Research on school students' intercultural competence

As stated in section 2.3.1, IC is a complex concept which lacks any unified definition. Therefore, before proceeding to an overview of the relevant research, it is important to emphasize that scholars can base their studies on different understandings and approaches to IC. They may also use various notions that reflect only specific aspects of IC as it relates to certain skills, abilities, attitudes, or psychological traits. Each study, consequently, especially those implying the use of objective criteria, reflects a particular understanding of IC and typically elicits only parts of the overall concept (e.g., Borghetti, 2017; Hoff, 2020; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013; Perry & Southwell, 2011; Sercu, 2010). Given these specifics, the present overview includes studies which, besides IC, explore other relevant notions, such as intercultural sensitivity, intercultural empathy, or openness. The focal element explored in relation to IC in the present PhD study will be discussed in section 2.3.4.

While the development of IC has been stated as one of the primary goals of school education in Norway (see section 2.3.2), empirical research exploring this phenomenon in Norwegian school settings, and especially in relation to language learning, is quite rare. One can distinguish two major groups among the studies that have addressed this issue in the given context. The first group explored various pedagogical approaches aimed at promoting students' IC. The exploration of IC was thus undertaken to illustrate

the application or efficiency of these approaches. For example, Fenner (2001) and Hoff (2019) studied how the use of literature in English as a Second Language classrooms can contribute to raising learners' understanding of the Self and the Other. Similarly, and considering self-awareness as a core element of IC, Khanukaeva (2020) and Hanukaev (2022) explored the efficiency of working with an e-portfolio in English classrooms. In addition, Furnes and Birketveit (2020) investigated English learners' ability to decenter. Measuring this trait both before and after an intervention that included reading a story and fulfilling different tasks, the scholars found a statistically significant increase in students' IC that was further supported by interviews. As they focused on investigating approaches to developing IC rather than on measuring it, these studies neither generated any comprehensive knowledge on students' IC nor examined the factors that may potentially be related to students' IC in the Norwegian context. The latter issue has been addressed in the second group of studies, which, given the research aims of this PhD project, represent the main interest of the current overview.

Studies exploring the link between school students' IC and relevant factors in the Norwegian school context are hard to come by. To the best of my knowledge, only a few recent studies (Solhaug & Kristensen, 2020; Solhaug & Osler, 2018) have so far addressed this issue. Among them, Solhaug and Kristensen (2020) investigated upper secondary school students' IC in the Danish and Norwegian contexts. While differences between the national contexts were uncertain, the findings revealed *gender* to be the most significant predictor of IC, with female students scoring substantially higher on IC than their male peers in both national contexts. In addition, *coming from a bilingual home* and attending *culturally and linguistically diverse schools* had a moderate effect on students' IC. Based on these results, the scholars suggested that schools have the potential to be positive arenas for developing students' IC, although more involvement and support from teachers and administration is needed. A similar investigation was conducted by Solhaug and Osler (2018), who also found substantial differences in intercultural empathy between boys and girls in lower and upper secondary schools in Norway. Moreover, their findings revealed that, in addition to gender, students' *understanding of cultural diversity* was an important predictor of intercultural empathy. Contrary to Solhaug and Kristensen (2020), however, *experiencing diversity in school*

had low predictive value, and the scholars suggested that further research is needed to explore the significance of this factor.

Numerous studies conducted in international and other national contexts have shown that IC can also be connected to many other factors (for a broader overview of factors related to IC, see, for example, Kohli Bagwe & Haskollar, 2020). Among predictors of school students' IC, researchers identified *previous intercultural experiences*. Straffon (2003) revealed that students' intercultural sensitivity was positively correlated with the length of time that they had attended international schools. In addition, in the case of teenagers, *friendship with people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds* was found to be significantly linked to students' intercultural sensitivity and positive attitudes towards diversity (Chocce et al., 2015; Pederson, 1998). However, there was no consensus among scholars as to whether *experience living abroad* can be a predictor of students' IC. While some studies confirmed the significance of this factor (Dewaele & Wei, 2013; Medina–López–Portillo, 2004; Olson & Kroeger, 2001; Tompkins et al., 2017), others (e.g., Williams, 2005) specified that living or studying abroad can enhance students' IC only if they interact with representatives of other cultural and linguistic groups. Several studies also suggested that *migration background* can be positively related to students' intercultural sensitivity (e.g., Morales, 2017; Ruokonen & Kairavuori, 2012). Similarly, in Solhaug and Kristensen (2020), coming from a bilingual home, which means potentially having a migration background, also had a moderate effect on students' IC in Norwegian and Danish secondary schools. In addition to the aspects related to learners' experiences and backgrounds, scholars (Alaei & Nosrati, 2018; Saricoban & Oz, 2014; Sercu, 2005; Valdivia & Montoto, 2018) suggested that *having an interculturally competent teacher* is an important factor in relation to students' IC. To promote students' IC, foreign language teachers themselves should have a high level of IC and be aware of intercultural pedagogy (see further discussion in section 2.3.3.2).

Summing up, international research has provided ample data indicating that various factors (e.g., gender, previous intercultural experience, experience living abroad) can be potentially connected to students' IC. However, as the present overview has shown, these potential connections have rarely been a focus of investigation in the

context of Norwegian schools, and relevant research remains scarce (see Solhaug & Kristensen, 2020, as an example). Consequently, while focusing on the link between students' IC and multilingualism as a central issue of investigation (see section 2.4.3.1 for further discussion), this study also aimed to examine other factors that can be related to students' IC in the Norwegian context. Such investigation was undertaken to enrich our knowledge about students' IC, as well as to provide nuanced insights into the complex interplay between IC and multilingualism (see Article 4 for further details).

2.3.3.2. Research on teachers' views on intercultural competence in language education

As illustrated in section 2.3.2, policy documents consider language learning an ideal medium for the development of students' IC and related skills, abilities, and attitudes. However, the implementation of IC depends greatly on teachers' views, which, as suggested in previous research, can differ. For instance, exploring educators' views on IC in the Finnish school context, Jokikokko (2005) revealed that while being generally positive towards working with an intercultural dimension in their practice, teachers define it differently and associate it with different aspects, ranging from cultural knowledge of differences between national contexts to understanding the diversity and complexity of people's identity in intercultural encounters. Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2011) and Jedynak (2011) found that most teachers of additional languages in Polish schools associated IC with teaching students about historical facts, customs, habits, and everyday life in the target language society. Explaining this tendency, Otwinowska-Kasztelanic (2011) argued that the teachers could be strongly influenced by the content of the course books and other materials available on the Polish market, most of which still focus on cultural representations of target-language countries and their traditions. Jedynak (2011) also noted that teachers can lack theoretical and practical knowledge about the intercultural approach in foreign language education, including what it implies and which activities can foster the development of learners' IC. Similarly, in Sercu's (2006) large-scale study involving 424 foreign language teachers from Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Poland, Spain, and Sweden, educators shared the same essentialist view on IC, associating it with teaching cultural knowledge. Nevertheless,

the study revealed that, if given opportunities to gain necessary knowledge and skills, teachers would be eager to implement more sophisticated and non-essentialist approaches to intercultural education.

In the Norwegian context, Mork (2017) indicated that most teachers participating in her study considered students' critical thinking and reflection on their own personal values and identity to be important elements of IC. However, Rosnes and Rossland (2018) revealed that, in focusing on the promotion of students' language skills as necessary for intercultural communication, teachers may often pay less attention to the promotion of cultural awareness and intercultural attitudes like openness and cultural empathy. Underlying the same trend, Fenner (2017) claimed that many teachers had never integrated practices that include personal interpretations, reflection, and discussion.

Further exploration of teachers' views in the Norwegian context showed that practitioners find it difficult to operationalize IC in the foreign language classroom due to a lack of clear definitions or guidelines in the Norwegian curricula (Myklevold, 2022), as well as a lack of support in teaching materials (e.g., Haukås & Vold, 2012). Addressing the latter issue, scholars have suggested various pedagogical approaches which may help enhance students' IC in learning additional languages at school, including work with literary texts (Eide et al., 2022; Hauan, 2021; Hoff, 2016, 2019; Olsbu, 2014), films (Mortensen, 2017), picture books (Bøhn-Abrahamsen, 2019; Furnes & Birketveit, 2020; Heggernes, 2019, 2019; Ibrahim, 2020), e-portfolios (Hanukaev, 2022; Khanukaeva, 2020), and critical incidents (Dypedahl, 2022).

However, it is important to emphasize that most studies so far have explored language teachers' views on IC in the context of English language teaching. Research on the views of foreign language (L3) teachers remains extremely scarce. Among few studies addressing this issue in the Norwegian context, Borge (2021) explored teacher attitudes towards and understanding of cultural education in Foreign Language subjects. The study showed that when promoting students' IC, teachers tend to focus on aspects of everyday life in the target language countries and draw on their own and students' intercultural experiences.

2.3.4. Exploring open-mindedness in relation to students' intercultural competence in quantitative research

Being aware that any study on IC may have a limited focus (see section 2.3.3.1), I find it necessary to clarify how the present investigation explored this concept in language learners. Stemming from a psychological perspective (e.g., Dewaele & Stavans, 2014; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001), in the Ungspråk project, we chose to focus on students' open-mindedness, and explored this quality as one of the key elements of IC. In a broad sense, open-mindedness refers to how people perceive new ideas and opinions (McIntosh, 2013). Scholars in intercultural psychology suggest defining open-mindedness as a person's capacity to be open and unprejudiced towards people outside of their own socio-cultural groups and towards new ideas, opinions, values, and norms that are different from their own (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001). According to this perspective, open-mindedness is one of the crucial psychological factors necessary for coping with differences and navigating diversity in a constructive manner.

Our focus on this psychological factor can also be explained by theoretical models of IC, which consider open-mindedness, or openness, among the key elements of intercultural understanding (e.g., Byram, 1997, 2021; Deardorff, 2006, 2009; Dypedahl, 2019, 2022; Fantini, 1995; Kealey, 1989; Kim & Gudykunst, 1988; Munezane, 2021; Ting-toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Most influential among these in language education research is Byram's (1997, 2021) model of intercultural (communicative) competence. It includes four dimensions: attitudes (*savoir etre*), knowledge (*savoirs*), skills (*savoir apprendre/faire*), and education (*savoir s'engager*). The *knowledge* component refers to language learners' awareness of cultural products, practices and general rules of societal and individual interactions in learners' own countries and countries of their interlocutors. *Skills to interpret and relate* include learners' ability to interpret documents and events from another culture and relate them to phenomena from learners' own cultural context. Furthermore, *skills of discovery and interaction* refer to the abilities to "acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices" (Byram, 1997, p. 51) and the ability to apply this knowledge, as well as relevant skills and attitudes in real-life. *Education* concerns the 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. 53). Regarding attitudes, the most relevant dimension for the purpose of this study, Byram emphasizes that understanding these simply as positive beliefs and tolerance is not sufficient. Positive beliefs can foster stereotypes and prejudices and thus hinder understanding in communication in the same way as negative beliefs. Byram stresses that attitudes need to be associated with "curiosity and *openness*, … readiness to suspend disbelief and judgement with respect to others' meanings, beliefs, values and behaviours" (Byram, 2021, p. 45, italics added). Interpreted in this way, attitudes serve as a ground for the further development of abilities crucial in intercultural communication, such as a person's ability to critique her own ways of thinking and acting. Similarly, adopting Deardorff's (2006) model of IC to the field of language learning, Dypedahl (2019, 2022) considers *openness and willingness to understand* among the key attitudinal components of IC. Moreover, he considers these attitudinal components as both premises for, and outcomes of, IC development.

The importance of open-mindedness in developing IC, suggested in theoretical models, finds evidence in research. Numerous studies indicate that a higher level of open-mindedness is strongly connected to people's capacity to listen to and take seriously alternative views (Riggs, 2010), respect diversity (McCrae & Costa, 2003), and reconsider their social, political, and religious values (Costa & McCrae, 1992). These personal qualities also mirror abilities that the Norwegian curricula associate with intercultural understanding and which they aim to develop in students. These abilities include respect for differences and human dignity, tolerance and respect for other people's opinions and perspectives, the ability to establish dialogue, living together in a diverse society, and to understand and be understood (see section 2.3.2 for details). In addition, the documents explicitly state that students shall become "open for new perspectives on the world and ourselves" (NDET, 2019a, p. 2; NDET 2019c, p. 2), and highlight the importance of open-mindedness for students' personal development and the promotion of democratic values in the society at large.

Summing up, previous theoretical and empirical research has suggested that open-mindedness—combined with other factors such as critical thinking—can be considered an important element of intercultural understanding in language learning. Stemming

from this suggestion, as well as taking into account the emphasized importance of open-mindedness in the Norwegian curricula, the present study explores this psychological trait as a potential indicator of students' IC in the quantitative stage of this PhD project (see section 3.3.1 for further methodological discussion).

2.4. The interconnection between multilingualism and intercultural competence in language education

The present section starts with an overview of policy documents—theoretical and pedagogical approaches which suggest the link between multilingualism and IC in language education (2.4.1). It proceeds with an analysis of the Norwegian Core Curriculum (NDET, 2017) and language subject curricula (NDET, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c) and discusses how, and to what extent, these documents present the elements as interconnected (2.4.2). The subsequent literature review focuses on research that has explored the link between multilingualism and IC in language learners and on studies which have investigated teachers' views on this link in the context of language education (2.4.3). Because relevant studies are quite rare in the Norwegian context, the literature review covers mainly international research.

2.4.1. International policy papers, didactic and theoretical approaches

While emphasizing the importance of multilingualism and IC as separate elements, several policy documents, didactic approaches, and theoretical studies have also suggested considering multilingual and intercultural dimensions in English (L2) and foreign language (L3) learning as interconnected. For example, the link has been made in the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2018, 2020), which considered both elements as two intertwined parts of the same competence, *plurilingual and pluricultural competence*. Stemming from the definition suggested by Coste et al. (2009/1997), the CEFR conceptualized this competence as:

> the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of

> several cultures. This *is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence* on which the user may draw. (Council of Europe, 2001, p. 168, italics added)

This definition stresses that both learners' linguistic resources and cultural experiences are equally important when taking part in intercultural interactions and dealing with linguistic and cultural diversity. According to descriptors suggested in the CEFR, in addition to the knowledge of several languages and flexibility in their use, plurilingual and pluricultural competence involves aspects related to intercultural understanding. These include, for example, sensitivity to other cultural orientations and otherness, recognition of similarities, understanding that practices and norms are culturally dependent, as well as the ability to use social and cultural strategies for constructive intercultural communication (Council of Europe, 2020, pp. 124-126; see also other descriptors). As argued by scholars such as Galante and Chen (2022), plurilingual and pluricultural competence represents a complex phenomenon which "embraces hybridity, mixing, and meshing of languages as well as cultural diversity, interculturality and cross-cultural awareness" (p. 264).

Furthermore, the conceptualization of plurilingual and pluricultural competence as a single "composite competence" explicitly indicates that both dimensions represent integral parts of the same construct. Underlining a dichotomous relation between the elements, Coste et al. (2009/1997) suggested that the multilingual and intercultural dimensions in learners' repertoires influence each other. For instance, knowledge of several languages may encourage language learners to surmount the ethnocentric position and help raise awareness of other languages and cultures, thus encouraging the development of intercultural understanding. At the same time, intercultural experiences can promote "the emergence of linguistic awareness, and even of metacognitive strategies" (p. 11) that help in language learning.

In addition, Coste et al. (2009/1997) indicated that both multilingual and intercultural aspects of plurilingual and pluricultural competence contribute to the development of learners' understanding of themselves and others and are thus

interconnected through a common link to the identity dimension. On the one hand, diversified linguistic and cultural experiences enable learners to develop the capacity to deal with new situations and better understand the identities of others. On the other hand, by becoming more aware of the linguistic and cultural differences between themselves and others, language learners construct their own linguistic and cultural identities. Chen and Hélot (2018) suggested that in this way, plurilingual and pluricultural competence can be considered a "two-way competence" (p. 172). This idea—that both aspects are linked to identity—was also developed in theoretical research, which will be discussed later in this section.

It is important to mention, however, that while considering multilingual and intercultural dimensions in language learning as two sides of the same coin, the CEFR and other related documents (e.g., Coste et al., 2009/1997) have indicated that there can be a form of imbalance between the elements (Council of Europe, 2020, p. 30). Each person's plurilingual and pluricultural competence is always unique and composed of different linguistic and cultural repertoires and skills which are dynamic and constantly evolving (Candelier & Castellotti, 2013; Castellotti & Moore, 2011; Chen & Hélot, 2018; Coste et al., 2009). Hence, one component can be more developed than the other. For example, learners can be confident in their language skills (e.g., Spanish), but lack the cultural knowledge about communication norms in a specific community (e.g., indigenous communities of Colombia); or, they may have advanced intercultural skills without necessarily being able to speak the language. This imbalance, however, does not suggest that learners are seen as insufficient language users in comparison to an ideal native speaker; it rather indicates that they have the potential to carry out specific tasks in different areas and contexts (Chen & Hélot, 2018).

The link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions proposed in the CEFR has been further strengthened in guidelines (e.g., Beacco et al., 2016; Cavalli et al., 2009) suggesting how the principles of plurilingual and intercultural education can be incorporated into curricula and teaching. For example, Candelier et al. (2012) elaborated a framework of reference for pluralistic approaches to languages and cultures and developed a database of classroom activities that integrated both multilingual and intercultural approaches in language education (see section "Integrated Didactics" in the

CARAP Database [European Centre for Modern Languages, n.d.]). Among other approaches promoting both elements as intertwined, scholars have also suggested audiovisual translations to develop students' mediation skills (Baños et al., 2021), action-oriented tasks (Galante & Chen, 2022) and scenarios (Scholze et al., 2022), and virtual exchanges (Gruber & Bailey, 2021). It is also worth mentioning Barret et al.'s (2014) *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters through Visual Media* and Byram et al.'s (2009) *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters*, which, in addition to linking multilingual and intercultural components, include the element of students' reflection on their own and others' *identities*.

In addition, the linking of multilingualism and IC with the identity dimension has been emphasized in several *theoretical* approaches (e.g., Clark & Dervin, 2014; Clark & Stratilaki, 2013; Fielding, 2021). Clark and Dervin (2014) emphasized the role of *reflexivity* in language and intercultural education, especially in relation to the notions of multilingualism and interculturality. Associating reflexivity, among other factors, with the ability to see the complexity of self and others, the scholars suggested considering reflexivity as a key element in developing a person's IC and multilingualism, as both attend processes of identity transformation and reflection. Fielding (2021) suggested enhancing the intercultural stance in language education by integrating students' reflection on their own *multilingual* identity. Following Garcia and Beardsmore (2009), Fielding argued that language learners can be positioned as *emerging* multilinguals and that reflection on their multilingual selves shall be promoted in the language classroom. The opportunity to conceptualize themselves as multilingual and to explore the complexity of their own identity can help students enhance their understanding of others as equally complex individuals and consequently, promote positive attitudes towards diversity. In the Norwegian context, scholars have discussed various approaches which can be used to help students explore their multilingual selves in the classroom, including identity texts (Krulatz et al., 2018) and children's multimodal narratives (Ibrahim, 2019). However, the potential of these theoretical and methodological approaches connecting multilingual, intercultural, and identity dimensions, as well as teachers' views on the connection between these elements, have not yet been empirically explored.

2.4.2. The interconnection between multilingualism and intercultural competence in the Norwegian curricula

As shown in sections 2.2.2 and 2.3.2, the Core Curriculum (LK20) and curricula in language subjects consider both multilingualism and IC to be important elements of school education and students' development. However, in addition to underlining the significance of each element, the documents also suggest that these two dimensions are connected.

Stating that "the population is more diversified than ever before" and "the world is coming closer together" (NDET, 2017, p. 8), the Core Curriculum connects the elements by claiming that both are crucial for enabling students to understand different ways of living, thinking, and communicating, and to deal with linguistic and cultural diversity within and across borders. In this way the document reflects the perspective proposed in the CEFR, which considers individual multilingualism and IC as two intertwined aspects of plurilingual and pluricultural competence (see section 2.4.1 for details).

Mirroring the CEFR's perspective, all three language curricula (Norwegian, English, and Foreign Languages) consider multilingualism and IC as integral parts of the language subjects, focusing, however, on either "local" or "global" angles. The Curriculum for Norwegian underlines the importance of developing students' understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity within Norway. It focuses on the variety of dialects and standard variations of Norwegian (Bokmål and Nynorsk) and underlines the presence of the Sami and other languages in the Norwegian linguistic landscape. It suggests that by obtaining "insight into the rich and diverse language and cultural heritage in Norway" (NDET, 2019b, p. 2) and learning about their own and others' language backgrounds, students will develop an understanding of how to communicate and participate in the diverse Norwegian society.

Considering English as "the foundation for communicating with others" (NDET, 2019c, p. 2), the Curriculum in English shifts to the global perspective. The document states that both proficiency in the lingua franca and the development of IC should prepare students for intercultural communication in multilingual and multicultural

societies, including communication across borders. However, by emphasizing the role of English in the modern world and focusing on the enhancement of students' proficiency in this language, the document implicitly reduces the link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions to the link between the particular language, *English*, and IC. The further development of students' multilingualism through learning additional languages, which is encouraged in the CEFR, remains unmentioned. Although the curriculum states that multilingualism is a "resource" and that "[t]he pupils shall experience that the ability to speak several languages is an asset at school and in society in general" (NDET, 2019c, p. 2), the document leaves open the issue of whether this reference to "several languages" also includes languages that students may learn further in life, such as in the Foreign Language subject or outside school. The knowledge of other languages, when mentioned, refers to languages that students already know and which they can use strategically to enhance their proficiency in English.

The link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions is further elaborated in the Foreign Language subject curriculum. This is the only language subject curriculum that explicitly considers "Language learning and multilingualism" and "Intercultural competence" as core elements of the subject. While there is no explicit mention that multilingualism and IC should be interpreted as intertwined elements, the document contains some indications of this. For example, the section *Assessment of coursework* states that "the teacher shall award a grade in the foreign language … based on pupil's communicative [oral and written language skills] *and* intercultural competence" (p. 5, italic added). The document thus reflects the CEFR's idea that intercultural understanding and language skills are two sides of the same coin. In comparison to the curricula in English, the document advances a more elaborate view of students' multilingualism. Stating that "all students are already multilingual" (NDET, 2019a, p. 3)—that is, students have already learned about different variations of Norwegian and have experience of learning English—it encourages the further development of students' multilingualism through learning additional languages. The document emphasizes that "in a globalized world, there is a greater need to communicate in several languages" and highlights the value of "learning a *new* language" (p. 2, italic added). The connection

between IC and multilingualism consequently goes beyond students' proficiency in English as a lingua franca and its use as a medium in intercultural encounters.

Furthermore, all four curricula suggest that multilingualism and IC can be connected due to their link to the identity dimension (the same connection was found in the Curriculum in English by Speitz & Myklevold, 2022). The *Identity and cultural diversity* section of the Core Curriculum suggests that, through promoting cultural awareness and confidence in their languages, students develop a sense of belonging and thus form their own identity. Moreover, communicating with people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds enhances students' understanding of others' identity. Promoting this idea further, the Curriculum for Norwegian emphasizes that "through working with the Norwegian subject, the pupils shall become confident language users who are aware of their own linguistic and cultural identity" (NDET, 2019b, p. 2). In addition, "insight into the relationship between language, culture and identity," which the subject provides, shall enable students "to understand their own and others' language situation in Norway" (p. 3).

The *Working with texts in English* section of the Curriculum in English (NDET, 2019c) suggests that the development of language knowledge and intercultural understanding through the work with texts helps students "build the foundation for seeing their own identity and others' identities in a multilingual and multicultural context" (p. 3). Moreover, in its discussion of the interdisciplinary topic *Health and life skills* in this subject, the curriculum indicates that the enhancement of language proficiency and intercultural understanding "can help students develop a positive self-image and a secure identity" (p. 3). However, it seems implied in the document that this idea of securing identity mainly concerns situations where English is used as a medium of communication.

Last but not least, the Curriculum for Foreign Languages (NDET, 2019a) claims that "[k]nowledge about a society's language and cultural diversity provides valuable insight into one's own and others' backgrounds" (p. 2). Through raising students' cultural awareness, the subject thus aims to help students learn not only about different "values and ways of thinking […] in areas where the [foreign] language is spoken" (p. 2), but also about "different identities." Although it focuses mainly on providing an

understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity in the target language regions, the curriculum suggests that through learning about others' backgrounds the students may also enrich their understanding of themselves and "open up new perspectives of the world and [them]selves" (NDET, 2019a, p. 2).

Presenting multilingual and intercultural elements in language education as interconnected—whether through a common goal or a link to the identity dimension—the curricula nevertheless do not address the practical issue of how the elements can be implemented in tandem. Thus, although language education research provides guidelines and examples of relevant practices (e.g., Byram et al., 2009; Candelier et al., 2012), the many different approaches to multilingualism and IC (see 2.2.1 and 2.3.1) and the lack of clarity regarding both concepts in the documents (2.2.2 and 2.3.2) may create challenges for practitioners in the field. Without clear definitions, teachers may adopt different interpretations of both elements and the link between them. These potential challenges and teachers' views were further explored in the present research (see Book chapter 5).

2.4.3. Empirical research on the interconnection between multilingualism and intercultural competence

This section provides an overview of empirical studies that have investigated the link between multilingualism and IC in language learners, as well as studies that have explored teachers' views on the interconnection between multilingualism and IC in language learning.

2.4.3.1. Previous research on the interconnection between students' multilingualism and intercultural competence in a school context

Numerous studies in the field of intercultural psychology have suggested a positive link between multilingualism and IC in university students and adults (e.g., Dewaele & Botes, 2020; Dewaele & Wei, 2012, 2013; Ikizer & Ramírez-Esparza, 2018; Korzilius et al., 2011; Piechurska-Kuciel & Rusieshvili, 2021; van Compernolle, 2016; Wei & Hu, 2019). However, similar research in school settings remains scant and, moreover, suggests inconclusive results. For example, investigating the link between

multilingualism and personality traits associated with IC in young London teenagers, Dewaele and van Oudenhoven (2009) found that multilingual participants with immigrant backgrounds had a higher level of open-mindedness and cultural empathy than their locally born peers, who became multilingual through learning an additional language at school. This connection was even more pronounced in immigrant students who were dominant in, and actively used, two languages, in comparison to those who had only one dominant language. The scholars suggested that, as in the case of multilingual adults, students' IC was positively linked to migration background and the number of dominant languages in their language repertoires.

Other studies, however, revealed different results. Contrary to Dewaele and van Oudenhoven (2009), Dewaele and Stavans (2014) found no link between students' multilingualism and IC in the Israeli context. To the scholars' surprise, diversity in the parents' backgrounds appeared to be the most significant factor. Multilingual secondary school students from mixed families, in which only one parent had a migration background, scored higher on personality traits associated with IC than did students whose parents were both locally born or immigrants. The scholars consequently argued that it is the active engagement in, and interaction with, linguistically and culturally diverse groups, including family, rather than the knowledge of several languages, that are related to students' intercultural understanding. Further, these findings were partly supported by Gross and Dewaele (2018) in the context of primary schools in South Tyrol (Italy), where children with two migrant parents scored significantly lower on openness to change in comparison to other groups. This finding suggests that migration experience may also strengthen multilingual students' desire to contribute to family values and preserve their identity, rather than encouraging them to be open to new things and changes.

The scarcity of research involving young participants, as well as divergent results on the link between children's multilingualism and IC, indicate that more research involving young learners is needed. Moreover, it is important to emphasize that, so far, scholars (Dewaele & Stavans, 2014; Dewaele & van Oudenhoven, 2009; Gross & Dewaele, 2018) have predominantly explored the link between multilingualism and IC by focusing on multilingualism associated with students' migration background.

Multilingualism developed through language learning in school, on the other hand, has rarely been taken into account. To my knowledge, only a few studies so far have explored the link between learning an additional language at school and IC in school students. Considering additional language learning as a process going along with acquiring knowledge about new things and cultures, Gojkov-Rajić and Prtljaga (2013) suggested that the acquisition of additional languages, particularly at an early age, can be positively connected to learners' intercultural tolerance. However, Mellizo (2017), Ruokonen and Kairavuori (2012), and Pederson (1998) found no evidence of a link between learning an additional language and children's intercultural attitudes. It is important to emphasize, though, that the above studies predominantly considered learning *one* additional language (L2) at school in relation to students' IC. The significance of learning a *second* additional language (L3) in relation to learners' IC has rarely been addressed. Herfst et al. (2008), for example, reported that there was no effect on intercultural effectiveness of speaking a second additional language, yet the study involved adult participants. Scholars have also focused on the difference between L2 and L3, though only in relation to other aspects, such as communicative anxiety (Dewaele, 2002) and self-perception (Dewaele & Nakano, 2013). Given this gap, the present study specifically differentiates L2 and L3 learning when exploring the link between students' multilingualism and their IC.

In addition, scholars have suggested that students' multilingual identity—that is, an explicit self-identification as multilingual—may be related to students' intercultural attitudes. In Henry and Thorsen (2018), participants described their sense of being or becoming multilingual with images indicating openness, empathy, and discovery. They associated the knowledge of additional languages with opening doors to new perspectives and being less limited. Similarly, in Busse (2017), some participants perceived learning German as part of developing a cosmopolitan identity, of belonging to a global community, and of becoming "an educated European citizen" (p. 568), rather than only enhancing their language skills for communication purposes. However, the actual connection between multilingual identity and IC in students has not yet been empirically explored.

2.4.3.2. Empirical research on teachers' views on the interconnection between multilingualism and intercultural competence in language education

As shown in sections 2.4.1 and 2.4.2, policy documents, school curricula, pedagogical approaches, and theoretical studies either explicitly or implicitly consider multilingualism and IC as intertwined components in language education. However, empirical research investigating teachers' views on the link between the elements, especially in foreign language (L3) teaching, is extremely scarce. Among the few studies that have been conducted, Pinho and Moreira (2012) explored how primary school English teachers in Portugal understand plurilingual/multilingual and intercultural education and the constraints they face when promoting it. The study showed that while teachers of English are eager to implement both dimensions "in tandem" and to take action, they feel a great imbalance between curricular requirements and their own theoretical and practical knowledge. Among several challenges that teachers face when working on promoting plurilingual and pluricultural competence in the classroom, the participants named a lack of professional theoretical and practical knowledge about, or training in, multilingual and intercultural pedagogies. The practical implementation of these dimensions in tandem was a major challenge, as teachers had limited knowledge of relevant classroom activities. The need to provide guidelines to help integrate such activities in the classroom was also mentioned as an important factor. In addition, many participants suggested developing an interdisciplinary collaboration between school educators, which would involve content teachers other than language subject teachers (see for comparison, Haukås, 2016). Pinho and Moreira (2012) argued that, without additional support, the implementation of multilingual and intercultural pedagogies, especially in tandem, can become an extra burden for practitioners in the field. In a similar study conducted in France, Chen and Hélot (2018) revealed the same trend towards an imbalance in the representation of multilingual and intercultural dimensions in the curricula and teachers' preparedness to implement them in interconnection. The scholars argued that "being an announced but poorly defined objective, the notion of plurilingual and pluricultural competence remains unknown and distant" (p. 168) to language teachers. The study also underscored the need for a better presentation of the

meaning and possible pedagogical outcomes of the link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions in curricula in language subjects.

Section 2.4.2 showed that a similar trend towards the promotion of multilingualism and IC as intertwined elements in language education is present in the Norwegian curricula. However, the views of schoolteachers on the link between these elements, especially in the context of the Foreign Language (L3) subject, remains unexplored. In the Norwegian context, only a few studies have touched upon the topic of teachers' views on the link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions in language education. Exploring teachers' beliefs about their own multilingualism in Norway, Calafato (2020) indicated that most language teachers believe that their own knowledge of multiple languages can help to promote students' IC. However, the study neither explored this belief further nor examined how teachers understand students' IC. The topic of teachers' views on the link between multilingualism and IC was also brought up in Krulatz et al. (2018). Exploring how the practice of identity texts (Cummins & Early, 2011) can empower students with minority backgrounds in English as a Second Language classrooms, the scholars revealed that implementing this practice helped teachers raise their own awareness about linguistic and cultural diversity in their classrooms and thus to see the link between multilingualism and the intercultural dimension. However, teachers' views on this link were not explored further.

2.5. Summary

Summing up, this chapter discussed the key terms and theoretical concepts of the present PhD project. Language learning in the context of Norwegian secondary schools was defined as the contextual framework of the study. The subsequent discussions on theoretical approaches to multilingualism and IC, with open-mindedness as a component of IC, showed the complexity of these phenomena and specified how they were explored in the present study. Further examination illuminated that the Norwegian curricula, didactic approaches, and theoretical studies consider both elements, although to different extents and in different ways, as interconnected in language education. It was suggested that the lack of clear definitions of these multifaceted concepts, as well

as the lack of practical guidelines for their implementation, especially in tandem, can cause challenges for practitioners in the field.

The literature review identified potential gaps in previous empirical research and thus outlined a foundation for the present PhD study. First, a certain imbalance in research on the different forms of multilingualism was revealed. The chapter noted that multilingualism acquired through learning additional languages at school—that is, a multilingualism related to *all* students—has not been sufficiently explored in either the Norwegian or international research contexts. Moreover, L2 and L3 learning at school, as well as students' multilingual identity, have rarely been investigated as factors related to students' IC in empirical research. Second, the literature review showed that research exploring language teachers' views on the link between multilingualism and IC in language learning is still scarce, although teachers' views can be crucial in implementing education policies that promote this link. Especially rare are studies exploring the views of L3 teachers. This scarcity of research focusing on the context of language learning, and particularly foreign language (L3) learning, informed the ground for the present study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter addresses issues related to the choice of methodology, data collection, and analysis. The main task of my PhD project was to empirically explore the relationship between multilingual and intercultural dimensions in language education. For this purpose, I chose a two-fold approach, which at the first stage included a quantitative investigation of the link between open-mindedness (considered as an element of IC) and multilingualism in language learners. The second stage involved a qualitative exploration of foreign language teachers' views on the link between multilingualism and IC in students' development in the context of foreign language (L3) learning. To integrate these two research angles, I selected a mixed methods design, which also reflected the overall layout of the Ungspråk research project (see section 1.3 and Article 1 for details).

The major methodological issues of the present PhD research were discussed in the published works. Article 1 introduced the research design of the Ungspråk project and framed the overall methodological perspective of the present PhD study. Article 2 provided insight into the process of developing the Ungspråk questionnaire, which was used as the main quantitative instrument of the current project. The article suggested an extensive and transparent description of the validation process considered as an integral part of the questionnaire development. The Ungspråk questionnaire was developed by all members of the Ungspråk research team (Prof. Åsta Haukås, PhD Candidate André Storto, and the author of the present PhD thesis). Data collection through the Ungspråk questionnaire, and the subsequent analysis of that data, were also carried out by all three researchers. Article 3 continued to discuss the methodological issues of the project, yet the focus shifted to the quantitative exploration of IC in language learning research. Through an overview of five quantitative questionnaires applied in the field to study learners' IC (including the Ungspråk questionnaire), the publication discussed how and to what extent the theoretically problematic perspective of cultural differentialism was addressed in the considered research instruments. The present chapter aims to provide an extensive, transparent, and systematized overview of the general methodological

approach applied in this PhD project and to discuss issues that were not addressed in the publications.

3.1. Issues related to mixed methods research

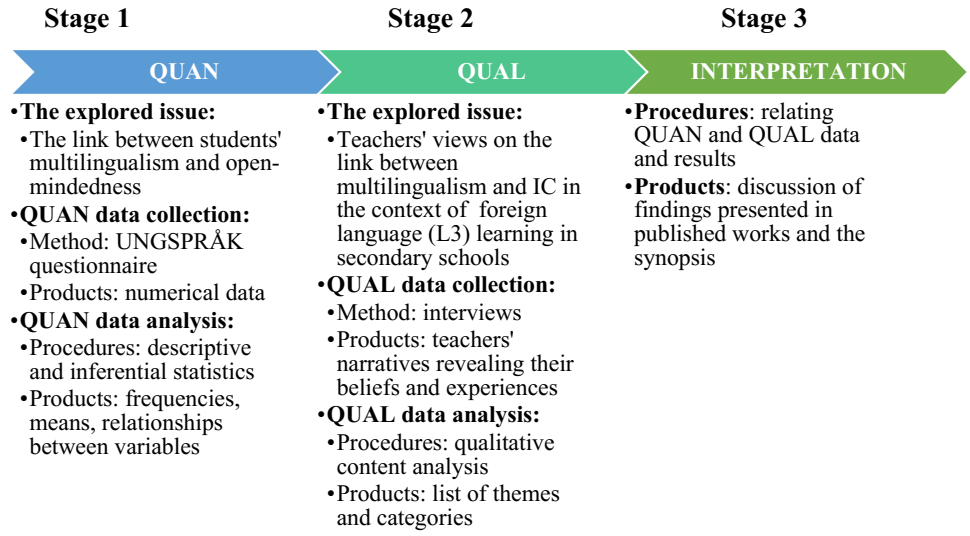
The current section justifies the choice of the mixed methods approach in the study and clarifies how different methodologies were combined to explore the link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions in the context of foreign language learning. With reference to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) and Brewer and Hunter (1989), the mixed methods approach can be defined as a research perspective that combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, and concepts into a single study, with the aim to collect multiple data ensuring the complementary strengths of the study. Scholars (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017) argued that the primary rationale for mixing approaches is to ensure research validity and reliability. The use of qualitative and quantitative research together helps to produce more complete knowledge and adds insights and understandings that might be missed when only one approach is used. Following this argument, and starting from a pragmatic perspective, I considered mixed methods to be the most appropriate approach to address the research questions, which were: *To what extent are multilingualism and IC interconnected in secondary school language learning?* and *How can this interconnection be explored in this specific context?* The quantitative data collected with the Ungspråk questionnaire helped uncover *the extent to which* different forms of students' multilingualism can be connected to students' open-mindedness (considered a key element of IC). The instrument also helped identify other factors significantly connected to this psychological trait, thus providing a better understanding of the interplay between the elements. The qualitative data gathered through interviews with foreign language (L3) teachers helped understand *whether* and *how* educators see the promotion of students' multilingualism and IC as interconnected in their subject.

Integration of the quantitative and qualitative elements of the study was provided at three levels: design, methods, and interpretation (Fetters et al., 2013). At the level of design, the research was planned as *an explanatory sequential study*, meaning that the quantitative data were collected first, and the collection of the qualitative data followed,

with the purpose of explaining the findings in more depth (Creswell, 2015). More specifically, while the quantitative phase aimed to explore the link between students' multilingualism and IC in the context of language learning in secondary schools, the qualitative data aimed to provide teachers' insights into this link in the specific context of foreign language (L3) learning. At the level of methods, both quantitative and qualitative methods were used in the study: a quantitative questionnaire, which helped collect the data on the link between multilingualism and IC in students, and qualitative interviews with teachers, which further shed light on this interconnection in the foreign language (L3) learning. At the level of interpretation, both quantitative and qualitative findings were related to answer the research question *To what extent are multilingualism and IC interconnected in secondary school language learning?* Figure 1 provides an overview of the research design.

Figure 1

An Overview of the Research Design



3.2. Context and participants

This section provides an overview of the research context and introduces the participants of both the quantitative and qualitative stages of the study.

3.2.1. The overall context of the study

The data were collected in lower secondary schools in the western part of Norway, where two standard variations of written Norwegian, Nynorsk and Bokmål, are officially used. To ensure the representativity of the data and to reflect the social and linguistic diversity of the region, schools where selected based on their geographical location and the dominance of Bokmål or Nynorsk. Both rural and urban schools were contacted. Among urban schools, we also aimed to include institutions with students from different social and ethnic backgrounds. Letters of invitation were sent either directly to schools' administrations or to teachers working in these schools. In total, eight schools replied positively to our invitation and participated in the research; data from seven schools were included in the final dataset (will be elaborated on in section 3.3.1). Among them were two schools with dominance of Nynorsk, while Bokmål was used as the dominant variation of Norwegian in the other five schools.

3.2.2. Participants in the quantitative stage of the study: school students

School students involved in the first stage of the project were recruited by school administration and teachers, who were contacted in advance by the leader of the research group. Typically, all eighth graders at each involved lower secondary school took part. However, some students declined the invitation to participate in the study; the refusal rate was 1.7%. The total number of young participants who submitted fully completed questionnaires was 593. There were also partly completed questionnaires, and these were not considered in the subsequent data analysis. Partial completion may have been due to internet connection problems that occurred in some classes. Some students had to repeatedly log in and start filling out the questionnaire from the beginning. Also, some students may have stopped filling out the questionnaire due to a lack of motivation.

All respondents were 13-14 years old. In total, 276 boys and 317 girls took part in the study. Among them, 512 pupils reported having Bokmål and 81 pupils reported having Nynorsk as their first written variety of Norwegian. Most were learners of an L3 at school (85%). Two hundred and ninety-seven learned Spanish (50%), 109 were learners of German (18%), and 99 were learners of French (17%). In total, 522 students (88%) reported having Norwegian as their native language, while 71 students (12%) reported having Norwegian as their non-native language.

3.2.3. Participants in the qualitative stage of the study: teachers

Teachers who took part in the second stage of the project were recruited from the same schools as the students participating in the first stage of the project. During the summer of 2020, I began the search for teacher participants. First, I contacted individuals from schools with whom we were in correspondence in the first stage of the project, and some teachers who were present in classes during data collection with the survey. Most of these school representatives were teachers of subjects other than the Foreign Language subject, so I asked them to forward the information letter to their colleagues teaching foreign languages (L3). Since not all contacts responded to my request, in some cases the information letter was also forwarded to the administration offices. In addition, I used a method of snowball sampling (Cohen et al., 2002) to recruit participants. I asked friends, acquaintances, and colleagues if they knew people working as foreign language (L3) teachers in the relevant lower secondary schools and to spread the word about my research project to those who may know such people. Five teachers contacted me and expressed their desire to contribute to the research. They were teachers of Spanish (n = 3) and French (n = 2). There were no responses from teachers of German at that time, even though a contact was established with one of them through a school administrator. One teacher of German later volunteered, after a personal request was sent by my supervisor and co-author of Book chapter 5, Prof. Åsta Haukås. In total, six educators with different profiles replied positively to my invitation. Table 2 provides an overview of participants' teaching experience, language repertoire, age, and educational background. All teachers were given pseudonyms to guarantee their anonymity.

Table 2

Information about Teachers

Name	Foreign Language subject	School	Age group	Experience of working in school	Experience of teaching foreign languages	Language repertoire[6]
Anne	Spanish	A	25-29	2	2	English, Finnish, Norwegian, Spanish
Jan	Spanish	B	30-34	5	10	English, French, Italian, Norwegian, Polish, Spanish
Ingrid	Spanish	C	55-59	18	17	English, German, French, Norwegian, Spanish
Kari	French	D	50-54	21	21	English, French, Norwegian
Marit	French	E	55-59	22	22	English, French, German, Norwegian
Helene	German	A	30-34	3	3	English, German, Norwegian

It is worth mentioning that the response rate from potential participants and school administrations was significantly lower than it was in the first stage of the project. A possible explanation for this might be the spread of the coronavirus in the region and subsequent changes in education processes. Many schoolteachers had to adjust to distance teaching via online platforms or to new regulations in presential teaching. These regulations included limitations regarding physical contact, maintaining distance between groups of students at schools, strengthening hygiene norms, and paying special attention to risk groups (NDET, 2020). Originally, we planned to interview around eight teachers to ensure the representativity of schools with different backgrounds and the representativity of all three languages taught as foreign languages (L3) at school. However, under these circumstances, the recruitment of six participants was considered

[6] Languages are listed in alphabetical order.

sufficient. Moreover, the diversity of their profiles met our criteria: participants were teachers of the different foreign languages typically studied in lower secondary schools in Norway (Spanish, German, and French), they represented schools with different socio-economic backgrounds and geographical locations around Bergen, one participant represented a school with Nynorsk as a standard variation of Norwegian, and both women and a man took part in the research. Regarding the latter criterion, it should be noted, though, that the sample was not gender balanced, as most participants were women. Nevertheless, this distribution of male and female participants was representative, as female teachers comprise 74% of all teachers in primary and lower secondary schools in Norway (Statistics Norway, 2022a).

3.3. Data collection instruments

3.3.1. The Ungspråk questionnaire

The Ungspråk questionnaire was used as the main instrument for collecting data on the interconnection between multilingualism and open-mindedness in school students. The questionnaire was developed within the research project Ungspråk as an instrument helping to explore students' multilingualism and multilingual identity in interconnection with other factors. The Ungspråk questionnaire consists of four parts, which are described in Article 2. In this section, I present the parts of the questionnaire that are most relevant to the current study and discuss their design in detail.

Stemming from a holistic and minimalist approach (Cenoz, 2013; Fisher et al., 2020; Haukås et al., 2021), we aimed to study students' multilingualism as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon (see section 2.2.1). Consequently, various independent variables were explored to distinguish different forms of multilingualism, including learning additional languages at school—with a particular focus on learning only one or two additional languages—and students' migration background. In the section exploring students' linguistic repertoires and language habits, students were asked if they studied a second additional language at school and whether it was Spanish, German, or French. Students' knowledge of Norwegian and English was assumed, since these languages are compulsory for all students according to the school program in Norway. The same

section allowed participants to clarify which language or languages they considered to be their native or first language(s). Students' migration background was assumed based on students' choice of Norwegian as not being their native language and a different language or languages being chosen as their native/first language. These students could either have moved to Norway during their childhood or been born to parents with immigrant backgrounds.

Students' open-mindedness was explored with 10 Likert scale questions which aimed to reflect the definition of open-mindedness as referring to a person's capacity to be unprejudiced towards others and to be open to new ideas, opinions, and values that are different from one's own (see section 2.3.4). Some statements concern participants' attitudes towards differences in opinions and ideas, differences between people, and diversity within Norwegian society in general. Several statements also explore curiosity and interest in knowing new people and learning new ideas and things (see Table 3 for the full list of statements comprising the construct open-mindedness).

Table 3

Statements Comprising the Construct Open-Mindedness

1.	It would be better if all people in Norway shared the same opinions
2.	There are different ways of being Norwegian
3.	I like to get to know new people
4.	I would rather only be with people I know from before
5.	I would prefer if everyone around me had the same opinions as me
6.	I like that people have different opinions
7.	I like to talk with people whose opinions differ from my own
8.	I like that there are differences between myself and other people
9.	I try to get to know people who are different from me
10.	I am interested in many different things

The statements were developed by the research team of the Ungspråk project. To strengthen the instrument, some statements were adopted, although with certain modifications, from other relevant questionnaires which examine open-mindedness and

other attitudinal aspects associated with IC (for instance, the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire [the MPQ], van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001, and the Intercultural Development Inventory [the IDI], Hammer et al., 2003). For example, "I like to talk with people whose opinions differ from my own" and "I am interested in many different things" were based on the MPQ's "Seek contact with people from different backgrounds" and "Has a broad range of interests," respectively. Some modifications were made in accordance with the theoretical stand of the study and in respect to the respondents' age. The statement "Society would be better off if culturally different groups kept to themselves" from the IDI (Hammer et al., 2003) was transformed into the contextualized and less biased statement, "It would be better if all people in Norway shared the same opinions." Certain modifications were made, specifically aimed to avoid reproducing the problem of cultural differentialism, a theoretical perspective which suggests that people from different ethnic and national backgrounds should be considered essentially and potentially irreconcilably different in their beliefs and values due to their belonging to different cultural traditions (Taguieff, 2001) (see also Article 3 and section 2.3.1 of the present synopsis). In developing the Ungspråk questionnaire, we aimed to adopt a non-essentialist and non-differentialist paradigm with the corresponding assumption that the identities of interlocutors in intercultural encounters are complex and diverse and cannot be reduced to ethnicity, nationality, or culture (see e.g., Dervin, 2010; Dypedahl, 2019; Hoff, 2014). To prevent the reproduction of cultural differentialism in the Ungspråk questionnaire, we decided to exclude the term "culture" from the statements in order to shift the focus to general differences between people, opinions, and views. Consequently, open-mindedness was approached intentionally as a general psychological characteristic, rather than an attribute related to respondents' attitudes towards culturally specific differences. For instance, the statement "I would rather only be with people I know from before" was modified from the statement, "Feels uncomfortable in a different culture" in the MPQ (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001). However, we cannot discount that some respondents could still interpret the statements as referring to cultural rather than general or other forms of differences (e.g., gender, age), even though the term culture was not mentioned.

In addition, based on the literature review (sections 2.3.3.1 and 2.4.3.1), we considered the following factors as related to students' multilingualism and potentially connected to their IC: students' self-identification as multilingual, having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, students' migration background, and experience of living abroad.

Students' self-identification as multilingual in the Ungspråk questionnaire was explored with the question "Are you multilingual?" First, students were asked to give their own definition of a multilingual person, and then to specify if they considered themselves multilingual by choosing from the "yes," "no," and "not sure" options. Answers with the two latter options were merged into one category in the subsequent analysis to distinguish students who explicitly identified themselves as multilingual ("yes" answers) and those who did not ("no" and "not sure" answers). Students' friendships with peers whose home languages were other than Norwegian and who had experience of living abroad were explored with the questions "Do any of your friends speak a language other than Norwegian with their family?" and "Have you lived in countries other than Norway?"

At all stages of the questionnaire development, validity and reliability were considered as integral parts of the development process. To ensure content validity of the questionnaire, the exploration of central concepts was based on the theoretical standpoints underpinning the Ungspråk project (see Chapter 2 and earlier in this section). The content and face validity of the questionnaire were ensured through the involvement of external experts in the process of developing the questionnaire. Since the initial version of the Ungspråk was developed in English, which is the working language of our international research group, translation into Norwegian was considered to be a crucial, though often neglected (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2009), stage of the questionnaire's development and validation. Four colleagues working in language education research were involved in translating the questionnaire. In addition, the complete version of the questionnaire and its theoretical underpinnings were discussed with our colleagues from the MEITS project (see section 1.3 for details about the MEITS project). Moreover, face validity was ensured by the feedback from four language teachers with extensive experience working with our target group of secondary school

students. Finally, to ensure that the Ungspråk questionnaire is clear to 13-14-year-old adolescents, we used a think-aloud protocol with a lower secondary school student who was asked to provide reasons for his responses when answering the questionnaire.

To ensure construct validity and reliability of the questionnaire, we performed exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses as interconnected procedures (Gerbing & Hamilton, 1996). The questionnaire was piloted twice in two schools of the same size and from similar socio-economic areas. One hundred and eighteen students from one school took part in the first pilot and 116 students from the other school in the second pilot. The statistical procedures were performed in software SPSS version 25. After the first pilot, we ran an exploratory factor analysis of 26 statements examining open-mindedness and two other constructs from Section C of the questionnaire.[7] The results of the exploratory factor analysis showed seven constructs with some cross-loadings. However, most statements loaded on the three constructs corresponding to the constructs which the questionnaire section aimed to explore. Statements with low loadings (< 0.30) were deleted, and after that, a confirmatory factor analysis using Cronbach's alpha was performed to check whether the statements within each construct were internally consistent. The Cronbach alpha index for the construct open-mindedness was 0.65, and 0.73 and 0.65 for beliefs about multilingualism and future multilingual self, respectively. The questionnaire statements that showed a poor correlation (< 0.50) within the constructs were reformulated or removed, and new ones were added. The version of the questionnaire which was further used in the second pilot contained 28 statements, including 11 statements exploring students' open-mindedness.

After the second pilot, we repeated the confirmatory factor analysis for each construct using new data. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for open-mindedness was 0.71. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for beliefs about multilingualism and future multilingual self were 0.65 and 0.75, respectively. The result for open-mindedness showed stronger correlation between the statements compared with the previous version of the questionnaire. In addition, SPSS suggested that deleting Statement 11 ("I have

[7] Section C of the Ungspråk questionnaire explores three constructs: students' open-mindedness, beliefs about multilingualism and future multilingual self, based on Likert scale questions. See Article 2 for details on each construct and Haukås et al. (2022) for the analysis of the link between students' beliefs about multilingualism and other factors.

few hobbies") would increase the coefficient. After deleting this statement, the final Cronbach alpha of the revised, 10-item scale for open-mindedness was 0.75. After similar considerations, two statements were eliminated from the construct beliefs about multilingualism, resulting in an increase in Cronbach's alpha coefficient from 0.65 to 0.72. No changes were made for the construct future multilingual self. Since the main changes concerned removing particular items rather than changing their wording, it was decided to include the data from the second pilot into the final dataset.

3.3.2. Interviews with teachers

As my research was focused on teachers' beliefs, I was interested in giving teachers an opportunity to explore their own understandings and possible ways of interpreting the issues under investigation. Consequently, I opted for a semi-structured interview as my method of data collection. This type of interview implies that the interviewer relies on a set of questions or topics that allow for flexibility in digressing and probing based on interactions during the interview, rather that of a set of preestablished and scheduled questions (Blee & Taylor, 2002). Moreover, semi-structured interviews allow interviewers to consider interviewees as *informants* contributing to the dialogue, rather than as *respondents* following the researcher's agenda (Powney & Watts, 2018). This "interviewee-as-an-informant" approach helps to uncover issues and topics that are relevant to the research question but which have not been mentioned in the researcher's interview guide.

The interview guide was developed jointly with Prof. Åsta Haukås and was also reviewed by an external expert in intercultural education, Magne Dypedahl (University of South-Eastern Norway). The involvement of several scholars in the process of developing the guide aimed to ensure the validity[8] of the research instrument. The final version of the guide consisted of 20 questions, including four opening and one closing question (see Book chapter 5 for details). Opening questions concerned participants'

[8] At the qualitative stage of the study, *validity* was considered as confidence in research results, whereas *reliability* was referred to as a degree of accuracy—that is, as the correspondence between what researchers record as data and what actually occurs in the settings that are being investigated (Cohen et al., 2002; Golafshani, 2015).

teaching experience and beliefs about foreign language learning in general. They were mainly used, as scholars (Cohen et al., 2002) have suggested, to put interviewees at ease and to allow them to remain in their comfort zone while discussing complex theoretical concepts. The guide was piloted once with the first informant. Since no additional questions or significant misunderstandings occurred during the pilot, the data from this teacher were included in the analyzed dataset.

The transcribed material from six digitally recorded interviews—with an approximate duration of 45 minutes each—consisted of 27,500 words. The interviews were transcribed in full. For the sake of accuracy, I transcribed the interviews myself immediately after data collection. This allowed me to ensure that the further analyzed data corresponded to the data collected during interviews. For instance, when some words in a recording were hard to hear, I could rely on my notes and memory. Verbatim transcription was chosen as the transcription method. This method refers to the word-for-word recording of interview data, where the written text is an exact reproduction of the audio recording (Poland, 1995). However, when appropriate, an intelligent (McMullin, 2021) or naturalized (Bucholtz, 2000) style of transcription was used, which entails the modification of conversation filler such as the overuse of "uh-ms," obvious grammatical errors, and inarticulate phrases. Longer pauses, laughter, finger-snaps, and other elements of speech indicating participants' emotions were also noted, as they enhance further understanding of the data and the dynamics of interactions between the interviewer and interviewee (MacLean et al., 2004). In further analysis, this revealed which topics participants hesitated to talk about or about which they felt uncertain in their interpretations.

3.4. Data collection procedures

3.4.1. Procedures of the quantitative data collection

The quantitative data from students were collected during school visits from autumn 2018 to spring 2019, and these visits were arranged in agreement with the schools' administrations. Each school appointed a contact person with whom we discussed details of our visits: date, time, number of students in a class, etc. Given the advantages of online surveys, we chose to use a digital version of the Ungspråk

questionnaire. It was developed on the Internet platform SurveyXact, to which access was provided by the University of Bergen. In Norway, as all pupils have laptops for use in the classroom, data collection mainly depended on the quality of the internet connection. Since technical problems are always a potential risk, some paper-based versions of the questionnaire were prepared for each group. However, despite some short technical disruptions at a few sessions, there was no need to use the paper-based copies of the questionnaire. Respondents accessed the questionnaire using a short link and a password, which were printed out in advance and distributed in the classroom. The access information was also written on the board.

Each data collection session started with a brief introduction of the researchers and the project. Since members of the Ungspråk project have diverse linguistic and national backgrounds, the researchers presented themselves in Norwegian and English. The information given reflected the one provided in the information letter, and paper copies were distributed to the students. The information letter was read aloud by one of the researchers or a schoolteacher present in the class. To ensure that all students understood the information, the letter was read in Norwegian and an English version of the letter was provided to students if they preferred to have one. The introductory part usually took around 10 minutes, at the end of which students could ask questions. It is also worth mentioning that we specifically articulated that the current questionnaire was not a test. We emphasized that there were no right or wrong answers, and that we were interested in students' views and opinions. Students were also informed that they had the right to decline to take part in the research. Students that chose not to participate were given an assignment by a teacher responsible for the class.

As a rule, two or three members of the research group were present at each session of data collection. In some cases, when there were three parallel sessions in the same school, only one researcher was present in a class. However, to ensure consistency, all researchers followed the same protocol. Consequently, the procedures and the information presented to students were the same in each class.

After accessing the questionnaire via the provided link, students started filling out the questionnaire. Typically, there were no problems with logging in. In a few cases, students needed help due to misspelling the link or the password. There were also a few

cases involving brief technical problems with the internet. These were fixed after a short time, so students could log in successfully and start answering the questions. The average time to fill in the questionnaire was around 20-25 minutes, as was stated in the information letter. However, in a few cases students took less than 15 minutes. They were given a task provided by a teacher, as were all students who completed the questionnaire. Some students, on the other hand, needed more time. The longest reply time was 40 minutes. If students needed help with understanding the tasks of the survey, their questions were addressed by researchers or a teacher. There were only two cases when students needed special assistance to fill out the questionnaire. In these cases, help was provided by an assistant usually working with the student in class.

3.4.2. Procedures of the qualitative data collection

The qualitative data were collected in autumn 2020. Prior to the interviews, volunteer teachers received a link to a short background questionnaire, which also included detailed information about the research project and a consent form (Appendix 5). The background questionnaire consisted of questions about teachers' gender, age, working experience, education, linguistic repertoire, and contact information. This information was later used to select participants for interviews and to ensure the representation of professionals with different backgrounds. The questionnaire was administrated online via the SurveyXact program.

Scholars (Oppenheim, 2005; Silverman, 2014) have argued that the validity and reliability of a qualitative study depend on interviewees' understanding the questions in the same way. To provide for this, interviews were carried out by the same researcher, who, with reference to the interview guide, used approximately the same sequence of questions and wording in each interview. Some adjustments to the order of questions were made in particular cases to keep the conversations flowing naturally. The informants could choose between digital and presential participation. The online interviews were conducted using the Zoom software provided by the University of Bergen. One teacher was interviewed at the school, while the others chose an online alternative.

The interviews were recorded with the interviewees' permission. In the case of the presential interview, the recording was made with a recording device provided by the Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Bergen, the institution responsible for the project. In the case of the online interviews, the conversations were audio recorded in the Zoom program and saved directly to the university server. Using audio recordings as a method has benefits for the analysis. It allowed us to capture the complete interviews, which was important for ensuring the accuracy of the analyzed data and thus the validity and reliability of the study. To supplement the audio recordings, I decided to take notes. According to Atkins and Wallace (2012), this method helps the interviewer identify and emphasize key points as the interview proceeds. Besides this advantage, note-taking also helped me to remember some ideas, inferences, and cross-references between interviews, which occurred during the data collection and were further used in the analysis.

3.5. Data analysis procedures

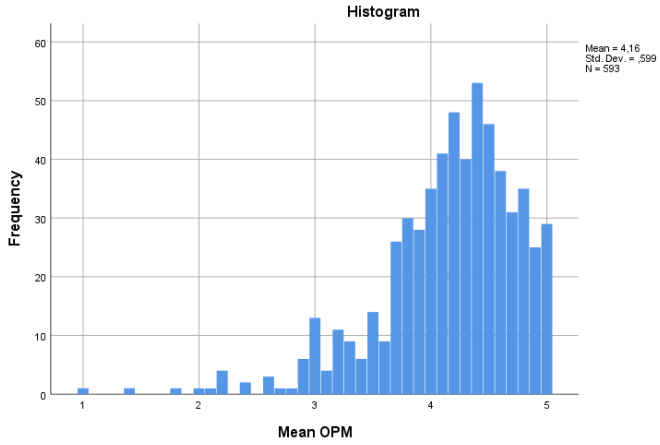
3.5.1. Statistical procedures

The data obtained with the Ungspråk questionnaire were analyzed with SPSS version 25. The main objective of the analysis was to explore the possible relationships between students' open-mindedness and a number of variables related to their multilingualism. Among the latter, the following variables were considered: learning only one additional language (English) or two additional languages (English and Spanish/German/French) at school, self-identification as multilingual, having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, students' migration background, and experience living abroad. Since open-mindedness was explored with a set of Likert scale questions, it was approached as a continuous variable, meaning that the variable can take on any value between the lowest and highest points of measurement (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004). Other variables mentioned above were approached as dichotomous, meaning that they take on one of only two possible values when measured (Lewis-Beck et al., 2004).

For the analysis of relationships between the variables, we chose to use independent samples *t*-tests, which help determine if there is a statistically significant difference between two groups. It is worth mentioning that the assumption of normality of distribution for the variable "open-mindedness" was first tested both visually, by means of histogram, and quantitatively, with a Shapiro-Wilk test. The histogram showed that the distribution for this numerical variable was negatively skewed (see Figure 2), and the Shapiro-Wilk test showed that the distribution violated normality ($W(593) = 0.917$, $p < 0.01$).

Figure 2

The Distribution of the Variable "Open-Mindedness"



However, scholars (e.g., Fagerland, 2012; Lewis-Beck et al., 2004; Piovesana & Senior, 2018) suggest that the *t*-test of equality of means in two independent samples is relatively robust to violations of assumptions of variance homogeneity and distribution normality. Moreover, scholars argue that in studies with large data samples, which can be considered any study with a sample size greater than 85 (Piovesana & Senior, 2018), or even 50 (Crawford & Howell, 1998), *t*-tests "can and should be used even for heavily skewed data" instead of, for example, the non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney test (Fagerland, 2012). Since the sample size of the current study was 593, these arguments

confirmed the choice of using t-tests, regardless of violations of variance homogeneity and normality of distribution. An alpha level of 0.05 was used to interpret the tests results. The results were considered significant if the *p* value was less than 0.05.

In addition, an effect size of the difference between two groups (Cohen's *d*) was calculated in each case. This was done to understand the importance of the *t*-test results—that is, the significance of the difference between two means—and to allow for comparisons between studies. Since Cohen's *d* is not available in SPSS version 25, we used an online calculator. The following criteria were applied to interpret the results: a *d* value of 0.2 was considered a small effect size, 0.4 as medium, and 0.6 as large (Cumming & Calin-Jageman, 2017).

3.5.2. Qualitative content analysis

The method of qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the data collected through interviews (Book chapter 5). This method refers to "the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). Both investigators analyzed the data working in sequence, which aimed to ensure the validity and reliability of the analyzing process. First, one interview was analyzed manually following the guidelines suggested by Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017). This helped to identify preliminary themes and categories, which were developed inductively. After that, the software NVivo 12 Pro was used for analysis of the data. The preliminary themes and categories which emerged from the analysis of the first interview were either confirmed by similar meaning units[9] found in other interviews or were merged into new ones. New themes and categories arose as well. In addition, peer examination of final codes and categories was applied to strengthen the validity and reliability of the study. Book

[9] Here and in Book chapter 5, I use terms suggested by Erlingsson and Brysiewicz (2017). The scholars distinguish meaning units, codes, categories, and themes, considering these terms as reflecting increasing levels of abstraction in the qualitative content analysis, where a *meaning unit* refers to a smaller part of the text expressing an idea; a *code* refers to a label or a name which most exactly describes this idea; a *category* is formed by a group of codes related to each other through their content or context; and a *theme* can be considered an expression of an underlying meaning found in several categories.

chapter 5 discusses in detail all the steps of the analytical process, providing illustrative examples of the data analysis (see Book chapter 5 for details).

The final list of themes and categories included those which revealed teachers' understandings of multilingualism, IC, and the interconnection between these two elements. Certain categories and topics were not included in the final interpretation of the data since they were outside the scope of the research question.

3.6. Ethical issues

3.6.1. Information letters and participants' consent

To ensure that the study meets ethical requirements, the *Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management* (Science Europe, 2018) provided by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD) was followed at all stages of the research project. Two applications with relevant documentation were submitted to NSD for approval. The first application concerned the quantitative stage of the project and was prepared by the research team of the Ungspråk project. It included a description of the project with information on how the data would be collected and stored, a copy of the Ungspråk questionnaire, and the information letter to students.

As the first stage of the project engaged underage participants who were thirteen-fourteen years old, we were especially concerned about obtaining all required consents to guarantee the children's protection. We were aware that in the case of collecting personal data (e.g., name, date of birth) we would also need to obtain consent from the children's parents/carers due to the participants' minor age. However, neither the Ungspråk questionnaire nor our research design implied the collection of such data. Consequently, following the ethical requirements, we needed only students' consent to participate in the project. In addition, we had an obligation to inform parents/carers about the project and their children's participation in it, so that parents/carers had an opportunity to withdraw their children from participation in the study. To obtain students' consent and to inform parents, we asked schools to send the information letter (Appendices 3 and 4) to grade eight students and their parents. The letter invited students to take part in the Ungspråk project and provided information about research and participants' rights. The letter informed them that all collected data would be

anonymized and that only three researchers engaged in the project would have access to the data. It emphasized that participation in the project was voluntary and that there would be no consequences for those who decided to withdraw. The letter was sent in advance so that students and their parents could discuss participation in the project. None of the parents contacted the research team and, to the best of our knowledge, objected in any way to their children's participation in the study. In addition, a short version of the information letter was read to each class prior to data collection to ensure that the students were aware of their rights. Following these steps, we aimed to ensure that consent to participate in the study was based on children's own decision. However, we were aware that some students might feel pressured to fill out the questionnaire if their peers chose to do so or if a teacher was present in the class. However, the overall withdrawal rate of 1.7% (relatively evenly distributed across participating schools and classes) indicates that some students chose not to participate in the study, which shows that they understood and were free to exercise their rights.

The second application to NSD described the qualitative stage of the present PhD project and, in addition to the project description and the information letter to teachers, included a copy of a short background questionnaire collecting participants' personal data (e.g., gender, age, years of working in school) and the interview guide. The background questionnaire also included a consent form which participants were to sign electronically before providing personal information. The form also asked teachers to provide consent to participate in interviews (see Appendix 5).

The presentation of our research project in the information letters was considered at both stages. In sections 2.2.1 and 2.3.1 of the present synopsis, it was argued that the term *multilingual* in the Norwegian context may have a strong association with migration background. Consequently, if the term "multilingualism" or "flerspråklighet" was mentioned in the information letters, it was likely that our participants, both students and teachers, would understand the purpose of the project as concerning exclusively students with immigrant backgrounds. This understanding would contradict the definition of multilingualism proposed in the project (see section 2.2.1 and Article 1) and could consequently influence the data. To avoid potential ambiguity in participants' interpretations, we decided to omit the term multilingualism in all documents sent to

participants prior to data collection. Being aware that such an omission could be considered a form of deception (Christians, 2013), we decided to describe the project as studying "languages pupils in lower secondary school (ungdomsskolen) know and use, and what they think about languages and language learning in general." By including this general description, we sought to reflect our broad approach to multilingualism as referring to all languages that students may know and learn in and outside school, while at the same time avoiding the use of a term that could be misleading in the Norwegian context.

3.6.2. Privacy and confidentiality

Since the Ungspråk project was initially planned as a longitudinal study (see section 1.3), we had to consider the issue of how to maintain the confidentiality of our young participants while at the same time linking the data from the planned pre- and post-surveys (see Article 1 for details). To anonymize students, we opted to use the method of self-generated identification codes (see, for example, Audette et al., 2020, for further information). This method generates identification codes based on participants' answers to several personally salient questions (for example, "first letter of your own name," "your birth month"). The answers are further combined in a predetermined order to create a unique code. The application of self-generated identification codes helped obviate the need to collect personal data (e.g., students' names, date of birth, school, class) and ensured the confidentiality of our young participants.

Following data protection requirements, the quantitative data were collected with SurveyXact, a secure software program provided by the University of Bergen. Only three researchers engaged in the Ungspråk project had access to the dataset. During the first stage of the data analysis, we also received support from professional statisticians who work as internal employees at the University of Bergen and who are thus aware of university research ethics guidelines.

To ensure the confidentiality of the teachers who took part in the qualitative study, the background questionnaire was also created and the relevant data collected through the SurveyXact software. The interviews were conducted through the Zoom program, provided by the University of Bergen. In the case of presential data collection, which

took place in a school, I used a recording device provided by the university. After the data collection, the recordings were transmitted to and saved on the university's online server and deleted from the recording device. To ensure teachers' confidentiality in subsequent data analysis and publication, we used pseudonyms instead of teachers' real names. According to the *Practical Guide to the International Alignment of Research Data Management* (Science Europe, 2018), the pseudonymization of personal data is reversible. Consequently, we also aimed to anonymize the data. In the subsequent process of transcribing, all information that could indicate the participants' identity was omitted (e.g., names of people and places, school name, participants' age, gender). At the analysis stage, only two researchers involved in the study had access to the data. Following the data protection requirements, the recordings, transcriptions, and all personal data were deleted after completion of the study.

3.6.3. The use of language in multilingual settings

Scholars (Schembri & Jašić, 2022) argue that when conducting research in multilingual situations, researchers can face specific ethical challenges related to their choice of language. As language is a power-based construct (Fairclough, 2013), the use of participants' native or dominant language(s) can have an empowering effect. However, the use of translation always takes time. Moreover, translation into languages in which researchers are not proficient may result in the misrepresentation or "deculturalization" of data (Schembri & Jašić, 2022). In recent years, due to its status as a lingua franca, English has been increasingly used as a medium of research. Nevertheless, conducting research in English may be discouraging and disempowering for participants who lack proficiency or confidence in English. This carries risks of compromising the quality of collected data and, consequently, the research in general.

At the quantitative stage of this study, the dilemma of language choice concerned the following issues: Which language(s) shall be used in information letters that will be read by students and their parents? In which language(s) shall the Ungspråk questionnaire be available to young participants? We were aware that providing the information letter and the questionnaire in various languages that are present in

Norwegian schools would be advantageous and empowering to students who lack proficiency in Norwegian and English. However, at the same time our language capacities were limited to languages known by members of the research group, including but not limited to Norwegian, English, Portuguese, German, French, Spanish, Russian, and Italian. Although this list of languages may seem ample for a group of three people, it does not include the languages of the many minority groups in Norway, such as Polish, Arabic, and Swahili. Facing the dilemma of language choice, we finally decided to opt for Norwegian and English as the languages of our quantitative study. The use of English aimed to accommodate students and parents with migration backgrounds whose knowledge of Norwegian may be limited—for example, those who have only recently moved to Norway and felt more confident to use English. The final dataset showed that only 6% of students used English to fill out the questionnaire. However, we were aware that for some students neither Norwegian nor English would be a preferable choice, and that they might therefore feel disempowered, unprivileged, and limited in self-expression. To meet this ethical concern, we decided that researchers and teachers should be present during the data collection to help students if they had problems understanding any questions. It should also be noted that the use of only two languages in the information letters could impact parents' decision regarding their children's withdrawal from the study. Some parents might misunderstand the information, while others could simply prefer to avoid communication in a non-dominant language. As none of parents contacted us during the project, we cannot know, if any of them had problems understanding the information.

Similar ethical concerns were considered at the qualitative stage of the project. Scholars (Kvale, 2006; Limerick et al., 1996; Schembri & Jašić, 2022) have argued that, especially in interview-based research, the power belongs to the interviewers, as they choose the topic, ask the questions, and set and typically lead conversations. As language use is intertwined with power play, the choice of the medium of communication for interviews can either counterbalance or strengthen the asymmetry of power between an interviewer and an informant.

As a foreigner conducting research in Norwegian schools, I was aware of my limitations in Norwegian when planning interviews with teachers. Since our participants

were teachers of foreign languages, I assumed that they had a good knowledge of English as well. Consequently, I opted for English as the medium of communication and data collection in both the short background questionnaire and in the interviews. However, I was aware that the use of any language that is non-native or dominant to informants can disempower participants and impede more accurate and fuller self-expression. To counterbalance the use of English as the medium of data collection, I followed the recommendations of scholars (e.g., Holmes, 2016) who encourage researchers to question monolingual practices and promote a multilingual approach, which implies the flexibility and capacity to shift between languages. To reflect this approach in the study and to empower informants, I decided to provide the interviewees with the option of using multiple languages when and if it was convenient for them. This was emphasized in the information letter—that participants should feel free "to elaborate something in Norwegian or French" if they preferred. I suggested these languages as an alternative to English as they constitute my own linguistic repertoire. Further, at the beginning of the interviews, I encouraged teachers to use other languages to elaborate their thoughts and for the sake of clarity explained why Norwegian and French were particularly emphasized in the letter. Finally, all interviews were conducted in English. However, teachers tended to use some words and sometimes sentences in their other dominant languages, especially when discussing complex concepts or ideas, or expressing ideas and thoughts. For instance, at one point one interviewee used Norwegian (L1 to the informant) to elaborate a thought:

> I would like to have more opinions and more research on how we can have language learning and language teaching [to be] connected to other subjects in school—to English, to Norwegian, to social studies. How can we do the language learning more and more... I cannot find the word... *mer aktuelt. Også i forbindelse med tverrfaglige temaer som Bærekraftig utvikling som ikkje er et tverrfaglig tema i språklæring, men det er bare Demokrati og medborgerskap som er det tverrfaglige temaet [i fremmedspråk]. Men jeg*

synes at vi må ta alle tverrfaglige temaene i språklæring.[10] So that every topic in Democracy and The Sustainable Lifestyle and Health—how you can live your life and how health... and such—should be a part of every subject. So, the connection between different subjects and what it looks like in practice in school. And then work together with other language teachers. (from the interview with Helene).

I had the impression that this shift to a dominant language empowered the interviewee and helped clarify a new idea, as further explanation in English was then provided. This observation parallels scholars' (Chen, 2011) suggestion that informants who use their dominant language (Norwegian in this case) with an interviewer who is not equally proficient in this language seek to be understood and feel empowered, and thus tend to provide richer data. Moreover, the use of some words and expressions in French, which was a common language for teachers of French and the interviewer, helped facilitate communication and establish a sort of connection based on shared language knowledge. I also noticed that when using French, teachers felt proud, and thus empowered (see Koulouriotis, 2011, for similar conclusions).

[10] Translation from Norwegian to English: *"... more relevant. Also, in connection with interdisciplinary topics such as Sustainable Development, which is not an interdisciplinary topic in language learning, but only Democracy and Citizenship is the interdisciplinary topic [in Foreign Language subject]. But I think that we must take all the interdisciplinary topics in language learning."*

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

The PhD project aimed to answer the following research questions:

To what extent are multilingualism and IC interconnected in secondary school language learning? How can this interconnection be explored in this specific context?

To answer these research questions, five specific objectives were defined and addressed in five publications composing the present PhD thesis (see Table 1 in section 1.3). The present chapter sums up the main findings of these five publications and discusses theoretical, methodological and empirical contributions. It also provides discussion on overarching implications of the PhD study for language learning education, policy making and teacher training.

4.1. Summary of the publications and main findings

Article 1: Haukås, Å., Storto, A., & Tiurikova, I. (2021). The Ungspråk project: Researching multilingualism and multilingual identity in lower secondary schools. *Globe: A Journal of Language, Culture and Communication*, *12*, 83-98.

Discussing how the empirical investigation of the link between multilingualism and IC can be meaningfully carried out in the context of language learning in secondary schools (Objective 1), Article 1 starts with a conceptualization of the key concepts. It shows that both multilingualism and IC are complex and multifaceted phenomena which can be defined and explored in different ways. Given this complexity, the article suggests using a mixed methods approach and investigating the link from two complementary perspectives. The first perspective implies exploring the link in young language learners and highlights the need to develop a tool that allows studying school students' multilingualism as a multifaceted phenomenon. Furthermore, the article suggests exploring the link from teachers' perspective as both multilingualism and IC have been presented as core elements of language education in the Curriculum for Foreign Languages (L3) (NDET, 2019a). Arguing that teachers' views are crucial for

implementing the elements and the link between them in practice, the article justifies the need for such exploration in language education research.

Article 2: Haukås, Å., Storto, A., & Tiurikova, I. (2021). Developing and validating a questionnaire on young learners' multilingualism and multilingual identity. *The Language Learning Journal*, 1-16.

Article 2 discusses the development and validation of the Ungspråk questionnaire, an electronic quantitative questionnaire designed specifically for exploring students' multilingualism as a multifaceted phenomenon in the context of language education in Norwegian secondary schools (Objective 2). Besides multilingualism, the questionnaire explores many other aspects, including students' open-mindedness. This allows for the investigation of a potential link between multilingualism and IC in school students. Considering validation as an integral component of all stages in the process of the questionnaire development, the article presents quantitative and qualitative procedures adopted to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire (e.g., feedback from the external experts, translation, think-loud protocol, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses). The results of these procedures provided a strong basis for concluding that the Ungspråk questionnaire is a reliable tool to explore students' multilingualism in the school context. In addition, the article addresses other issues related to the questionnaire's development, such as designing a questionnaire for young people and creating and using an electronic version of the tool.

Article 3: Tiurikova, I. (2021). Researching intercultural competence in language learners: Gaps between theory and methodology. *Intercultural Communication Education, 4*(2), 122-136.

Article 3 aimed to provide an analysis of the newly developed Ungspråk questionnaire and other quantitative questionnaires examining IC and related concepts in language learners (Objective 3). More specifically, the article explores how and to what extent the problem of cultural differentialism (see sections 2.3.1 and 3.3.1 for details) has been addressed in five quantitative questionnaires (see Article 3 for details).

The article reveals that, despite being broadly criticized in theories of language education research (e.g., Dervin, 2016; Holliday, 2010), cultural essentialism and differentialism persist in quantitative research methodology. However, the extent to which the use of a questionnaire can reproduce this problematic standpoint in empirical research depends on how the notions of culture, identity, differences, and similarities are presented in the questionnaire statements and whether these notions reflect essentialist or non-essentialist perspectives. The article reaches the important conclusion that the use of questionnaires whose statements do not reflect the presumed theoretical framework, or which imply ambiguous interpretations of key concepts, can compromise the data and lead to unreliable results. In addition, the use of such a questionnaire may lead to fostering stereotypes and prejudices among respondents.

Article 4: Tiurikova, I., Haukås, Å., & Storto, A. (2021). The link between multilingualism, language learning and open-mindedness in secondary school students in Norway. *Nordic Journal of Language Teaching and Learning, 9*(2), 1-24.

Article 4 examined to what extent open-mindedness, considered as a key element of students' IC in language learning, can be linked to various factors related to students' multilingualism (Objective 4). Among the factors significantly connected to this psychological trait, we found: having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, learning an L3 rather than only an L2 (English) at school, and students' self-identification as multilingual. Additional analysis of the effect size calculated with Cohen's *d* indicated that while the two later factors had a moderate connection to the examined psychological trait, the factor having friends with home languages other than Norwegian was strongly connected. At the same time, no link was found between open-mindedness and students' migration background and experience living abroad.

Book chapter 5: Tiurikova, I., & Haukås, Å. (2022). Multilingualism, intercultural competence, identity, and their intersection: Foreign language teachers' perspectives. In R. Fielding (Ed.), *Multilingualism, identity and interculturality in education: International perspectives*. Springer.

Book chapter 5 explored how teachers of foreign languages in secondary schools understand multilingualism and IC and to what extent they see these elements as interconnected in their subject (Objective 5). Drawing on the data collected through interviews with six foreign language teachers, the study revealed a diversity of participants' views on both concepts. Teachers defined multilingualism as the knowledge of several languages; however, some participants additionally connected the concept to cultural knowledge, social privileges, or migration background. Despite some differences in interpretations, all teachers agreed with the Norwegian Curriculum for Foreign Languages (NDET, 2019a), suggesting that "*all students are already multilingual"* (p. 3) when they start learning an L3. While all teachers associated IC with the cultural knowledge of social norms, traditions, and history of L3-speaking countries, the main difference in their views was in other aspects that informants linked to the concept, such as differences, similarities, identity, and how these concepts were interpreted. The interviews revealed that most practitioners support the non-essentialist theoretical approach to IC; however, essentialist and differentialist views persist to some extent. Teachers' views on the link between multilingualism and IC in language learning were significantly determined by teachers understandings of the elements as separate phenomena. While some participants associated multilingualism and IC within the knowledge of linguistic and cultural *differences* across national contexts, others shared the belief that both elements aim to promote students' understanding of social and linguistic diversity *across* and *within* national borders. Some teachers with the latter views also suggested that multilingualism and IC are connected to the identity dimension and the development of students' understanding of themselves and others. Students' reflection on the complexity of their own linguistic and cultural identities and the identities of others was considered the main interconnecting factor by this group.

4.2. Discussion and research contributions

4.2.1. Theoretical and methodological contributions

Addressing the research question *How can the interconnection between multilingualism and IC be explored in the context of language learning in secondary schools?,* the present PhD thesis suggested several theoretical and methodological

contributions for language education research. Article 1 suggested how different research perspectives can be combined to explore the interconnection between multilingualism and IC in the context of language education in secondary schools and how both concepts can be conceptualized in such an investigation. Article 2 introduced the Ungspråk questionnaire, an electronic quantitative tool developed specifically to examine young language learners' multilingualism in its connection to various factors. Through a critical overview of five quantitative questionnaires exploring language learners' IC, Article 3 revealed how and to what extent the theoretically problematic issue of cultural differentialism has been addressed in these methodological instruments. The section discusses these contributions in detail.

Article 1: Conceptualizing multilingualism and suggesting ways to explore its link to intercultural competence in the context of language education in secondary schools

Article 1 suggested several theoretical and methodological contributions to the field of language education research. First, it emphasized the importance of conceptualizing multilingualism as a multifaceted, rather than a homogeneous, phenomenon in the context of secondary schools and argued that such a perspective is highly relevant to the Norwegian context, where students have diverse linguistic repertoires (see Article 1 for details). The overview of previous studies (see section 2.2.3.2), however, showed that language education research in the Norwegian context has focused mainly on minority students' multilingualism associated with migration background (e.g., Iversen, 2017; Krulatz & Dahl, 2016). Other forms, such as multilingualism related to learning additional languages at school, knowledge of regional dialects, or receptive multilingualism, have not been equally represented in previous research. To shift to a broader conceptualization of multilingualism, the article suggests applying a minimalist and holistic approach to multilingualism (Cenoz, 2013; Fisher et al., 2020; Haukås et al., 2021), according to which all students in Norwegian schools can be considered multilingual (see section 2.2). Recent empirical research indicates that this perspective on multilingualism reflects students' own self-perceptions. Preliminary findings of the Ungspråk project presented in Haukås (2022)

showed that most school students (67%) in Norway consider themselves as multilingual and include various forms of language knowledge in the notion of multilingualism. Consequently, the article argues for the need to reconsider the concept of multilingualism in future research and apply a more complex and comprehensive approach to school students' multilingualism, encompassing different forms of language knowledge in the school context.

Second, suggesting the exploration of students' IC through the concept of open-mindedness (see section 2.3.4 for details), the article aimed to introduce a psychological perspective in the methodology of language education research in Norway. Open-mindedness and other personality traits have previously been explored in relation to students' multilingualism and language learning mainly in studies in intercultural psychology and applied linguistics with focus on such countries as Italy (Gross & Dewaele, 2018), Israel (Dewaele & Stavans, 2014), and the UK (Dewaele & van Oudenhoven, 2009). The psychological perspective has also been previously applied in educational research in Norway (e.g., Solhaug and Kristensen, 2020, explored upper secondary students' IC as associated with intercultural empathy, among other factors). However, to the best of my knowledge, no studies have yet examined students' IC through open-mindedness or other personality traits in language education research in the context of secondary schools in Norway. The use of the psychological perspective sought to ensure that the results of the present study are comparable with other national contexts. However, it should be noted that the focus on open-mindedness also created certain limitations, which will be discussed in the relevant section.

Article 2: Introducing the Ungspråk questionnaire

Continuing the methodological discussion raised in Article 1, Article 2 presents the development of the Ungspråk questionnaire, a new quantitative questionnaire that was developed specifically to explore school students' multilingualism as a complex phenomenon. Based on the holistic approach to multilingualism (Cenoz, 2013; Haukås et al., 2021), the questionnaire allows for the examination of students' multilingualism in relation to learning additional languages at school, migration background, knowledge

of standard variations of Norwegian and dialects, and other factors.[11] Furthermore, the questionnaire explores students' perspectives on their own multilingualism, and consequently contributes to research on multilingual identity in language education (e.g., Fielding, 2021; Fisher et al., 2020).

Among other aspects, the Ungspråk questionnaire enables an exploration of the link between students' multilingualism and intercultural attitudes. As mentioned in section 1.1, quantitative tools exploring this link are quite rare, and most available questionnaires examine the concepts separately. For example, the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer et al., 2003) focus on a person's IC and related concept. Calafato's (2021) Multiteach centers on the concept of multilingualism and investigates various aspects that constitute multilingualism and the multilingual identity of language teachers. Other questionnaires approach the elements as intertwined parts of the same unidimensional construct. For example, following the CEFR (Council of Europe, 2001, 2018, 2020), the Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence Scale (Galante, 2022) measures the multilingual and intercultural components as one single variable. Contrary to this approach, the Ungspråk allows for separation of the multilingual and intercultural dimensions; consequently, the questionnaire can be used in studies that examine students' multilingualism and open-mindedness as distinct elements. The questionnaire explores various factors, such as students' migration background, experience living abroad, gender, school grades, and parents' education, which can be examined in relation to students' multilingualism or open-mindedness, explored separately.

Besides the advantages related to the questionnaire design, there are also several opportunities regarding application of the Ungspråk questionnaire. The present study and the parallel PhD project by Storto (2023) suggest that the tool can be used effectively in further research that involves large samples of school students. Making the content and design of the questionnaire easy to understand, so that young learners can work through it without assistance, was a priority of the Ungspråk research team. Moreover,

[11] A comprehensive overview of students' multilingualism in Norwegian schools based on the data collected through the Ungspråk questionnaire is presented in Storto, Haukås, and Tiurikova (2023).

the choice of an electronic rather than paper-based form of the questionnaire aimed to facilitate its use in the present study and in future studies. In addition, the Ungspråk questionnaire can be used in longitudinal studies. Applied at time intervals, it can help to reveal changes in students' open-mindedness and multilingualism, and can thus illuminate certain trends and developments. Last but not least, the Ungspråk questionnaire can be used in language classrooms to increase teachers' awareness of languages present in the class and to enhance students' awareness of their linguistic repertoires and multilingual identities (will be elaborated upon in section 4.3).

Article 3: Suggesting an overview of quantitative questionnaires exploring intercultural competence in language learners

Exploring how cultural differentialism is reflected in five quantitative questionnaires, Article 3 offers a systematic analysis of methodological tools. Certain questionnaires were criticized earlier for reflecting this theoretically problematic perspective. For instance, Dervin (2016) and Dervin et al. (2012) criticized the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer et al., 2003) and the theoretical model underpinning the Inventory (Bennett, 1993) for representing the Other as a foreigner. Scholars argued that the use of a differentialist lens and the overuse of culture in emphasizing differences can contribute to a simplified view of the Other and reproduce unbalanced power relations (Dervin, 2016). However, to my knowledge, no systematic analysis of other methodological tools in this regard has yet been carried out. Suggesting such an analysis, the article aims to cultivate discussion on the coherence of methodological instruments applied in the field of language learning research and to initiate a comprehensive review of available tools to clarify which theoretical approaches they aim to reflect, to what extent, and how successfully they manage to do this.

Moreover, the article aims to connect theoretical and methodological knowledge in language education research and to show how the former can be used as an analytical lens for examining questionnaires. Following the theoretical criticism of cultural differentialism in certain models of IC (see, for example, Hoff's [2020] and Dervin's [2010] criticism of Byrams' [1997] model of ICC), the presented analysis focused on

the notions of *culture*, *identity*, *differences*, and *similarities*, and their presentation both in the theoretical frameworks underpinning the questionnaires and in the questionnaire statements. This examination of key concepts helped to elucidate which theoretical perspectives the questionnaires reflect and to what extent.

Finally, showing that the problem of cultural differentialism persists in the field of language education research, Article 3 intended to foster a discussion as to how quantitative questionnaires can be adjusted to avoid reproducing this problematic perspective. Instead of questioning the very idea of assessing or measuring IC in language learners (e.g., this idea has been criticized in Hoff, 2020 and in Borgetti, 2017), the study proposed criteria that other researchers can use when selecting or developing methodological tools for studying IC or related concepts quantitatively. For instance, the article emphasized the importance of avoiding presentations of the Self and the Other as being different solely because of ethnicity or nationality and highlighted the need to promote the idea of the multidimensionality of people's identities in intercultural encounters.

In addition, Article 3 reached important conclusions regarding the Ungspråk questionnaire. It showed that, in contrast to similar instruments, the theoretical underpinning of the Ungspråk stems from the more recent non-essentialist approach to IC. According to this approach, an intercultural encounter can be considered as any communicative situation involving people with different mindsets, where their ethnic or national culture is only one of many possible markers of identity and difference (this view aimed to reflect the definition of IC suggested by Dypedahl, 2019; see section 2.3.1 for details). Thus, to avoid the oversimplified perspective of people as different due solely to their culture, the questionnaire statements focused on general rather than ethnic or national differences between people's mindsets. Considering the Ungspråk as a questionnaire which corresponds to most criteria suggested in the analysis, the study nevertheless offered some directions for its further improvement. For instance, the article suggested that, in addition to mentioning differences in mindsets and opinions, the questionnaire statements could also mention similarities, as they constitute an important aspect of intercultural communication.

4.2.2. Empirical contributions

Answering the research question *To what extent are multilingualism and IC interconnected in secondary school language learning?*, the study provided empirical contributions to the field of language education research. First, Article 4 suggested new and more nuanced insights into the relationship between multilingualism and IC in language learners. Second, Book chapter 5 shed light on foreign language teachers' beliefs regarding both elements and the interconnection between them in the context of language learning.

Article 4: Providing empirical evidence on the link between multilingualism and open-mindedness in young language learners

Showing no link between open-mindedness and migration background in school students, Article 4 supported studies (e.g., Dewaele & Stavans, 2014; Gross & Dewaele, 2018) which suggested that factors other than migration background can be more significantly connected to IC in school students. Among these factors, having friends with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds appeared to be most significantly linked to students' open-mindedness in our investigation. This finding paralleled numerous other studies (Chocce et al., 2015; Pederson, 1998; Williams, 2005) showing that active engagement in interactions with culturally and linguistically diverse others, rather than passive exposure to diversity, is needed to enhance IC. Since Norwegian schools are becoming more and more linguistically and culturally diverse, the school environment can be an ideal arena for establishing such interactions. However, it is worth noting that in order to encourage intercultural communication between school students and to maintain it in a constructive way, more involvement and support from teachers and school administration can be required.

Furthermore, the article has confirmed previous studies (e.g., Gojkov-Rajić & Prtljaga, 2013) suggesting that learning additional languages at school can be positively linked to young learners' intercultural understanding. However, distinguishing L2 and L3 learning, which has previously only rarely been done in relation to IC (see as an example Lenkaitis et al., 2020), the study indicated a more nuanced relationship between language learning and students' intercultural attitudes. It revealed that learning a *second*

additional language (L3) at school can be positively connected to students' open-mindedness, in contrast to learning only English (L2). When discussing this discrepancy between L2 and L3 learning, the article suggested that the element of novelty may be a defining factor. In comparison to learning English (L2), which students in Norway typically begin in primary school, learning an L3 in the eighth grade accompanies learning about new things and cultures they are unfamiliar with (see also Gojkov-Rajić & Prtljaga, 2013, for this argument). As scholars (Ushioda, 2017) suggest, this new experience can increase students' sense of discovery and curiosity and open new perspectives. Based on this result, the article hinted at the potential value of L3 learning for the promotion of students' IC. It was emphasized, however, that a positive link between L3 learning and open-mindedness can equally indicate that more open-minded students actively choose to learn further additional languages at school.

Finally, the study contributed to recent research exploring the potential benefits of promoting multilingual identity in language learners. Other research has suggested that self-identifying as multilingual can be positively linked to students' academic achievements (Rutgers et al., 2021), as well as motivation and investment in language learning (Forbes et al., 2021). In addition to these, our study demonstrated that a multilingual identity may have a positive link to students' intercultural attitudes, thus identifying one more potential benefit of encouraging students to explore their identity in a language classroom. Moreover, the revealed positive link between these elements supports theoretical studies (e.g., Fielding, 2021) which advocate that multilingual, intercultural, and identity stances in language education are interconnected (see section 2.4.1).

Book chapter 5: Unfolding the variety of teachers' views on multilingualism, intercultural competence, and the interconnection between these elements in foreign language learning

Book chapter 5 aimed to enrich knowledge about teachers' views on multilingualism and IC as separate and interconnected elements in language education. Moreover, investigating the views of teachers in foreign languages (L3), the study aimed to shed light on the perspective of a group whose views have rarely been explored in

either international or Norwegian contexts (see as exceptions Chen & Hélot, 2018 and Haukås, 2016, respectively).

In relation to multilingualism, the study revealed an increasing tendency among foreign language (L3) teachers in Norway to consider multilingualism a multifaceted phenomenon. In comparison to Haukås's (2016) investigation, also conducted in the Norwegian context, the participants of the present study showed a more elaborate understanding of multilingualism. In addition to the knowledge of several national languages, they associated students' multilingualism with a knowledge of dialects and standard varieties of Norwegian (Bokmål and Nynorsk). Moreover, our study revealed that participants tended to see *all* students' multilingualism as a resource, which reflected the new Norwegian Curriculum for Foreign Languages (NDET, 2019a). While this parallels the findings of other recent studies indicating the same trend (e.g., Myklevold, 2021), it differs from research conducted before the recent educational reform and the adaptation of the new curricula in Norway (NDET, 2017, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c). For instance, in an earlier study conducted before the reform, Dahl and Krulatz (2016) observed differences in teachers' attitudes towards various forms of multilingualism, with the multilingualism of immigrant students being perceived as something of a problem. Indicating a positive dynamic in teachers' attitudes towards *all* students' multilingualism, the present study may yet point out that educational reforms and new curricula could significantly influence and change teachers' views and beliefs (see Myklevold, 2021 and Sopanen, 2019 for a similar argument).

Suggesting that any form of multilingualism can be an asset, participants of the present study also claimed to apply diverse multilingual approaches in the classroom. This differs from other studies showing that language teachers often have limited knowledge of multilingual pedagogy and rarely apply it in practice (Burner & Carlsen, 2022; Dahl & Krulatz, 2016; Myklevold, 2021). Our findings can potentially be explained by recent research indicating that teachers of different language subjects may integrate multilingual pedagogy in their practice to different extents. For instance, in Tishakov and Tsagari (2022) and Calafato (2021), despite a general resource-orientation towards multilingualism, teachers of more than one additional language at school—who

are often teachers of foreign languages (L3)—tended to apply multilingual teaching more often than their colleagues teaching only English (L2).

In relation to teachers' views on IC, the book chapter suggested that there can be differences in teachers' understanding of intercultural education across national contexts. Our research showed that although essentialist views on IC persist among language teachers in Norway, more elaborated interpretations reflecting non-essentialist perspectives on this concept prevail. Comparable results were documented by Jokikokko (2005) and Mork (2017) in Finland and Norway, respectively. In addition to cultural knowledge, our informants tended to relate IC to such aspects as awareness of one's own values, appreciation of diversity, and reflection on one's own personal values and identity. On the contrary, teachers in Spain and China (Castro et al., 2004 and Tian, 2013, respectively) associated IC mainly with cultural knowledge and positive attitudes towards cultural differences, considering reflection on identity to be a minor factor. Similar results showing that teachers tend to reduce their understanding of IC to knowledge about cultural differences were obtained in other national contexts, such as Belgium, Bulgaria, Greece, Mexico, Spain, Sweden (Sercu, 2006), and Poland (Otwinowska-Kasztelanic, 2011). Explaining these findings, scholars (e.g., Otwinowska-Kasztelanic, 2011) argued that teachers' views on IC can be inspired by the content of the course books. Similarly, they can be inspired by the ideas promoted in the policy documents and curricula. More sophisticated views on IC among our participants can potentially be explained by the emphasis of the new Norwegian curricula on the fact that societies are linguistically and culturally diverse, and that school education should therefore aim to develop students' understanding of their own identities and the identities of others as complex (see NDET, 2017, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, and the discussions in sections 2.2.2, 2.3.2, and 2.4.2). However, it should be noted that research on teachers' understandings of IC is scarce, and that the topic remains unexplored in many other national contexts. Moreover, teachers' views change over time. Consequently, there is a need for further and more updated research investigating and explaining the differences in teachers' views on IC across borders.

Showing that teachers' views on the link between multilingualism and IC differ, and that they strongly depend on teachers' understandings of both elements as separate

phenomena, the study underscored the importance of providing clear definitions of key concepts and indicated significant implications for policymaking and teacher training (will be elaborated in section 4.3). Although all foreign language teachers in our study were eager to consider multilingual and intercultural dimensions as interconnected, the study revealed that teachers may face various constraints when implementing this link. Besides poor definitions of the main concepts, the *practical* implementation of the elements "in tandem" was considered as the main challenge. Our findings paralleled previous research (Chen & Hélot, 2018; Pinho & Moreira, 2012) that uncovered the same trend in other national contexts (in France and Portugal, respectively) and showed that teachers often lack knowledge of relevant classroom activities and additional training (implications for teacher training will be discussed in section 4.3). Moreover, the suggested link between multilingualism and IC with the identity dimension that appeared in some interviews may indicate an increased reflexivity (Clark & Dervin, 2014; Feucht et al., 2017), as well as indicating the possible influence of policy documents (such as the CEFR) on teachers' views.

4.3. Implications for language education, policy making and teacher training

In addition to the theoretical and methodological contributions discussed in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2, the present PhD project has several overarching implications for language education, policy making and teacher training.

First, showing the link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions in secondary school language learning, the study strengthened the argument that multilingualism can potentially be a resource (see section 2.2.2 for details). However, scholars (Haukås, 2016; Moore, 2006; Myklevold, 2022) argue that to activate this resource-orientation in practice, teachers and students should be aware of the variety of languages and forms of multilingualism present in the classroom. Moreover, it is important to encourage students to explore their own linguistic repertoires and multilingual identities and provide them with a relevant tool to do so. The Ungspråk questionnaire that was introduced in this study can potentially be used as such a tool. Although developed for research purposes, the instrument can also be used in the classroom to explore the complexity and diversity of school students' multilingualism

as a phenomenon related to students' learning additional languages at school. Applied in the classroom, the Ungspråk questionnaire can help teachers increase awareness of the variety of languages present in the class and the forms of multilingualism. In addition, teachers can gain information on the diversity of students' backgrounds, students' beliefs about multilingualism, students' friendships with peers who have different linguistic backgrounds, the use of languages outside school, and many other relevant aspects that can be valuable for teaching practice and planning learning activities. Moreover, the Ungspråk questionnaire can be used to help *all* students explore their own (and their peers') multilingualism. Filled out at the beginning of a language course, the questionnaire can stimulate students' reflection on languages they already know, as well as their own identity. As scholars (Fielding, 2021) have suggested (see section 2.4.1 for details), such reflection can also stimulate the development of intercultural understanding, as it enhances students' awareness of the diversity of their own identities and the identities of others. This effect can be strengthened if other teaching materials and tools encouraging students' exploration of their identities are also used (e.g., language portraits [Ibrahim, 2019], the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* [Byram et al., 2009]). Moreover, before promoting students' multilingualism in the classroom, teachers may need to raise awareness of their own multilingualism (Calafato, 2021; Ibrahim, 2020). The Ungspråk questionnaire can also be used to address this issue. Applied in training programs for pre- and in-service teachers, the questionnaire can help enhance teachers' cognition and contribute to their professional development.

Second, the identified link between multilingualism and IC in the context of foreign language (L3) learning has significant implications for policymaking in language education, which can be illustrated by the following case. In 2019, the public committee "Liedutvalget" set up by the Ministry of Education, issued a report (NOU, 2019) which suggested optimizing upper secondary school (*videregående skole*) education in Norway by, among other approaches, reconsidering the status of the Foreign Language (L3) subject as a compulsory discipline at this level. The proposed change to make L3 learning optional in 11th and 12th grades stimulated a public debate (see Hearing NOU 2019:25 [Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2020] for more information).

Among the key arguments against the change, it was highlighted that this proposal contradicts the National Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning (2017), which underscores that after completing upper secondary education, students must be able to communicate in at least two additional languages (English as L2 and a foreign language as an L3) (see, e.g., replies from the University of Bergen and Norwegian German Teachers Association in Hearing NOU 2019:25 [Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2020]). Consequently, in order to fulfill this requirement, foreign language learning in upper secondary education must be strengthened rather than weakened. Moreover, the decision could also have negative consequences for L3 learning at the earlier stage. For instance, students may have lost the motivation to choose to study L3 in lower secondary school (grades 8-10) as it would no longer be a requirement for continuing education at the next level. When thinking of this case, I assume that politicians and other actors opting for the non-compulsory status of the Foreign Language subject (L3) may not have considered learning an L3 at school as connected to the promotion of several key goals stated in the Norwegian Core Curriculum (see sections 2.2.2, 2.3.2, and 2.4.2 for detailed discussions). The present study, however, showed such a connection. Based on empirical data, it revealed that L3 learning can be significantly linked to students' open-mindedness, and may thus potentially contribute to the development of other goals of school education, such as students' intercultural understanding, tolerance, respect towards diversity, and other democratic values (see Article 4). However, as noted in Article 4, the findings may also indicate that more open-minded students tend to choose to learn an additional foreign language at school. Either way, such a potential relationship suggests that giving students an opportunity to learn new languages and to further develop their language skills and multilingualism can be beneficial for stimulating students' openness, curiosity, desire to learn, and acceptance of new things and perspectives later in life (see, e.g., Cankaya et al., 2018 and Dewaele, 2015 for similar arguments). Moreover, the study showed that teachers consider the Foreign Language subject an important medium for developing students' skills and competencies emphasized in the Core Curriculum (see Book chapter 5). For example, most participants argued that the foreign language class is a perfect space to enhance students' respect for diversity through stimulating students' reflection on cultural and

linguistic variety within and between L3-speaking countries and comparing this with diversity within Norway. Consequently, the study's findings can be essential for making decisions about the status of the Foreign Language subject in school education at all levels. They show that the subject can be related and contribute to the development of values, which are stated in policy documents as main goals of school education (e.g., open-mindedness, tolerance, respect for diversity, global citizenship). In addition, the project clearly indicates that more empirical research on the role of L3 learning and students' multilingualism is needed to make evidence-based political decisions in the future.

Furthermore, the revealed variety of teachers' views on multilingualism and IC and the link between the elements stressed the importance of providing clear definitions of key concepts in subject curricula and other documents that introduce educational strategies. Throughout the publications, I aimed to highlight that multilingualism and IC are complex concepts which can have various, even theoretically conflicting, understandings. The qualitative investigation of teachers' views illustrated that when the meanings of key concepts remain vague—which is the case in the Norwegian curricula (see sections 2.2.2. and 2.3.2 for details)—teachers may suggest different interpretations. Some understandings can reflect non-essentialist views emphasizing the "diverse diversities" (Dervin, 2010) within and across contexts and thus help to promote the principles and ideas of global citizenship, respect for diversity, and democratic values stated in the new curricula. Other interpretations, on the contrary, may reflect principles of cultural essentialism and differentialism which, when applied in teaching practice, reinforce stereotypes and prejudices among students (see Article 3 for further criticism of cultural differentialism). A simple lack of clarity may thus lead to potentially problematic outcomes. Moreover, the lack of transparent definitions in the guiding documents may have serious implications for teachers. When the key concepts remain vague, the responsibility to make sense of them and, consequently, to implement educational strategies, transfers to teachers (Voogt & Roblin, 2012). Teachers, however, may have neither relevant knowledge nor competencies, or they may feel insecure in performing such a task (see sections 2.2.3.2, 2.3.3.2, and 2.4.3.2 for details).

Consequently, responsibility for implementing new curricula risks becoming a burden that can result in extended workloads.

Moreover, the revealed lack of teachers' practical knowledge regarding the implementation of the link between multilingual and intercultural dimensions in language learning has suggested that it might be necessary to provide teachers with additional opportunities to explore related theoretical perspectives and practices. For instance, teachers may benefit from training sessions discussing theoretical perspectives on key concepts introduced in the new curricula. In addition to new knowledge, such sessions can provide teachers with the time and opportunity to reflect on relevant pedagogical approaches, such as multilingual and intercultural pedagogy, and the implementation of these approaches in tandem in teaching practice.

Teachers' awareness of the theoretical perspectives and pedagogical approaches suggested in research can also be enhanced by strengthening the dialogue between scholars and educators in the field. This can be done through teacher education programs, the increased availability of materials developed within research, continuing professional development, and the involvement of teachers in research (see, e.g., Paran, 2017 for other options). Teachers can be engaged in research at various stages: from defining research objectives and designing research tools, to interpreting results. In addition, such an approach can encourage and support the transition from research *on* to research *with* and *for* participants (see Article 1 for details). Moreover, as indicated in sections 2.3.3.2 and 2.4.1, several teaching materials suggesting how multilingual and intercultural pedagogy can be implemented, separately or in tandem, have already been proposed in research (e.g., identity texts [Krulatz et al., 2018], picture books [Ibrahim, 2020], and e-portfolios [Khanukaeva, 2020]). The fact that teachers have limited knowledge of suitable teaching materials indicates that greater awareness might be needed to increase the dissemination of, and to ensure better access to, available instruments. Teachers can also take part in developing new tools in cooperation with scholars. Strengthening the dialogue between teachers and researchers can also be beneficial for scholars in many ways as it can provide feedback "from the field" and open new, more practically oriented directions for further studies (Paran, 2017).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The present PhD project aimed to explore *the extent to which multilingualism and IC can be interconnected in the context of secondary school language education in Norway*. Starting with the question *How can this interconnection be meaningfully explored in such a context?*, the study suggested a two-fold approach (presented in Article 1 as part of the Ungspråk project design), which included the exploration of the link between the elements, first, quantitatively in secondary school students, and second, qualitatively through gathering foreign language teachers' views on both elements and the link between them in the Foreign Language subject. To conduct the quantitative phase, the study introduced the Ungspråk questionnaire (Article 2), an online quantitative questionnaire specifically developed for examining students' multilingualism as a complex and multifaceted phenomenon in the school context. In addition, the study provided a critical analysis of the Ungspråk questionnaire and four other quantitative questionnaires exploring leaners' IC and related concepts. This analysis allowed investigating the extent to which the tools avoid reproducing the theoretically problematic perspective of cultural differentialism (Article 3).

Empirical data collected during the quantitative and qualitative phases of the project shed light on the nuanced relationship between multilingualism and IC in the context of secondary school language learning. First, exploring the link in young language learners, the study revealed that this is likely multilingualism developed through learning additional (L3) languages at school—rather than associated with migration background or learning only English (L2)—that is positively connected to students' intercultural attitudes at lower secondary school. In addition, the study showed that other factors related to students' multilingualism—such as self-identification as multilingual and friendship with peers whose home languages include those other than Norwegian—can potentially be significantly connected to the development of students' IC (Article 4). The qualitative part of the project indicated that foreign language teachers also recognize multilingualism and IC as interconnected elements in their subject. However, their understandings of this interconnection vary depending on the teachers'

views and beliefs about multilingualism and IC as separate phenomena (Book chapter 5).

Limitations of the Thesis

The first phase of the PhD project provided quantitative data that illuminated the link between multilingualism and open-mindedness in school students. Despite generalizability, the predictive power of results, and other advantages of quantitative methodology, the produced knowledge did not provide insight into nuances that can be determined by a specific situation and the opinions of each individual student. To overcome this limitation, the first phase of the project could include a qualitative part. As previous research has illustrated, such strengthening of quantitative results with qualitative data can add understandings that might be missed when only a quantitative methodology is used. For instance, in a similar study by Mellizo (2017), the quantitative exploration of students' intercultural sensitivity was followed up by qualitative interviews which helped reveal that students' acceptance of cultural differences was largely hypothetical due to a lack of real-life intercultural communication. In addition, the use of additional research tools (e.g., the *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters* by Byram et al., 2009) could provide a more comprehensive understanding of students' IC.

Similarly, the qualitative phase of the project, which involved exploring teachers' views, could be strengthened by adding a quantitative part. For instance, the distribution of an additional quantitative survey among foreign language teachers in participating schools could potentially help obtain data allowing more informed conclusions, especially regarding the limited number of participants in the present study. Another limitation of the second phase of the project is that conclusions were made based on teachers' self-reports. In the interviews, most participants stated that they approached all students' multilingualism as a resource and supported non-essentialist views on IC in their teaching practice. However, due to the lack of observations in the classroom, it cannot be assumed that these views are fully reflected in teachers' practice.

Additional limitations in the second stage of the project are related to the global pandemic of 2020, during which interviews with teachers took place. Due to regulations (NDET, 2020), most interviews were conducted online in order to avoid physical contact with participants. While the online format provides advantages (such as flexibility for

both interviewer and interviewee in terms of time and settings), it imposes certain constraints. For instance, a webcam does not allow observation of an informant's body language (Cater, 2011) or eye contact, which can be essential in understanding participants' feelings (e.g., hesitations or unwillingness to discuss certain topics).

Moreover, some limitations of the study are related to the focus on open-mindedness as an indicator of learners' IC in the first phase of the study. First, the quantitative exploration of personality traits might be as problematic as the assessment of IC (see section 2.3.3.1), which has been broadly criticized in language education research (e.g., Borghetti, 2017; Hoff, 2020; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). Related to people's attitudes, open-mindedness does not represent any "real" entity or knowledge that can be objectively measured, but rather a certain parameter which reflects the probability of a specific human behavior in a specific situation (Nowakowska, 2000). Consequently, the exploration of open-mindedness is always subjective and limited by researchers' operationalization of the concept. Second, the chosen focus on one specific factor as related to IC limits the study by eliciting only part of the overall construct (Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013). As discussed in section 2.3.1, IC is a complex phenomenon which, in addition to the attitudinal component, may include cultural knowledge, mediation skills, and critical cultural awareness (depending on the theoretical model; see, for example, Byram's model of IC). Moreover, besides open-mindedness, other psychological factors, such as cultural empathy, flexibility, social initiative, and emotional stability (suggested by van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001), can be recognized as equally important in intercultural communication, and thus constituting IC (see, e.g., Deardorff's [2006] and Dypendahl's [2019] models of IC, where flexibility is included as a constituting element). Furthermore, in the same way that it might be problematic to assess IC due to its dynamic and contextual nature (Hoff, 2020; Dervin, 2010), it should be acknowledged that open-mindedness likely changes over time. The research suggests that all psychological traits develop dynamically under the influence of external and internal factors, even though scholars tend to consider them as relatively stable characteristics of personality (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2020; Nowakowska, 2000).

Suggestions for Further Research

The present project suggests a number of opportunities for further research. First, the literature review (see sections 2.4) showed that our knowledge of how students' multilingualism can be connected to the development of IC in foreign language education is quite limited. In parallel with previous research (Gross & Dewaele, 2018; Dewaele & Stavans, 2014), the first phase of the current project suggested that factors other than migration background can be significantly connected to students' IC. Moreover, our study underscored that learning a second additional language (L3) at school, rather than only English, can be significantly connected to students' open-mindedness. Future studies can help provide further insights. For example, they can help to shed light on the causality of the relationship between the elements and determine whether learning L3 at school affects students' intercultural attitudes, or whether more open-minded students are more likely to choose to study an additional foreign language at school. It may also be interesting to conduct a similar study with a younger group of students, such as primary school students. This can help us see if learning English (L2), a relatively new language for most students in this age group, has the same connection to intercultural attitudes, as is the case with L3 learning for eighth graders. Moreover, the exploration of students' IC can be strengthened by exploring other aspects associated with IC, such as critical cultural awareness or other relevant psychological traits. To ensure better understanding of the link between multilingualism and IC, similar studies can also be conducted in different educational, political, and national contexts. To my knowledge, the Ungspråk questionnaire has recently been adapted in several studies exploring students' multilingualism in other national contexts (e.g., in the research project *Language use and instruction across contexts* [LANGUAGES] which investigates classroom practices in French and English lessons in England, France, and Norway; see Brevik, 2022 for details).

Second, teachers' views on the interconnection between multilingualism and IC should be further explored. As mentioned in the previous section, the present study had a limited number of participants. Consequently, the collection of additional data from teachers can help us draw stronger conclusions about their views on multilingualism,

IC, and the link between these elements. Moreover, the present study suggested that there might be differences in teachers' views across national and educational contexts (see section 4.2.2 and Book chapter 5). Therefore, more evidence from other countries is needed. In light of the view that teachers' beliefs may differ from their actual practice (Basturkmen, 2012), subsequent studies could also include classroom observations. The following questions can be further addressed: How do teachers refer to multilingualism as a resource in their practice, and to what extent? How and to what extent are various languages (e.g., Western European languages, immigrant languages, indigenous languages) taken into consideration in the classroom? How and to what extent do teachers apply the non-essentialist perspective on IC in their practice? How and to what extent do they link multilingualism and IC in their classroom activities? What specific activities do teachers suggest?

Last but not least, the present study introduced a new research instrument—the Ungspråk questionnaire—which can be used for the quantitative exploration of various issues related to students' multilingualism. For instance, in addition to the topics discussed in the present PhD project and in the parallel study by Storto (2023), the instrument provides the opportunity to quantitatively examine students' self-identification as multilingual and future-oriented multilingual identity (see Article 2 for a discussion of the concepts of multilingual identity and future multilingual self). Both issues have only recently been addressed in empirical research (see, e.g., Forbes et al., 2021 and Rutgers et al., 2021). The use of the Ungspråk questionnaire can be especially valuable since quantitative instruments allowing exploration of these concepts are still scarce in the field (e.g., the multilingual identity questionnaire in Forbes et al., 2021 and Rutgers et al., 2021, and Henry & Thorsen's [2018] questionnaire exploring the ideal multilingual self). Similarly, the Ungspråk questionnaire can be used to examine students' beliefs about multilingualism. While many studies discuss the potential benefits of being multilingual, there is little research on what of these benefits students actually believe in (see, e.g., Haukås et al., 2022). Moreover, the further use of the Ungspråk questionnaire in studies similar to the present or parallel investigations can ensure comparability of results and thus enrich our knowledge of students' multilingualism and related issues.

In summary, addressing multiple research gaps in the field can help strengthen our understanding of multilingualism, IC and related factors as potential resources for the individual and society across contexts.

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Appendix 1

NSD assessment of processing of personal data
(The First Stage of the PhD Project)

Reference number	Assessment type	Date
610192	Standard	10.01.2019

Project title
UNGSPRÅK

Data controller (institution responsible for the project)
Universitetet i Bergen / Det humanistiske fakultet / Institutt for fremmedspråk

Project leader
Åsta Haukås

Project period
01.01.2019 - 30.06.2022

Categories of personal data
General

Legal basis
Consent (General Data Protection Regulation art. 6 nr. 1 a)
The processing of personal data is lawful, so long as it is carried out as stated in the notification form. The legal basis is valid until 30.06.2022.
Notification Form

Comment
Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg den 10.01.2019, samt i meldingsdialogen mellom innmelder og NSD. Behandlingen kan starte.

MELD ENDRINGER
Dersom behandlingen av personopplysninger endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. På våre nettsider informerer vi om hvilke endringer som må meldes. Vent på svar før endringer gjennomføres.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige kategorier av personopplysninger frem til 30.06.2022.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake. Lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen vil dermed være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER
NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen om:
- lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen
- formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke behandles til nye, uforenlige formål
- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: åpenhet (art. 12), informasjon (art. 13), innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18), underretning (art. 19), dataportabilitet (art. 20).
NSD vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.
Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER NSD
legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).
Dersom det behandles personopplysninger gjennom SurveyXact, vil leverandøren være databehandler i prosjektet. NSD legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene til bruk av databehandler, jf. art 28 og 29. For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må dere følge interne retningslinjer og/eller rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET NSD vil følge opp underveis (hvert annet år) og ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet/pågår i tråd med den behandlingen som er dokumentert.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Kontaktperson hos NSD: Øivind Armando Reinertsen
Tlf. Personverntjenester: 55 58 21 17 (tast 1)

Appendix 2

NSD assessment of processing of personal data
(The Second Stage of the PhD Project)

Reference number	Assessment type	Date
130017	Standard	03.08.2020

Project title
The intersection of multilingualism and intercultural competence in the Norwegian foreign language curriculum: teachers' perspectives

Data controller (institution responsible for the project)
Universitetet i Bergen / Det humanistiske fakultet / Institutt for fremmedspråk

Project leader
Åsta Haukås

Project period
15.08.2020 - 30.06.2021

Categories of personal data
General

Legal basis
Consent (General Data Protection Regulation art. 6 nr. 1 a)
The processing of personal data is lawful, so long as it is carried out as stated in the notification form. The legal basis is valid until 30.06.2021. Notification Form

Comment
Our assessment is that the processing of personal data in this project will comply with data protection legislation, so long as it is carried out in accordance with what is documented in the Notification Form and attachments, dated 03.08.2020, as well as in correspondence with NSD. Everything is in place for the processing to begin.

NOTIFY CHANGES
If you intend to make changes to the processing of personal data in this project it may be necessary to notify NSD. This is done by updating the information registered in the Notification Form. On our website we explain which changes must be notified. Wait until you receive an answer from us before you carry out the changes.

TYPE OF DATA AND DURATION
The project will be processing general categories of personal data until 30.06.2021.

LEGAL BASIS
The project will gain consent from data subjects to process their personal data. We find that consent will meet the necessary requirements under art. 4 (11) and 7, in that it will be a freely

given, specific, informed and unambiguous statement or action, which will be documented and can be withdrawn. The legal basis for processing personal data is therefore consent given by the data subject, cf. the General Data Protection Regulation art. 6.1 a).

PRINCIPLES RELATING TO PROCESSING PERSONAL DATA
NSD finds that the planned processing of personal data will be in accordance with the principles under the General Data Protection Regulation regarding:
- lawfulness, fairness and transparency (art. 5.1 a), in that data subjects will receive sufficient information about the processing and will give their consent
- purpose limitation (art. 5.1 b), in that personal data will be collected for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes, and will not be processed for new, incompatible purposes
- data minimisation (art. 5.1 c), in that only personal data which are adequate, relevant and necessary for the purpose of the project will be processed
- storage limitation (art. 5.1 e), in that personal data will not be stored for longer than is necessary to fulfil the project's purpose

THE RIGHTS OF DATA SUBJECTS
Data subjects will have the following rights in this project: transparency (art. 12), information (art. 13), access (art. 15), rectification (art. 16), erasure (art. 17), restriction of processing (art. 18), notification (art. 19), data portability (art. 20). These rights apply so long as the data subject can be identified in the collected data.
NSD finds that the information that will be given to data subjects about the processing of their personal data will meet the legal requirements for form and content, cf. art. 12.1 and art. 13.
We remind you that if a data subject contacts you about their rights, the data controller has a duty to reply within a month.

FOLLOW YOUR INSTITUTION'S GUIDELINES
NSD presupposes that the project will meet the requirements of accuracy (art. 5.1 d), integrity and confidentiality (art. 5.1 f) and security (art. 32) when processing personal data.
SurveyXact is a data processor for the project. NSD presupposes that the processing of personal data by a data processor meets the requirements under the General Data Protection Regulation arts. 28 and 29.
To ensure that these requirements are met you must follow your institution's internal guidelines and/or consult with your institution (i.e. the institution responsible for the project).

FOLLOW-UP OF THE PROJECT
NSD will follow up the progress of the project at the planned end date in order to determine whether the processing of personal data has been concluded.

Good luck with the project!

Contact person at NSD: Tore Andre Kjetland Fjeldsbø
Data Protection Services for Research: +47 55 58 21 17 (press 1)

Appendix 3

Information Letter to Students and Their Parents (in Norwegian)

Til elever på 8. trinn og deres foreldre/foresatte

Invitasjon til å delta i forskningsprosjektet *UNGSPRÅK*
Vil du delta i et forskningsprosjekt ved Universitetet i Bergen? Dette brevet gir deg informasjon om prosjektet og hva det betyr for deg å delta.

Hva er målet med studien?
Hovedmålene med prosjektet UNGSPRÅK er å finne ut hvilke språk elever i ungdomsskolen kan og bruker, og hva de mener om språk og språklæring generelt. Professor Åsta Haukås er leder for prosjektet i Bergen. Prosjektet samarbeider dessuten med forskere ved Universitetet i Cambridge. De gjennomfører en liknende undersøkelse blant ungdommer i England.
Ledelsen ved skolen din er interessert i prosjektet og ønsker å delta. Ved å bli med på prosjektet og dele dine ideer og meninger, kan du hjelpe oss med å forstå hva unge mennesker tenker om språk, og hvordan vi kan undervise språk på nye måter i fremtiden. Din deltakelse betyr mye for oss!

Hva skal elevene gjøre?
Elevene svarer på en elektronisk spørreundersøkelse som tar for seg elevenes språkpraksis, språklæring og meninger om språk. Vi vil samle inn data ved hjelp av SurveyXact, et nettbasert verktøy for spørreundersøkelser. Vi er tilstede i timen når elevene gjennomfører undersøkelsen, dersom det er behov for hjelp eller for å svare på spørsmål.
Spørreundersøkelsen er enkel og gøy å svare på og tar ikke mer enn 20 minutter. Den skal svares på i timen, så du trenger ikke bruke av fritiden din.

Det er frivillig å delta
Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet og du svarer anonymt. Du kan trekke deg fra prosjektet når som helst, uten å gi noen grunn. Hvis foreldre/foresatte ønsker å se spørreundersøkelsen før barna deres kan delta, kan de spørre om å få lese den i forkant.

Personvern – hvordan vi lagrer og bruker dine opplysninger
Alle deltakerne i prosjektet er anonyme. Det er bare forskningsleder Prof. Åsta Haukås og hennes to doktorgradsstudenter, Irina Tiurikova og André Storto, som har tilgang til personlige opplysninger. Lærere eller personalet ved skolen har ikke tilgang til svarene. Verken deltagere eller skoler involvert i prosjektet kan gjenkjennes når vi publiserer resultater fra studien. Norsk Senter for Forskningsdata AS (NSD) har vurdert bruken av opplysninger i dette prosjektet og konkludert med at det er forenelig med datatilsynets regler.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?
Hvis du/dere har spørsmål til studien, kontakt
Institutt for fremmedspråk, Universitetet i Bergen, ved prosjektleder Åsta Haukås, på epost: asta.haukas@uib.no Telefon: 55582488

Med vennlig hilsen Bergen, 02.04. 2019

Åsta Haukås
Prosjektansvarlig og professor ved Institutt for fremmedspråk, UiB

Appendix 4

Information Letter to Students and Their Parents (in English)

To students in school year 8. and their parents/guardians

Invitation to take part in the research project *UNGSPRÅK*
Do you want to participate in a research project from the University of Bergen? This letter gives you information about the project and what it means to take part in it.

Why are we doing this study?
The main aims of the project **UNGSPRÅK** are to find out which languages pupils in lower secondary school (ungdomsskolen) know and use, and what they think about languages and language learning in general. Professor Åsta Haukås is the coordinator of the study in Bergen, but the project is done in collaboration with researchers at Cambridge University. They do a similar study among teenagers in England.
The management of your school is interested in the project and agreed to take part. By participating and sharing your ideas and opinions, you can help us understand what young people think about languages and how we can teach languages in new ways in the future. Your participation means a lot to us!

What are the pupils asked to do?
The study is an online questionnaire that asks pupils about their language practices, their language learning and their opinions about languages. We will collect the data using SurveyXact, an online questionnaire tool. We will be in your class when you fill in the questionnaire to help you in case you have any questions.
The questionnaire is easy and fun to answer and it takes about 20 minutes to be completed. It will be answered in class, so you do not need extra time to do it.

Your participation is voluntary
You can choose to participate or not. Also, you can leave the project at any time without giving a reason. If any parents/guardians wish to look at the questionnaire before allowing their children to participate, they can ask to read it in advance.

Your personal privacy
All participants are anonymous in the project. Only the project coordinator, Prof. Åsta Haukås, and her two PhD students, Irina Tiurikova and André Storto, will have access to the data. Your teachers and school staff will not have access to your answers. The participants or schools in the project will not be recognizable in publications resulting from the study.
NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has evaluated the use of data in this project and concluded that it is in accordance with data protection laws.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions about the project, contact:

- Prof. Åsta Haukås, Institutt for fremmedspråk, Universitetet i Bergen, by email*:* *asta.haukas@uib.no* or by telephone*:* 55582488

Yours sincerely,

Åsta Haukås
Project Leader and Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages, UiB

Appendix 5

Information Letter to Teachers, Consent Form and Background Questionnaire (electronic version)

Thank you for participating in the Ungspråk Project at the University of Bergen!

This research is about language learning in lower secondary schools and the experiences and beliefs of teachers. By sharing your thoughts with us, you can help contribute to the field of foreign language learning.

Please read and sign the consent form before you start filling in the questionnaire.

Neste

Are you interested in taking part in the research project "Ungspråk"?

In the spring semester 2019, your school took part in the Ungspråk project, which aims at studying the languages and language habits of pupils in lower secondary school. At the current stage of the project, we would like to learn more about your thoughts and experience in teaching foreign languages to this age group. We are also interested in your thoughts on the recently issued Foreign Language Curriculum. In addition, we would like to share with you some of the results of our study and to get your opinion on how they can be useful for your teaching and for language education in general. Through your insights and perspectives, we hope to better understand how languages can be meaningfully taught and how research can contribute to this.

Who is responsible for the research project?

The Department of Foreign Languages at the University of Bergen is the institution responsible for the project. Professor Åsta Haukås and PhD Candidate Irina Tiurikova implement the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

At the current stage of the project, we invite teachers of foreign languages in lower secondary schools to take part in the project. You and your colleagues have received this invitation from the research group and/or from the school administration because your school took part at the first stage of the project. An approximate number of participants that will be invited for an interview is 10.

What does participation involve for you?

Participation in the project involves the filling in of a short background questionnaire and an interview. The background questionnaire can be filled in electronically at any time before the interview and will take 10-15 minutes. In the questionnaire, we will ask you to provide some personal information, including your name, education and contact information, in order to contact you further for an interview. The questionnaire also includes some questions on your beliefs and opinions in relation to language learning. Your answers will be recorded electronically. The interview can be held online or at a location of your choice. The approximate duration of the interview is 45-60 minutes. It will be conducted in English, but if you like to elaborate something in Norwegian or French, feel free to do so. The interview will be audio recorded. Questions will concern your thoughts and experiences with teaching foreign languages, and your opinion on students' views and beliefs about languages and language learning.

Participation is voluntary

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data
We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

Only the project group, Professor Åsta Haukås and PhD Candidate Irina Tiurikova, will have access to the personal data. All personal data will be treated confidentially. The questionnaire data will be collected with SurveyXact, a survey programme authorised by the University of Bergen, and stored on the research server during the period of the study. The data will be deleted after the end of the project. The interview data will be transcribed by the researchers and only they will have access to the raw data. The data will be anonymised at the point of transcription. We will replace your name and contact details with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data. In the publications and presentations resulting from the study, it will be impossible to identify who you are or in which school you are teaching. Both publications and presentations will be made available to you if you wish.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?
The project is scheduled to end on 30 June 2021. The personal data, including digital recordings, will be deleted after the end of the project.

Your rights
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

- We will process your personal data based on your consent.
- Based on an agreement with the University of Bergen, NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Professor Åsta Haukås (Project Leader) by email: asta.haukas@uib.no or by telephone: +4755582488, or Irina Tiurikova (PhD Candidate) by e-mail irina.tiurikova@uib.no or by telephone: +4794095042.
- Our Data Protection Officer: Janecke Helene Veim by email: janecke.veim@uib.no
- NSD – The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: personverntjenester@nsd.no or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Åsta Haukås
(Project Leader)

Irina Tiurikova
(PhD Candidate)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project Ungspråk and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- ☐ to participate in a questionnaire
- ☐ to participate in an interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 30 June 2021.

(Signed by participant, date)

Neste

1. Your age: _____
2. Gender:
   - Female
   - Male
   - Other
3. Years of work in school: _____
4. Current place of work (school name): _____
5. Which subjects do you teach? _____
6. Languages do you teach? Please, select several options if applicable:
   - Norwegian
   - English
   - Spanish
   - German
   - French
   - Chinese
7. How long have you been teaching foreign language(s)? _____
8. Your education:
   - BA
   - MA
   - PPU
   - Other

   If MA: Please specify the profile of your MA: _____
   If other, please specify: _____
9. Which languages do you know? _____
10. Which language(s) do you consider as your first/native language(s)?

Please leave us your e-mail and/or phone number, so we can contact you to invite for an interview.

Email address: _____

Phone number: _____

Thank you for filling in the questionnaire!

Publications

Article 1

The Ungspråk project: Researching multilingualism and multilingual identity in lower secondary schools

Globe: A Journal of Language, Culture and Communication, 12: 83-98 (2021)

The Ungspråk project: Researching multilingualism and multilingual identity in lower secondary schools

Åsta Haukås, University of Bergen
André Storto, University of Bergen
Irina Tiurikova, University of Bergen

Abstract: The main objective of this article is to discuss the theoretical background and rationale for developing Ungspråk, a longitudinal, mixed methods study set in Norwegian lower secondary schools. The paper starts with an overview of different scholarly approaches to the study of multilingualism and their implications for research on multilingualism in education. After a brief introduction to multilingualism in Norwegian society and educational contexts, we present our research areas of interest and the main research questions. Particular attention is paid to the relevance of the concept of multilingual identity to the study. In addition, we discuss how the project will contribute to furthering the understanding of the relationship between multilingualism and intercultural competence. The mixed methods design of the Ungspråk project innovatively explores how different research methods and instruments can be combined to investigate questions related to multilingualism and multilingual identity and to create opportunities for meaningful interactions between researchers and participants. When discussing the mixed methods design of the project, we focus on how quantitative and qualitative components are integrated to address the research questions, engage participants in the research process and strengthen the overall validity of the findings. Overall, we hope that the Ungspråk project will contribute new insights into how languages can be learned and cultures explored in the 21st century multilingual classroom. Furthermore, the project may impact how researchers and participants interact with and benefit from empirical studies on education.

Keywords: Multilingualism, multilingual identity, intercultural competence, mixed methods research, interactive sessions, visualisations, interviews.

1. Introduction

To be or not to be multilingual remains an important question in applied linguistics and educational research. Even though multilingualism has always been a feature of countless individuals and societies throughout history (Adams et al. 2002; Pahta et al. 2018), the recent increase in transnational mobility associated with globalisation has brought the topic to the forefront of the research agenda. More than ever, educators and scholars feel the need to understand what it means to learn and use different languages, both at school and in other contexts (May 2013).

The objective of this article is to add to this discussion by presenting the design and ongoing implementation of the research project Ungspråk (2018-2022), a longitudinal mixed methods study conducted at the Department of Foreign Languages of the University of Bergen, Norway. The main aim of the project is to investigate young learners' multilingual identity in the Norwegian lower secondary school context. The term Ungspråk consists of the words *ung* (young) and *språk* (language). In Norwegian, *språk* is both singular and plural form and thus may refer to either one or several languages. In coining the term Ungspråk, we wanted to capture the main participants in our research, young learners. Furthermore, the choice of the non-transparent word *språk* alludes to the linguistic diversity of the learners along a continuum and the possibility for them to self-identify as monolingual or multilingual. The paper begins by discussing current definitions of multilingualism, language and multilingual identity and to what extent Norwegian pupils can be called multilinguals. We then go on to present the epistemological rationale underpinning the research project Ungspråk and its bearing on the main research questions and methods for data collection and analysis. Particular attention is paid to the sequential design of the mixed methods study (Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017) and how the research instrument designed for the first phase of the project (the Ungspråk

questionnaire) helped develop the interactive sessions with the learners and language teachers in the second phase. The interactive sessions are attempts to move away from a sole research *on* multilingualism, in which learners and teachers are *research objects*, towards a more participatory and collaborative approach in which participants also explore and contribute to the research process according to their own interests and concerns (Hales 2006; Kubanyiova 2008).

2. Defining the main concepts and theoretical framework

Multilingualism, a buzzword of our times, has been defined in several ways. In her overview of the various definitions of multilingualism, Cenoz (2013) sorted the most common approaches along three dimensions: the individual versus social dimension, the proficiency versus use dimension and the bilingualism versus multilingualism dimension (for further discussions on the concept of multilingualism and related terms, see Kemp 2009; Hammarberg 2010; Butler 2012).

The individual versus social dimension includes definitions that differentiate between a person's knowledge of multiple languages and the presence of multiple languages in a given society or geographical area. Some scholars refer to individual multilingualism as plurilingualism, which is the term used by the Council of Europe (2001).

The proficiency versus use dimension comprises definitions that take into account certain competency levels or frequency of use of a person's languages as criteria. The definitions vary from having an encompassing approach that includes people who are in the process of learning an additional language, irrespective of their proficiency levels (see for example Fisher et al. 2018), to restrictive definitions at the other end of the scale requiring near-native control of the languages in question. Definitions in the latter category, such as Braun's (1937: 115) "active, completely equal mastery of two or more languages" (orig. "aktive vollendete Gleichbeherrschung zweier oder mehrerer Sprachen") are rarely seen in current research studies, but Aronin and Singleton (2012: 2) suggested that this understanding of multilingualism typically represents the "man-in-the-street perspective".

Usage also belongs to this dimension. Do the languages have to be in active use in everyday life (see for example Commission of the European Communities 2007; Grosjean 2010: 4), or is receptive knowledge of a language also included in the researchers' definition of who is multilingual? Receptive multilingualism means that people understand and communicate with each other, normally using closely related languages and not a lingua franca (Zeevaert & ten Thije 2007; Rehbein et al. 2012). This phenomenon is quite common in several regions of the world, for example, in Scandinavia. Furthermore, does the criterion of everyday usage encompass learners in less authentic contexts, such as in the language learning classroom, or are the definitions limited to use in authentic communication?

According to Cenoz (2013), the bilingualism versus multilingualism dimension refers to the number of languages a person needs to know to be regarded as multilingual. Most definitions require either proficiency in more than one language or proficiency in more than two languages. The term *bilingualism* is commonly used to refer to the first category, and research includes, but is not restricted to, the investigation of bilingualism in educational contexts (García 2009; Cummins & Swain 2014). The term is also used in a more general way to include all individuals who are not monolingual. Some scholars argue, however, that bilingualism (knowledge of two languages) and multilingualism (knowledge of three or more languages) should refer to distinct phenomena, as having previously learned a second language, the learning of additional languages is different in multiple ways, including increased metalinguistic awareness and cognitive flexibility (De Angelis 2007; Jessner 2008).

The Ungspråk research team takes a broad, holistic approach to multilingualism (Cenoz 2013), defining it as the dynamic and integrated knowledge and/or use of more than one language or language variety. Briefly, a holistic view on multilingualism considers the whole linguistic repertoire

of the learners as an integrated set of resources that are in constant interaction and development, both in their practices and in their language learning processes. Rather than focusing on one language at a time and looking into the acquisition of discrete syntactic, lexical and phonological items, a holistic approach seeks to relate "the way multilingual students (and multilingual speakers in general) use their communicative resources in spontaneous conversation to the way languages are learned and taught at school" (Cenoz 2013: 11). In order to achieve this, it is crucial that we gain a deeper understanding of the participants' practices, their own beliefs and attitudes towards learning and using different languages and their self-identification as multilingual.

In the context of this project, we need to clarify what is meant by *language*. For example, should only official or national languages be included in studies of multilingualism, or can knowledge of dialects and other semiotic systems such as body language, sign language and iconography also count when deciding who multilinguals are? Many studies on multilingualism still seem to focus on standard languages such as English, French or German without problematising what a language is. More recently, however, several scholars have moved towards a broader understanding of language. Wei (2018: 26), for example, referred to language as "a multilingual, multisemiotic, multisensory, and multimodal resource that human beings use for thinking and for communicating thought".

With this widened view of what constitutes a language, one might claim that, strictly speaking, we are all multilingual, as everybody uses various semiotic resources in communication on a daily basis. Considering different approaches to the understanding of language, in this project, we define language as any semiotic system used for communication purposes, and, as discussed earlier, the languages of an individual are not static, discreet entities. Instead, they are in a constant state of change and interact with each other in the multilingual brain (Herdina & Jessner 2002).

However, no matter which definitions scholars use in their research to determine a language or to classify someone as multilingual, we believe the individuals' own perceptions to be equally relevant in the understanding of multilingualism, especially in educational contexts. Therefore, the concept of *multilingual identity* is of central importance in our study. Multilingual identity refers to a person's explicit self-identification as multilingual because of an awareness of the linguistic repertoire one has (Fisher et al. 2018).

Fisher et al. (2018) suggested that people who explicitly identify themselves as multilinguals may have several advantages. First, to see oneself as multilingual may strengthen one's self-esteem and motivation to learn additional languages. Second, it may foster an increased language awareness in and across the languages one knows and is learning, which again may result in better learning outcomes. In addition, research has suggested that being multilingual is positively correlated with certain personality traits that could allow for more effective intercultural encounters. For example, Dewaele and Oudenhoven (2009) and Dewaele and Wei (2012, 2013) indicated that there is a link between multilingualism and tolerance of ambiguity, cognitive empathy and open-mindedness.

In education and research, these traits are often associated with intercultural competence (Tiurikova fc). According to some recent studies (e.g. Dervin 2010; Dypedahl 2018; Hoff 2014, 2019), intercultural competence is often defined as one's ability to deal (constructively) with diversity and differences, whether these are "within a society (differences due to age, gender, religion, socio-economic status, political affiliation, ethnicity, and so on) or across borders" (Deardorff 2019: i). In comparison to traditional approaches that emphasise ethno-cultural differences between participants during an intercultural encounter, more recent approaches stress the idea that one's identity is always diverse and multidimensional (i.e., it is comprised of various facets, such as gender, class, language repertoire, interests and personal experience) (Dervin 2010; Dypedahl 2018). Therefore, intercultural competence is related to dealing with "diverse diversities" (Dervin 2010: 166), rather than ethno-cultural ones, and to the ability "to navigate conflict, contradiction, complexity and ambiguity" in contemporary societies (Hoff 2019: 444).

Stemming from these recent theoretical views, we suggest that open-mindedness, understood

as open and unprejudiced attitudes towards diversity and differences in general, can be an indicator of one's predisposition to develop intercultural competence. Based on previous research, which shows a possible connection between multilingualism and open-mindedness (Dewaele & Oudenhoven 2009), it can be assumed that multilingualism is related to and can be a resource for the development of intercultural competence. However, research that has investigated the connection between these two elements in the school context is surprisingly scarce, although the fostering of pupils' multilingualism and intercultural competence are central aims in language curricula in Norway and elsewhere. Furthermore, to our knowledge, there have not yet been any studies examining the connection between multilingualism, intercultural competence *and* multilingual identity. Consequently, a main contribution of the Ungspråk project is that it investigates the intersection of these three elements using an innovative mixed methods design.

3. Why the Norwegian context?

To some extent, Norway can be called a multilingual paradise (Røyneland 2009; Haukås fc). The official national languages are Norwegian and Sami, a group of indigenous languages spoken in northern Scandinavia. The use of local dialects and regional varieties are highly valued in Norway, and their use is promoted in all domains of society (Kulbrandstad 2018). At school, all children are taught the two written varieties of Norwegian, Nynorsk and Bokmål. They are usually taught one of the varieties in primary school, but from the first year of lower secondary school (Grade 8), all students learn to use both varieties in written communication. Receptive multilingualism is also quite common in Norway, as most Norwegians can understand standard Swedish and Danish. However, mutual understanding among young people seems to be declining, perhaps due to the increasing influence of English (Delsing & Åkeson 2005).

When children start school and begin learning Norwegian or Sami, they simultaneously start learning English, which is a compulsory subject during the 10 years of mandatory education. English is also mandatory in the first year of upper secondary school (Grade 11) and can also be studied in more depth if pupils decide to take English as a programme subject. Norwegians are well known for their excellent English-language skills, which are ranked among the best in Europe (Education First 2019), likely because of the omnipresence of English in the Scandinavian context. Recent research has suggested that many young Scandinavians' extensive use of the Internet (for gaming, social media, etc.) has positively impacted their English communicative skills (Sundqvist 2009; Sundqvist & Wikström 2015; Brevik 2016). Moreover, a growing number of pupils in Norwegian schools know and/or speak a host of other languages due to increased immigration in the last decades. According to Statistics Norway (2020), 18.2% of the total Norwegian population are immigrants or Norwegian-born children of immigrant parents. However, this number varies across demographic settings, as more immigrants and, consequently, more linguistic diversity can be found in urban centres.

When pupils start lower secondary school (Grade 8), they are offered the choice of learning an additional foreign language besides English. The most commonly taught languages are Spanish, German and French. Some schools also offer other languages such as Italian, Chinese and Norwegian sign language. In the 2018/2019 school year, around 77% of the pupils opted to take a second foreign language class, whereas the remaining group chose between extra classes in English, Norwegian, maths or the more vocationally oriented subject *arbeidslivsfag* (work experience), depending on the availability of the subject in each particular school (Foreign Language Centre 2018). In light of this linguistic diversity, Norwegian schools offer a rich groundwork for studying multilingualism and multilingual identity.

Lower secondary schools are a particularly interesting setting because starting in their eighth year, learners have the choice to expand their linguistic repertoires and begin learning a second foreign language in a formal educational context. This was the foundation for this longitudinal study investigating the development of pupils' beliefs and attitudes in relation to multilingualism and

language learning throughout lower secondary school.

Furthermore, investigating lower secondary school teachers' beliefs about multilingualism and related topics, as well as their preparedness for implementing a multilingual and intercultural pedagogical approach in their classrooms, provides a broader understanding of multilingualism in an educational context, as teachers play a key role in fostering pupils' multilingual awareness and identity (Haukås 2016; Fisher et al. 2018). In the following section, we present the Ungspråk project in more detail, focusing on the areas of interest, research questions and their relationship to the mixed methods design of the project.

4. Areas of interest and research questions

The Ungspråk project is comprised of three main areas of research interest. The first concerns students' multilingualism and multilingual identity in Norwegian lower secondary schools. Despite the recent focus on multilingualism in the field of language education, many researchers and practitioners tend to assume that multilingual speakers are primarily students originating from ethnic minorities or who have migration backgrounds (Haukås fc). The example of Norway, however, illustrates that this view has never been adequate in this society with its rich linguistic diversity.

Hence, in our research, we shift away from the academic and educational discourses that reproduce this bias. Instead of following certain criteria to identify students as mono/multilingual, we focus on students' own perceptions of multilingualism, their language habits and repertoires as well as whether or not they see themselves as multilingual. For this purpose, we address the concept of multilingual identity as central to our project, viewing identity as dynamic, contextual, hybrid, unstable and changing over time (Block 2009, 2010, 2013; Norton 2010; Fisher et al. 2018). Consequently, we also aim to investigate how students' views of their multilingualism change over time, and specifically what role language learning plays in these views.

The second area of interest relates to the intersection between multilingualism, multilingual identity and intercultural competence. Both internationally and locally, there is an increasing emphasis on the interconnection between multilingualism and intercultural competence, which is reflected in key official documents. For instance, the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe 2001, 2018) considers individual multilingualism and intercultural competence as two facets of the same skill: plurilingual and pluricultural competence. In Norway, school subject curricula have recently been revised by the Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training (2017). Of particular interest to the Ungspråk project is the new emphasis on multilingualism, language awareness, intercultural competence and global citizenship in the core curricula as well as in the language subjects:

> The teaching and training shall ensure that the pupils are confident in their language proficiency, that they develop their language identity and that they are able to use language to think, create meaning, communicate and connect with others. Language gives us a sense of belonging and cultural awareness … knowledge about the linguistic diversity in society provides all pupils with valuable insights into different forms of expression, ideas and traditions. All pupils shall experience that being proficient in a number of languages is a resource, both in school and in society at large (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training 2017: 7).

The emphasis on these issues is particularly strong in the foreign language curriculum (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training 2019), which includes multilingualism and intercultural competence as two of its four core elements. This tendency towards connecting and emphasising the role of intercultural competence and multilingualism in education indicates a clear

need for empirical research that can shed light on the intersection between these phenomena. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the link between students' multilingualism, multilingual identity and intercultural competence, we also examined their relationship with other variables, such as gender, experience living or travelling abroad, migration background and number of languages learned in and out of school.

The third area of interest is grounded in an approach to research ethics that seeks to go beyond the general principles of procedural ethics (Christians 2005). Kubanyiova (2008) stated that the three core principles that serve as a standard for studies conducted with humans (respect for persons, justice and beneficence) should be followed in any research field, including language education and applied linguistics. However, the author argued that these principles are "by no means sufficient (and unambiguous) guides in making ethical choices in the actual practice of conducting research" (Kubanyiova 2008: 506). Therefore, there is a need for an interpersonal approach to ethics in research that sees ethical challenges as intrinsic and integral components of the whole research process (Guillemin & Gillam 2004; Haverkamp 2005).

In our view, such an approach to ethics entails expanding the scope from mainly doing research *on* to doing research *with/for* the participants. In our project, we seek to respond to the need for an increased interpersonal approach to ethics by sharing the research results with participants and establishing a dialogue with them. Through interactive sessions with students and teachers, we seek to investigate how research can be meaningfully presented to participants and in which ways a collaborative exploration of research can create new insights for all involved and for the research field in general.

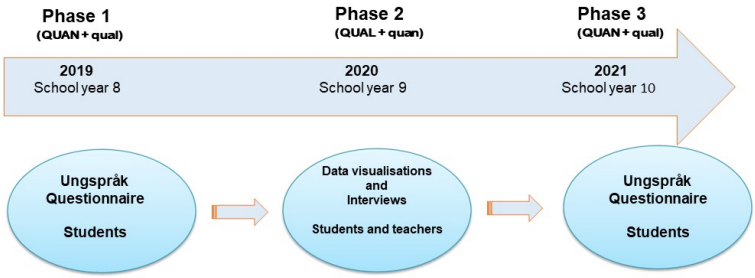
With respect to these three areas of interest, the Ungspråk project raises the following main research questions:

> Area 1: What does it mean to be multilingual for pupils in Norwegian lower secondary schools? Do their views on what it means to be multilingual change throughout lower secondary school?
> Area 2: To what extent does multilingual identity correlate with intercultural competence and a number of other variables, such as students' multilingualism, language use habits, gender, experience abroad and migration background?
> Area 3: How can research on multilingualism and multilingual identity be designed to engage participants with the research processes and findings? How can participants' involvement in research contribute to a deepened understanding of multilingualism and multilingual identity?

5. Methodology: using a mixed methods design to research multilingualism

In order to integrate the three areas of interest, we opted for a mixed methods research design for our project. Figure 1 provides an overview of the Ungspråk project. It shows the timeline for data collection (2019-2021) in three different phases, the type of data to be collected in each year and the participants in each phase. Capitalisation of either QUAN or QUAL in the figure signals the predominance of either quantitative or qualitative methods, respectively, in the phases.

Figure 1: Overview of the Ungspråk project and its mixed methods design



The Ungspråk project assigns equal status to both its quantitative and qualitative components. This is based on an epistemological stance that sees the persistent dichotomy between qualitative and quantitative paradigms as unproductive, and sometimes even detrimental, to the overall quality of research (Hammersley 1992: 159). In practical terms, this means that in the Ungspråk research project, the qualitative and the quantitative components "take control over the research process in alternation, are in constant interaction, and the outcomes they produce are integrated during and at the end of the research process" (Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017: 123).

The research questions address multilingualism and the development of multilingual identity from a processual, longitudinal perspective and call for a sequential design in which the later phases of the research project are dependent on and emerge from the insights and findings gathered in previous phases. In other words, the broader scope of the design allows for the triangulation of data collected at different phases and the use of results from previous research components to develop and inform the subsequent components of the project (Greene et al. 1989; Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017: 4). Since the Ungspråk project is currently ongoing, our discussions are focused mainly on the first and second phases of the project.

5.1 Phase 1 – the Ungspråk questionnaire: the first round of quantitative data collection

To tap into learners' multilingual identity and related variables and thus gather data to help answer the questions of the first two areas of research interest, we developed an online instrument, the Ungspråk questionnaire. The starting point for developing the questionnaire was a paper-based survey used in the Multilingualism: Empowering Individuals, Transforming Societies (MEITS) project at the University of Cambridge[1]. However, a number of changes were made to adapt the Ungspråk questionnaire to the Norwegian educational context and our research needs. For example, whereas the MEITS questionnaire takes a special interest in pupils' use of metaphors to describe language

[1] The cross-disciplinary project MEITS (2016-2020) has six strands and aims at fostering awareness of multilingualism and multilingual identity in a variety of ways. Our collaborators at strand 4 (with strand leader Dr Linda Fisher, Faculty of Education) take a somewhat similar approach to multilingualism as in the Ungspråk project; they are researching learners' multilingual identity development in lower secondary schools in England.

learning, the Ungspråk questionnaire included statements on pupils' beliefs about multilingualism, their views as future multilingual speakers and their intercultural competence. Nevertheless, the two questionnaires are similar in several respects, which make them a solid foundation for comparing the results across countries.

In order to facilitate the data collection and analysis, we decided to develop an electronic questionnaire. The survey tool SurveyXact was used to design the layout and administer the questionnaire. It is available in two languages, Norwegian and English, and respondents were able to switch between languages during completion. English was chosen as an additional language for the questionnaire because all pupils in Norway study it from Grade 1 and usually have a good knowledge of the language. Besides, given the status of English as a lingua franca, we aimed to provide an opportunity for students who are not native speakers of Norwegian to use a language that can contribute to their better understanding of the questionnaire. We recognise that some of our respondents could benefit even more from the translation of the questionnaire into other (e.g., minority) languages. However, considering that the translation of a questionnaire into several languages is a time-consuming process and that the collection of the data in different languages would have complicated the analysis, especially in relation to open-ended questions, we decided to opt for these two languages.

When recruiting the schools, we aimed for a combination of different socioeconomic areas with varying linguistic diversity, including schools from rural areas where pupils have Nynorsk as their first priority language. In total, 593 pupils from seven schools responded to the questionnaire in the first phase of the project during spring and summer of 2019. Of all respondents, 86% listed Bokmål as their first choice form of Norwegian, while 14% indicated Nynorsk. These numbers correspond to the proportions of Bokmål and Nynorsk users in Norwegian schools at the national level (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training n.d.). By adding this dimension of linguistic diversity (i.e., being a user of Nynorsk may be viewed as belonging to a minority), we sought to investigate to what extent students' different language constellations in and out of school (Aronin & Singleton 2012) influenced their language practices and multilingual identity.

The Ungspråk questionnaire includes a mix of multiple choice and open-ended questions as well as Likert scale questions to assess students' attitudes and beliefs (Dörnyei & Taguchi 2010: 5). The research instrument and the predominant type of data collected determined the primarily quantitative aspect of the first phase of the project. However, the textual responses generated by the open-ended questions added a secondary qualitative element.

The Ungspråk questionnaire is divided into four main sections. Section 1 was designed to examine pupils' language habits and contexts of language use. It contains six statements which provide an overview of what languages the participants study in school; what other languages they know; and how often, with whom and in which situations they use their various languages. In addition, four statements investigate learners' views related to each of the languages they know. In sum, Section 1 provides a general mapping of all the languages known and used by pupils in and out of school as well as an overview of the contexts in which these languages are used.

Section 2 is concerned with different aspects related to having a multilingual identity. In total, there are 25 statements in this section comprising three different constructs: beliefs about multilingualism, future multilingual self and open-mindedness. The answers to the statements use a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Section 3 has one open-ended statement in which pupils are asked to define what it means to be multilingual. After that, they are asked if they identify themselves as multilingual (by choosing yes, no or not sure in response to the question "Er du flerspråklig?/Are you multilingual?") and to provide an explanation for their answer. The first open-ended statement "To be multilingual means…" was designed to investigate a practical problem that is only partially addressed in the research literature about multilingualism in Norway: in institutional discourses, the word *flerspråklig*

(multilingual) is frequently used to refer to students with immigrant backgrounds who struggle to learn Norwegian (Sickinghe 2016; Haukås fc), thus portraying multilingualism as problematic. By understanding what it means to be multilingual according to the students themselves, this statement calls for "the voices of individuals who have not been heard" (Clark & Baddie 2010: 10).

The following question ("Are you multilingual?") constitutes our main dependent variable to assess what factors influence self-identification as multilingual. After marking either yes, no or not sure, students are asked to provide a brief written explanation for their answer. It is important to highlight that, apart from these two cases, the word *flerspråklig* does not appear in any other statements in the questionnaire to avoid that participants' answers being influenced by what they read. However, by asking questions related to their language habits in the first section, we cannot entirely exclude that this has influenced their perceptions of what it means to be multilingual. Section 4 of the questionnaire asks for background information that can shed more light on students' experiences with certain languages (for example, their experiences living in a different country, travel habits, languages that their parents or carers know and self-reported grades in each of the languages studied in school).

The questionnaire was piloted twice in two lower secondary schools in the same area during spring 2019. The validation process suggests that the final version of Ungspråk is a reliable and valid instrument for examining pupils' multilingual practices, multilingual identity and related variables. An article discussing the validation processes adopted for the Ungspråk questionnaire is discussed in detail in an upcoming issue of *Language Learning Journal* (Haukås et al. fc).

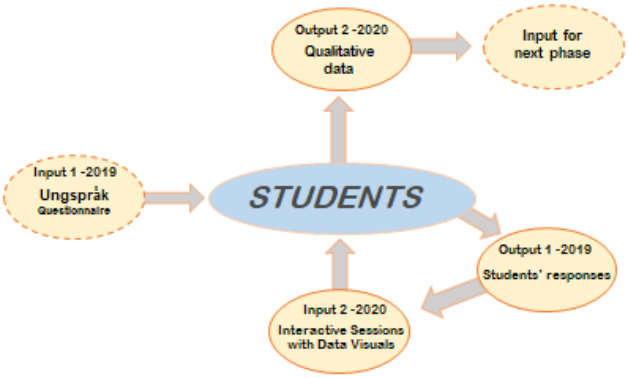
5.2 Phase 2 – interactive sessions: qualitative data collection

Interactive sessions are actions through which researchers and participants in a study can engage with the data and each other in a dialogical manner. The interactive sessions correspond to the qualitative components of the mixed methods design of the study and are built on the findings from Phase 1 of the project. They will be implemented in two forms. First, we will conduct facilitated discussions with students based on data visualisations that present the research results from the Ungspråk questionnaire. Second, we will interview the teachers regarding their perceptions of multilingualism and the potential benefits and outcomes of the study for participating schools and teaching practice. Below we discuss the interactive sessions in detail, focusing on their ethical, epistemological and pedagogical implications for the project as a whole.

5.2.1 Interactive data visualisation sessions with students

In order to integrate the quantitative and qualitative components of the study and to promote participants' engagement with the research findings, the Ungspråk team developed data visualisations for use in the interactive sessions in the autumn of 2020. Figure 2 below presents the development of the sessions and their timing (Guest 2013: 148).

Figure 2: Development and timing of the interactive sessions with students



As shown in the image, some of the responses to the Ungspråk questionnaire (Output 1) were converted into data visualisations for future use in classroom discussions during the interactive sessions (Input 2) with the participating schools. The procedure will create a feedback effect whereby qualitative data (Output 2) will be obtained based on the participants' interactions with the quantitative data they helped generate via the Ungspråk questionnaire. The interactive sessions are designed to offer participants the opportunity to reflect on their reflections by giving them tasks that are open to their own explorations and interests. Thus, the sessions address ethical concerns that are usually overlooked in research in education: the fact that, more often than not, participants do not get much feedback from researchers once data is collected and are rarely invited to interact with and give feedback on the data themselves.

The purpose of the sessions follows the epistemological rationale of mixed methods research. The sessions are the result of a point of integration (Guest 2013: 146) that combines qualitative and quantitative approaches with the aim of achieving "heightened knowledge and validity" (Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017: 4). First, one dataset (quantitative answers to the Ungspråk questionnaire) will provide input for the design of subsequent research instruments, data collection and analysis procedures (Guest 2013: 148; Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017: 8). Second, the sessions will provide valuable complementary data to answer the research questions related to the first area of research interest, and the second dataset (qualitative data from the interactive sessions) will enhance the results from the first dataset.

The Ungspråk research team opted for data visualisations for two interrelated reasons. The first reason was determined by a practical challenge that can be summarised in the following question: How can we present and make students interact with quantitative data in a way that is both accessible and engaging to participants? The second reason introduces a current pedagogical concern related to the development of visual-numeric literacy among schoolchildren as a consequence of the widespread and increasing use of data visualisations in contemporary societies (Lankshear 2003; Shield 2004; Bhargava & D'Ignazio 2015; Tønnessen 2020).

The data visualisations designed for the Ungspråk project include three graphs (a pie chart, a bar graph and a multi-layered icon crowd) representing participants' responses to the question "Are you

multilingual?". Each graph explores different affordances of data visualisations (Kress & Van Leuwen 2002). A fourth visualisation groups the participants' responses to the open-ended comment "To be multilingual means…" into different categories. Participants will create visual data using a sorting task and later compare their categorisations to those of the researchers. In addition, each category contains a brief comment and a set of questions to be answered by the participants. Here, the pupils will be free to choose the categories that interest them the most, thus giving them more autonomy to explore their own questions and interests. Their written answers and visual data will be used as qualitative data for the analysis. Altogether, the interactive sessions have the overt aim of promoting further discussions on multilingualism among students and the covert aim of practicing visual-numeric literacy, thus partially addressing the pedagogical need outlined before.

5.2.2 Interviews with teachers

The second type of interactive sessions that will be implemented in the Ungspråk project are interviews with teachers. In order to provide consistency between the two phases of the project, the language teachers will be recruited from the same schools that participated in the first phase of the project. Interviews will be conducted with foreign language teachers (i.e., teachers of Spanish, German and French) in the autumn term of 2020. We chose to introduce this method into our research design primarily to expand our knowledge in relation to the second area of interest in our project, which concerns the intersection between students' multilingualism and intercultural competence. Foreign language teachers' views are of special interest given the particularly strong emphasis on multilingualism and intercultural competence in the new curriculum for foreign languages that will be implemented beginning in August 2020 (Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training 2019).

The choice to interview foreign language teachers was selected as one of the main research methods for the second phase of the project for several reasons. First, we aim to enrich the research findings by introducing the perspective of teachers, who are central actors in the implementation of the new foreign language curriculum. We want to investigate how teachers conceptualise multilingualism, multilingual identity and intercultural competence and determine if they see an interconnection between these phenomena in their students' development. By gaining a better understanding of teachers' perspectives, we hope to contribute to the implementation of the new curriculum.

In addition, the interviews with teachers will also address the third area of interest, which concerns the meaningful presentation of research results to participants and stakeholders. As a research method, interviews engage participants in a meaningful discussion with researchers and can serve as a platform for collaborative exploration of research findings.

In order to provide a meaningful discussion on the research results, the teachers will have the opportunity to explore and discuss the same visualisations on multilingualism and multilingual identity that were presented to the students. In addition, they will explore the questionnaire data obtained on the construct of open-mindedness, which is used in the study as the main indicator of students' intercultural competence development, and its interrelation with multilingualism and multilingual identity. By inviting teachers' perspectives and views on the intersection between students' multilingualism, multilingual identity and intercultural competence, we aim to provide a diversity of views (Bryman 2006; Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017) that will contribute to a deeper understanding of the research results. Moreover, discussing and exploring the findings with language teachers will help us to assess the usefulness and potential benefits of the study outcomes for teachers and language education in general.

5.3 Phase 3 – the Ungspråk questionnaire: the second round of quantitative data collection

The main purpose of the third and last phase of the Ungspråk project is to provide data for a longitudinal assessment of pupils' opinions and beliefs about multilingualism and their multilingual

identity. In order to do so, the research instrument envisaged for this phase is similar to the one used in Phase 1 (the Ungspråk questionnaire). However, the design of the Ungspråk project leaves room for the final questionnaire to be adapted to explore unexpected outcomes that emerge from and are dependent on previous phases of data collection and analysis. Therefore, at the current stage of the project, the final design of this research instrument is yet to be determined.

6. Conclusion

The main objectives of this article were to discuss the theoretical background and rationale for developing the Ungspråk research project, to present the research questions and to explain how they will be answered using a mixed methods design. Prior to designing the study, several gaps in the existing research on multilingualism and multilingual identity were identified, resulting in three areas of interest. First, research on learners' own definitions of multilingualism, their multilingual habits and self-identification as multilingual in a lower secondary school context is limited both in Norway and internationally. Findings from this part of the project will contribute to scholarly discussions in several ways. Understanding how multilingualism is perceived and practised by young people may add new ideas on how multilingualism can be conceptualised and used as a resource in the classroom. Moreover, the longitudinal design of the project will provide new insights into young learners' multilingual identities as dynamic and emergent phenomena. These contributions may impact how languages are taught and how learners' multilingualism is explored in education.

Second, research on the correlation of young learners' multilingual identity with other variables is limited. Among these variables, exploring learners' open-mindedness has received particular attention given the increased emphasis on intercultural competence in the school curricula and the need for educating flexible, empathic, global citizens in a rapidly changing world. With insight into the correlation between learners' multilingual identity and open-mindedness, the study aims to contribute to research on the intersection between multilingualism and intercultural competence in the field of education.

Third, although ethical principles of research recommend that findings are shared with participants and should ideally be of benefit to them, the number of studies in applied linguistics that have reported doing so is minimal. In particular, studies that share the results from quantitative research with young participants are largely missing. In response to this gap, the Ungspråk project aims to examine how the research results can be shared with pupils and collaboratively explored. In addition, the project will pay attention to the key role of teachers in deciding how languages are taught and how topics related to multilingualism, multilingual identity and intercultural competence are approached in the classroom. For this reason, the sharing and exploration of research results will also include interviews with lower secondary school language teachers. An increased understanding of their beliefs and practices, as well as a collaborative exploration of data, may lead to new and innovative research-based teaching approaches. Moreover, our goal to meet fundamental ethical principles by presenting and exploring our research with the participants will create new questions regarding how research can be meaningfully shared.

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Article 2

Developing and validating a questionnaire on young learners' multilingualism and multilingual identity

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Developing and validating a questionnaire on young learners' multilingualism and multilingual identity

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ABSTRACT

Validation of data collection instruments is a necessary step in all research and should be regarded as an integral component in every stage of the research process; however, the validation process is often not accounted for in detail in published studies. The purpose of this paper is to describe the development and validation of the Ungspråk electronic questionnaire, which was designed to explore teenagers' multilingualism and multilingual identity in the Norwegian school context. It aims to examine whether having a multilingual identity correlates with several variables such as language practices, languages studied in school, open-mindedness, and beliefs about multilingualism. To our knowledge, the Ungspråk questionnaire is one of the first validated tools for quantitatively investigating learners' multilingual identity in school settings. Different qualitative and quantitative procedures were adopted for validating Ungspråk, including piloting sessions with students from two lower secondary schools. The results of the validation processes suggest that the Ungspråk questionnaire is a robust instrument for investigating young learners' multilingual identity. It is easy to use, acceptable to learners, and fulfils stringent criteria of reliability and validity.

KEYWORDS

Multilingualism in education; multilingual identity; language learning; questionnaire validation; electronic questionnaire

Introduction

Validity is at the same time one of the most important and contentious concepts in academic research, a fact supported by the multitude of theoretical and methodological approaches dedicated to it. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2020) defines the word *valid* as denoting something that is 'well-grounded or justifiable […] at once relevant and meaningful', 'logically correct' and 'appropriate to the end in view'. The aptness of these attributes to define high-quality academic research attest to why validity is something to be strived for. What seems open to dispute are the means used to validate a research study or, in other words, how one justifies the appropriateness of the research methods and instruments and how they lead to meaningful and well-grounded results.

The authors of this article consider validity as an integral component of all stages of a research process. Therefore, it should be accounted for in the purposes of a study, in the design of the research instruments and methods for collecting data and answering research questions, and in the ethical principles guiding the relationship between researchers, participants, collaborators and the research community.

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In this article, we provide an account of the quantitative and qualitative procedures adopted in the validation of the questionnaire Ungspråk.[1] The questionnaire is the main quantitative component of the Ungspråk project (2018–2022), a longitudinal mixed methods study that uses a combination of instruments for data collection and methodologies of analysis to investigate multilingualism and multilingual identity in Norwegian secondary schools (Haukås et al. 2021). Due to the prevalence of socio-constructivist views in language and identity research (Block 2013), qualitative methodologies have become more common in research on multilingualism and multilingual identity (see, e.g. Duff [2015] for an overview of relevant studies). However, we see it beneficial to collect and analyse both *qualitative* and *quantitative* data on the phenomena under focus. Combining results from quantitative and qualitative research on multilingual identity may provide valuable and complementary insights to the research field (Monrad 2013; Kroger 2007).

By offering a narrative of the development of a questionnaire aimed at investigating young learners' multilingualism and multilingual identity, we aspire to show how validity can be best understood as an iterative and cumulative process in which specific methodological procedures (such as face, content and construct validity) are not just isolated, one-time measures but relate and contribute to the overall quality of the study. From this perspective, even the writing of an academic paper is seen as part of the validation process, since it is not a neutral account of events but a 'literary technology designed to persuade readers of the merits of a study' (Sandelowski and Barroso 2002). Furthermore, research papers are usually the only means audiences have to 'understand the ground on which a study was undertaken, the means and methods adopted to realize the findings' (Lincoln 2001: 25) and, therefore, to assess its validity and relevance for future research.

To our knowledge, the Ungspråk questionnaire is one of the first validated quantitative research instruments designed specifically for studying multilingual identity in an educational context. The paper starts with an introduction to multilingualism and multilingual identity in the Norwegian educational context, followed by an overview of the theoretical framework that supports our research. After presenting our international partners in the project, the text focuses on the development of the electronic version of our research instrument and the challenges involved in designing a questionnaire to young learners. Particular attention is paid to specific procedures aimed at strengthening the overall validity of the questionnaire, such as expert reviews, translation and piloting. Next, we provide a detailed description of each section of the questionnaire, placing particular emphasis on how relevant theoretical concepts were operationalised.

Setting up the context and the theoretical framework for the development of the Ungspråk questionnaire

The increasingly diverse makeup of contemporary societies, and consequently of classroom environments, have promoted a dramatic shift in language learning and teaching. More and more, the knowledge of foreign languages, coupled with the ability to understand different cultures, are seen as crucial resources in preparing citizens for the global challenges of the twenty-first century. These demands are reflected, for instance, in institutional discourses and documents (Council of Europe 2001, 2018; Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training [NDET] 2017) and in the need for pedagogies that harness the potentials of linguistic and cultural diversity in the language classroom (Cenoz 2017; Hu 2018).

These societal shifts have engendered an impressive amount of research focusing on multilingualism in education. One aspect that remains under-researched, however, is the relationship between having a multilingual identity and its implications for language learning and teaching. The Ungspråk project seeks to address this gap by investigating multilingualism and multilingual identity in Norwegian secondary schools (see Haukås et al. [2021] for a detailed discussion of the whole research project). In the next sections, we provide an overview of multilingualism in the Norwegian educational context and explain the importance of the concept of multilingual identity to our research.

Multilingualism in Norway

Norway can be considered a multilingual country for several reasons. It has two official languages, Norwegian and Sami. Sami is a group of indigenous languages spoken and taught in northern Scandinavia. The two written variants of Norwegian, Nynorsk and Bokmål, are both taught as compulsory school subjects. Bokmål is currently the most frequently preferred language, with 85% of first graders learning it (NDET 2018). Nynorsk is mainly chosen by school children living primarily in western rural areas (Vangsnes 2018). However, all pupils learn both variants starting in school year 8. Furthermore, dialects are highly valued, and schoolchildren are encouraged to speak their local dialects in and out of class (Kulbrandstad 2018). Norwegians are also able to understand their neighbouring languages, Danish and Swedish, a common phenomenon in Scandinavia known as receptive multilingualism (Cenoz 2013; Zeevaert 2007).

English as a foreign language is taught from year 1 of regular schooling and when students start lower-secondary school (school year 8), about 75–80% opt for taking another foreign language; predominantly Spanish, German or French (Norwegian National Centre for Foreign Languages in Education 2020). In the past decades, this unique linguistic scenario has been enriched even further by a host of immigrant languages such as Polish, Lithuanian, Somali and Arabic (Statistics Norway 2020). The value of Norway's rich linguistic diversity for its citizens is emphasised in several white papers, such as in the *Core curriculum – values and principles for primary and secondary education and training* (NDET 2017):

> Knowledge about the linguistic diversity in society provides all pupils with valuable insight into different forms of expression, ideas and traditions. All pupils shall experience that being proficient in a number of languages is a resource, both in school and society at large.

Researching multilingualism in Norwegian lower secondary schools is particularly relevant for two interconnected reasons. The first one is specific to the age group in our study, since it is in the first year of lower secondary school when learners have the opportunity to choose to learn a third language in a formal context and, therefore, expand their linguistic repertoires. Of particular interest in our research project is the role played by learning a third language at school in the pupils' self-identification as multilingual individuals.

The second reason is more general and relates to the ambivalent meaning of the term 'multilingual' (*flerspråklig*) in Norwegian educational contexts. Haukås (Forthcoming) suggests that the word *flerspråklig* is often exclusively employed to refer to children and adults with immigrant backgrounds who struggle to learn Norwegian, therefore having a negative connotation. However, Sickinghe (2016) found that teenagers in upper-secondary school in Norway have a much more nuanced and flexible understanding of the concept. This finding is of particular relevance to our study in lower secondary school, an age range which has so far been neglected in this kind of research.

The concept of multilingual identity as a defining element of the Ungspråk project

Even though all schoolchildren in Norway can be considered multilingual (Haukås Forthcoming), this does not necessarily mean that their language knowledge, practices and beliefs correspond to their self-perceptions as multilinguals. Following Fisher et al. (2018), we distinguish between *linguistic identity* and *multilingual identity* in the context of this study. According to Fisher et al. (2018), the former refers to 'the way one identifies (or is identified by others) in each of the languages in one's linguistic repertoire' (1). So, for instance, the fact that an individual deliberately stresses (or hides) distinctive phonological features of her local variant or dialect in an interaction might be revealing of that person's negotiation of her *linguistic identity*. In this sense, linguistic identity is interpreted in poststructuralist terms as situated, contextual, fluid and dynamic.

Multilingual identity, on the other hand, refers to one's explicit self-identification as multilingual 'precisely because of an awareness of the linguistic repertoire one has' (Fisher et al. 2018: 2). In addition to poststructuralist attributes of linguistic identity, this notion reflects a psychological

theoretical perspective on identity and relates to a *core* identity, that is, a 'temporary fixed' sense of what one is (Block 2013: 18). As emphasised by Fisher et al. (2018: 3), this core identity develops over time and connects one's past, present and future (possible) images of oneself, thus providing guidance for actions and interpretations of experience. This understanding of multilingual identity as a temporary fixed phenomenon that can be connected with other factors has a direct bearing on the longitudinal, mixed methods design of the Ungspråk project and particularly on the construction of the Ungspråk questionnaire.

Several researchers (Fisher et al. 2018; Henry 2017; Henry and Thorsen 2018; Ushioda 2017) point out that the awareness and self-identification as a multilingual individual can be a potentially significant factor in the maintenance and development of the languages an individual already knows and in the effort and investment placed in learning new languages. In addition, some scholars consider multilingual identity as a holistic phenomenon, which can be related to and have an influence on other dimensions of identity, such as beliefs, attitudes, and personal life scenarios (Aronin 2016; Busse 2017). Fisher et al. (2018) and Pavlenko (2006) also suggest that a positive self-identification as multilingual can be empowering.

Multilingual identity and its connection to other factors

The researchers in the Ungspråk team adopt a holistic approach to multilingualism and are interested both in the language-learning implications of having a multilingual identity and in its relationship to other 'cognitive, societal and personal aspects' (Aronin 2019b: 9). Consequently, the Ungspråk questionnaire explores several aspects that can contribute to a better understanding of pupils' multilingualism and multilingual identity. In what follows, we present some of these aspects and discuss the theoretical orientations that support them.

(1) *Language use habits*. As mentioned earlier, the language habits of a multilingual individual do not necessarily correspond to her self-identification as multilingual. In order to enquire into the relationship between multilingual identity and language learning, it is crucial to have a mapping of the languages known and used by participants, both at school and beyond. Knowing the purposes and contexts in which a language is used and the speaker's attitudes towards that particular language provide researchers with valuable information not just about that individual language per se. More importantly, they offer a broad picture of the interplay among the language resources an individual has and the communicative, cognitive and identity purposes they serve (Aronin 2019b). In the section that presents the final version of the questionnaire, we describe in detail how a mapping of participants' language habits was obtained.

(2) *Student's beliefs about multilingualism*. Our interest in looking into possible correlations between having a multilingual identity and students' beliefs about multilingualism is due to the general scarcity of research that takes into account the participants' beliefs on the latter topic. Scholars have repeatedly pointed to several advantages of multilingualism, for example, higher cognitive flexibility, creativity, and better episodic and semantic memory compared with monolinguals (for an overview of general cognitive advantages see Antoniou 2019; Bialystok 2011; Leivada et al. 2020). Positive effects of multilingualism on additional language learning have also been documented in several studies. Above all, multilinguals seem to have an increased metalinguistic awareness, and they show better developed metacognitive skills related to using language learning strategies (Jessner 2008; Kemp 2007). In addition to cognitive effects, scholars emphasise positive economic effects of multilingualism and increased empathy/intercultural competence (Bel Habib 2011; Dewaele and Wei 2012). It should be noted, however, that scholars have also failed to demonstrate cognitive advantages in multilinguals in several studies and the debate is still ongoing (Antoniou 2019; Bialystok 2011; Leivada et al. 2020).

Yet, the abundance of research on the benefits of multilingualism stands in contrast with the rare studies on pupils' beliefs about multilingualism, especially considering the direct

implications they may have for language learning outcomes. For example, whereas positive beliefs about multilingualism may spark interest in investing time and effort in the learning process, negative beliefs may hinder students seeing the relevance of being multilingual, resulting in decreased motivation.

(3) *Future multilingual self*. The third focus derives from recent research in the field of language learning motivation (Busse 2017; Henry 2017; Henry and Thorsen 2018; Ushioda 2017). Research in this field uses the concept of the future/ideal multilingual self to refer to a particular aspect of multilingual identity, i.e. learners' future-oriented self-conception as speakers or users of multiple languages, and investigates the effects this image can have on students' motivation in language learning. Scholars argue that in the contemporary world where English language has a dominant status as a global language and significantly shapes learners' language choices, the ideal multilingual self may have a powerful effect on students' motivation in learning languages other than English. However, even though researchers believe that a future oriented image of oneself as a multilingual speaker can have a significant potential for research, empirical studies that explore this aspect of identity are still rare.

(4) *Open-mindedness*. Our interest in the correlation between a multilingual identity and open-mindedness is sparked by the growing emphasis on the role of intercultural competence in foreign language education. This trend is reflected, for example, in the new Norwegian curriculum for foreign languages which highlights fostering intercultural competence as one of the most important aims of the subject (NDET 2019). In research and assessment instruments, intercultural competence is often associated with learners' open, unprejudiced and positive attitudes towards diversity, which can be unified under the term *open-mindedness*. A number of studies indicate that open-mindedness can be positively connected to one's multilingualism (Dewaele and Van Oudenhoven 2009; Dewaele and Wei 2012). Other scholars (e.g. Mellizo 2017; Ruokonen and Kairavuori 2012) also show that pupils' positive attitudes and emotions towards cultural differences, among other factors, can be correlated to their language repertoires and language learning. Stemming from the above research, the Ungspråk questionnaire investigates whether and to what extent a multilingual identity is connected to learners' open-mindedness as a significant indicator of intercultural competence development.

(5) *Other significant variables*. In order to broaden the scope of analysis and strengthen our findings, the Ungspråk questionnaire collects data on a number of other variables that might be associated with self-identification as multilingual, such as attitudes towards the languages pupils know, gender, immigration background, school grades, travel experience, experience of living abroad, friends' language repertoires, and parents/carers' education. In addition, we are interested in investigating if being a user of the written variety of Norwegian used by most Norwegians (Bokmål) or a user of Nynorsk, which is only chosen by a minority (12%) (Vangsnes 2018) correlates differently with pupils' multilingual identity.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the centrality of the concept of multilingual identity in the Ungspråk questionnaire and how it is investigated in relation to other variables. It also shows how other variables might be interrelated.

Developing and validating the Ungspråk questionnaire: describing the process

Our starting point

The Ungspråk research project is made up of a team of multilingual researchers with a broad range of language learning and teaching experiences in different contexts across the world. For successful innovation as a team, it was deemed vital that enough time was spent for all members to develop a strong sense of ownership of the research project. To achieve this and to transform heterogeneity into common understanding and innovation, we adopted frequent meetings with open,

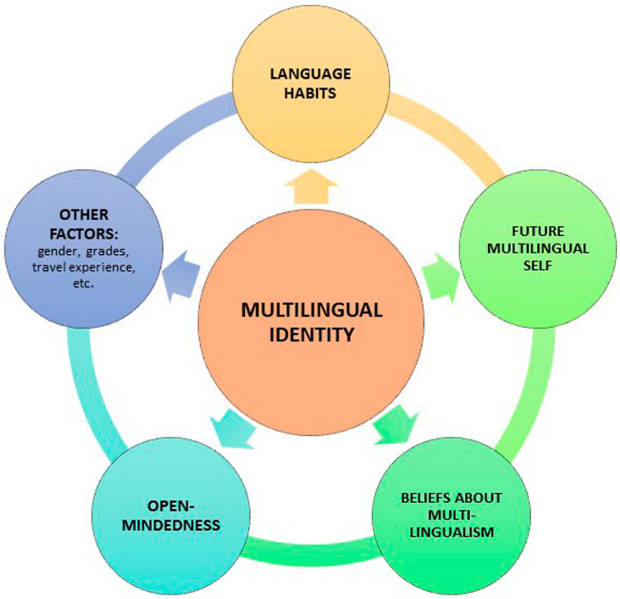

Figure 1. Multilingual identity in the Ungspråk questionnaire and its relationship to other variables.

inclusive and reflective discussions (Drach-Zahavy and Somech 2001; El Ayoubi 2001). Consequently, the Ungspråk questionnaire had a long maturational period and was developed over a period of eight months (August 2018 – April 2019).

Our international partners in the project belong to the MEITS group at the University of Cambridge. MEITS (Empowering Individuals, Transforming Societies) is an interdisciplinary research project funded under the AHRC Open World Research Initiative. Strand 4 of the project, which sought to answer the question 'What is the relationship between multilingual identity and language learning?', developed a questionnaire to be used for collecting data among lower secondary school pupils in England about their multilingual identity and several other variables such as language habits, motivation, and achievement. In order to compare pupils' multilingual identity and related variables across contexts (England and Norway), the MEITS paper-and pencil survey was used as a starting point for developing the Ungspråk questionnaire (see also Forbes et al. 2021).

However, for theoretical and practical reasons, it soon became clear that the Ungspråk questionnaire needed to depart from the MEITS questionnaire in multiple ways. The most obvious practical reason had to do with the adaptation of the general content to the context of Norwegian lower secondary schools. The main theoretical reasons involved developing a questionnaire that suited our specific research interests and was appropriate to provide answers to our research questions. For example, whereas MEITS takes a special interest in pupils' use of metaphors when describing their language learning, the Ungspråk questionnaire places a stronger emphasis on pupils' beliefs about multilingualism, their future multilingual selves and open-mindedness. Nevertheless, several similarities remain, providing valuable possibilities for comparisons across contexts.

As mentioned earlier, creating a valid questionnaire is a cumulative process that requires various developmental steps and considerations. In our case, several theoretical discussions over an extended period resulted in an agreement on the main research objectives for the project and which theories to draw on, as presented in the first section of the paper. Based on our theoretical framework, we thereafter created a full draft of the questionnaire. Subsequently, we invited a number of experts from the field (MEITS collaborators, local experts in multilingualism and research

design, and language teachers) to critically examine the appropriateness of the questionnaire for examining pupils' multilingual identity and related variables. More specifically, the experts were asked to consider its conciseness, clarity and adequacy. The feedback from the experts cannot be underrated, as it in multiple ways challenged the research team to clarify their objectives and to improve the contents of the questionnaire. Visits from researchers of the MEITS team (August and November 2018) were especially relevant, as they could share their experiences and provide our team with useful insights and comments. Summing up, the final version of the questionnaire is the result of several rounds of theory-driven discussions both in the Ungspråk team as well as with experts from various fields and professions. In what follows, we discuss some of our considerations during the process. These are related to developing questionnaires for young people and to the design and use of an electronic version.

Considerations when designing a questionnaire for young people

When designing a questionnaire, one should never lose sight of the audience it is intended for and strive not only 'for a psychometrically reliable and valid instrument but also for an intrinsically involving one' (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2010, 77). Consequently, creating a questionnaire that looks relevant and is engaging to the participants is a crucial step in validation, since 'questionnaires tend to fail because participants don't understand them, can't complete them, get bored or offended by them, or dislike how they look' (Boynton 2004: 1372).

Several steps were taken to ensure that the Ungspråk questionnaire was engaging, clear and meaningful to the participants. First, once the first draft of the questionnaire was ready, four language teachers with many years of experience working with our target age group were asked to review its contents. They carefully read through the questionnaire, keeping the clarity of the instructions in mind and considering if all formulations were understandable and would feel relevant for lower secondary school pupils. Overall, the language teachers approved of the questionnaire's structure and content for the target group.

In addition, one lower secondary school pupil was recruited to complete the questionnaire while being recorded. The think-aloud protocol took place in November 2018 and the volunteer was asked to explain how he understood the instructions and statements and to provide reasons for his responses when answering the questionnaire. The analysis of the think-aloud protocol proved helpful in spotting ambiguous formulations resulting in the rewording of one instruction, two questions and one statement.

Since the Ungspråk questionnaire is available in two languages (Norwegian and English[2]), translation, an often-neglected aspect of questionnaire development (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2010: 48), was a crucial component in the questionnaire. English was the language used in the research group meetings and in the subsequent development of the questionnaire. After the review of the first final draft of the questionnaire in English, four collaborators were recruited to work individually on the translation of the Ungspråk questionnaire into Norwegian. All of them had previous teaching experience, two were currently doing a Ph.D. in a similar field at the time and one had expertise in developing questionnaires. Three of them were speakers of Norwegian as a first language and highly proficient in English. One was a native speaker of English and highly proficient in Norwegian. The four versions were compared with the translation by the research team and, in each case, the most frequently suggested version was chosen. The team of experts were also asked to look for ambiguities and to estimate if learners would understand and answer the questions appropriately.

One final comment should be made about the perceived appropriateness of the questionnaire to participants. Taking into consideration the context of administration (i.e. classrooms) and the usual association questionnaires have with testing in educational environments, it was essential that we made it clear to the students that the Ungspråk questionnaire was *not* a test. This was mentioned explicitly in the information letter read to the participants in class and implicitly in the opening

instructions to the questionnaire. Thus, one of the threats to validity, evaluation apprehension, was minimized (Rosenberg et al. 1969).

The rationale for using an e-questionnaire

Besides favouring participants' engagement with the questionnaire, given the appeal digital technologies usually have among teenagers, the decision to use a digital format also had several additional advantages. First, all pupils in Norway have laptops for use in the classroom, thus making the data collection process faster, although technical problems are always a potential risk. The digital format also facilitated the logistics of administration, since data were collected in the classrooms via group administration, which allows for large amounts of data to be collected in a single session with a guaranteed high-response rate (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2010: 68).

The Ungspråk questionnaire was developed on SurveyXact, the leading survey tool in Scandinavia. Technical support and occasional meetings with SurveyXact staff were important to improve the questionnaire in terms of clarity of instructions, readability, consistency of style and formatting.

Some features of the online version of the questionnaire include an image related to teenage life and a completion bar at the top of the pages, to make the visual layout more appealing and to encourage participants to continue to answer (Figure 2).

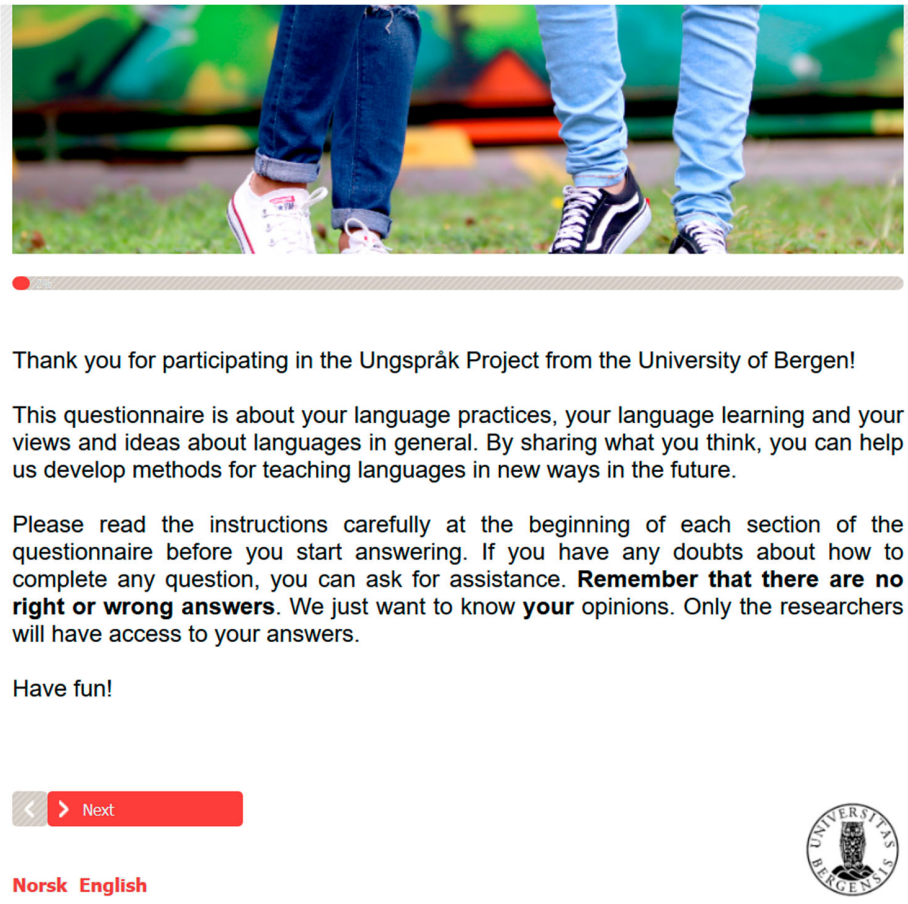

Figure 2. Initial page of the Ungspråk online questionnaire (English version).

Piloting and data collection: practical procedures

In November 2018 the research project, including the questionnaire and information letters in Norwegian and English, was submitted for ethical assessment to the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD). In early February 2019, the research team started contacting prospective schools for carrying out the piloting of the questionnaire. If the school accepted the invitation, a copy of the information letter with details about the project was forwarded to parents. Two schools of the same size and from similar socio-economic areas agreed to take part in the first and the second piloting of the questionnaire. School 1 had 118 participants and school 2 had 116 participants.

Data collection for all sessions, including piloting, took place at the participant schools during class hours. In every session, at least one researcher was present to guide and aid participants in the completion of the questionnaire. Researchers also took notes *in loco* and immediately after the sessions, to register factual information and practical problems arising during data collection and to have a systematic record of observations to triangulate with the data from the questionnaire.

In class, each student was handed a copy of the letter (in English or Norwegian, according to their language choice) and the class teacher was asked to read the version in Norwegian to the whole class. Even though parents had been sent the invitation letter well in advance, we wanted to make sure that all students were duly informed about the project. Particular emphasis was placed on voluntary participation in the research and if a student opted for not answering the questionnaire, they were assigned another activity by the class teacher. Refusal rate remained at 1.7%.

To ensure anonymity and to increase participants' willingness to answer potentially sensitive questions (Schnell et al. 2010), we asked the pupils to generate their own identification code based on the first two letters of the month in which they were born and the four last digits of their mobile phone numbers, assuming that all lower secondary school students own a mobile phone. In this way, the code was known to the pupils and could be used in a second round of data collection in school year ten.

Experts generally agree that the time of completion for a questionnaire should not exceed thirty minutes (Dörnyei and Taguchi 2010: 12). Taking into consideration our respondents' age group (13–14 years) and the length of one teaching unit (60 min), the questionnaire was designed to have an estimated response time of 20 min. However, depending on the number of languages listed by the participants and the length of their responses to some open-ended statements, the response time varied between 15 and 35 min.

The final version of the questionnaire

In the following discussion, our focus is on how the theoretical constructs related to multilingualism and multilingual identity were operationalised in the questionnaire. Where appropriate, the results of statistical tests, such as exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (EFA and CFA), are provided. These statistical procedures were run to test how well the measured variables represent the suggested theoretical constructs, or in other words, 'the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure' (Tavakol and Dennick 2011: 53).

The final version of the questionnaire consists of four main sections. Having pupils' self-identification as multilingual at the centre of inquiry in section 3, the other sections provide important insights into which variables correlate with pupils' multilingual identity. It is important to emphasise that the words 'multilingual' and 'multilingualism' (respectively, 'flerspråklig' and 'flerspråklighet' in Norwegian) are not mentioned in any part of the questionnaire until respondents get to section 3, where they are asked to complete the prompt 'to be multilingual means … '. The reason for this is that previous references to the terms might have influenced the pupils' own definitions and their following explanations to why they consider themselves multilingual or not. However, this consideration does not guarantee that the students' awareness of their multilingual identity may not have

been influenced by the first sections of the questionnaire. In what follows, we present the contents of each section and discuss how they connect to and are informed by relevant theory.

Section 1: multilingual habits

As Norwegian classrooms become increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse, there is a growing need to find out more about the linguistic repertoires, the contexts and the purposes of language use and the roles played by languages in pupils' lives. Drawing on theories of learners' dominant language constellations (Aronin 2019a), the first section of the questionnaire consists of statements related to pupils' language use habits. Participants are first asked to tick the languages they have as school subjects. For each of these languages the digital questionnaire generates a total of eleven statements. The first statement asks participants how many years they have known the language in question. The remaining statements are answered by ticking 'yes' or 'no.

The second statement in the series is 'this is my first/native language'. Besides providing indirect information about the students' family background, the statement allowed students to say which and how many language(s) they regard as their first ones. The next five statements refer to the contexts the language is used and include sentences like 'I use this language to speak to (some of) my friends' and 'I (sometimes) use this language when I go on holiday'. The last four are attitudinal statements for each reported language: 'I am proud that I know this language', 'I avoid using this language', 'I think I know this language well', and 'It is important for me to know this language' (see Supplemental data). In this way, we not only map the patterns of use, but also examine how learners' language practices relate to emotions, self-efficacy, and perceived importance.

Taking pupils' own perceptions of what it means to know a language as a starting point, they are next encouraged to include all other languages they feel they know. Each of these self-reported languages generates the same eleven statements described in the previous paragraph. As pupils' multilingual identity may be correlated with parents/caretakers' and friends' multilingualism, the last part of section 1 asks the participants to list languages their parents/caretakers and friends know. The mapping of pupils', parents' and friends' languages also allows the research team to study whether knowing certain languages (i.e. European or Norway's most common immigrant languages) is more closely correlated with a multilingual identity than others.

Section 2: beliefs about multilingualism, future multilingual self and open-mindedness

The second section of the Ungspråk questionnaire aims to examine to what extent students' self-identification as multilingual correlates with their beliefs about multilingualism, future multilingual self and open-mindedness. It consists of 25 attitudinal statements that were designed and adapted based on the theoretical approaches and empirical studies presented in the first part of this article. After the two piloting sessions, statistical analysis, performed with EFA and CFA as interconnected procedures (Gerbing and Hamilton 1996), helped us group the statements into the three main constructs discussed below (see Supplemental data) and to verify a goodness of fit of the suggested model.

Each statement is followed by a five-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. We decided to use 'not sure' as the middle option rather than 'neither agree nor disagree' to avoid the common problem of how to interpret the midpoint (Nadler et al. 2015). Although analysing the midpoint is often challenging, we decided against a four-point, forced choice Likert scale since pupils may never have reflected on some of the statements before and, consequently, may genuinely be unsure of what to answer.

The construct Beliefs About Multilingualism (BAM) has eight statements. Three statements are related to cognitive advantages associated with multilingualism found in previous research, such as higher intelligence (statement 2), creativity (statement 3) and flexibility (statement 8) (Antoniou 2019; Bialystok 2011). Two of the statements are related to increased language awareness, stating

that being multilingual facilitates further language learning (statement 1), and increases one's cross-linguistic awareness (statement 5) (Jessner 2008; Kemp 2007). Two statements are concerned with economic (statement 4) and general academic (statement 6) benefits, whereas statement 7 derives from research suggesting multilinguals show signs of being more empathetic than others (Bel Habib 2011; Dewaele and Wei 2012).

The construct Future Multilingual Self (FMS) is composed of seven statements. Four of them were designed based on Henry & Thorsen's questionnaire (2018) and reflect one's self-image as a multilingual person in the future (statements 9–13). The other two statements (14 and 15) are related to one's attitudes towards the knowledge of multiple languages. It is worth mentioning that the statements allow differentiating students' future self-images as users of multiple languages versus users of only Norwegian and English. We consider this distinction important due to the specifics of the Norwegian context, where Norwegian and English are compulsory school subjects, whereas learning additional languages is not.

The third construct, Open-mindedness (OPM), consists of ten statements, which were developed based on an overview of several questionnaires, including the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (Van der Zee et al. 2013) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer et al. 2003). The statements are designed to measure how open and unprejudiced respondents are when encountering people who may have different worldviews, opinions and lifestyles.

After the first pilot an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) based on the varimax rotation method was applied to clarify whether the statements represent the corresponding constructs. EFA was performed in SPSS version 25. The rotated factor matrix showed that the statements comprise three main factors, which correspond to the initial constructs FMS, BAM, and OPM. Cronbach's alpha correlation coefficient was used to measure the internal consistency, i.e. the reliability, of each construct (Drost 2011). Cronbach's Alpha of the constructs was 0.65 for FMS, 0.73 for BAM, and 0.65 for OPM.

Before a second piloting of the questionnaire items that showed a poor correlation and, thus, did not load well on these three constructs, were reformulated or replaced. This was the case for 13 statements from the first pilot. The CFA performed with the data from the second pilot confirmed that the items now had stronger factor loadings compared with the first version of the questionnaire. Cronbach's Alpha for the components after the second pilot was 0.75 for FMS, 0.72 for BAM and 0.75 for OPM. These values suggest that the three constructs are reliable measures of pupils' beliefs about multilingualism, future multilingual self and open-mindedness. However, the Cronbach's alpha reliability test showed a poor correlation of some statements to the other items in a construct. In these cases, we considered each statement separately and decided on whether it should be included into the final version of the questionnaire or not. Overall, we had four problematic statements: 'The more languages you know, the easier it is to learn a new language' (0.46) and 'The person I would like to be in the future speaks English very well' (0.38), related to the constructs BAM and FMS respectively; and 'There are different ways of being Norwegian' (0.38) and 'It would be better if all people in Norway shared the same opinions' (0.49), related to OPM. The values of these statements were lower than the selection criterion (<0.5). However, due to their moderate divergence, which is sometimes found in questionnaires containing subjective assessments (Prudon 2015), we kept these statements in the questionnaire as we were interested in studying the particular aspects of students' beliefs about multilingualism, future multilingual self and open-mindedness that they help examine. Furthermore, the results of Cronbach alpha analysis showed that the exclusion of these statements would not improve the overall validity of the constructs. More details about this section and to what extent the constructs correlate with other variables can be found in forthcoming publications.

Section 3: Pupils' definitions of multilingualism and their multilingual identity

Whereas the first two sections do not mention the term 'multilingualism' or 'being multilingual', Section 3 asks the pupils to define being multilingual by completing the sentence 'Being multilingual means … '. In this way, the pupils' own definitions of multilingualism are taken as starting points and

not the various scholarly definitions existing in the field. After having completed the sentence, the participants are asked the following question: 'Are YOU multilingual?' and given the alternatives yes/no/not sure. Thereafter, they are asked to explain their choice.

This section can be regarded as the heart of the questionnaire since it provides data for the main dependent variable and collects rich textual data to complement the quantitative findings. First results from analysing the data from this section can be found in Haukås (Forthcoming). In addition, the answers to this section will be used as input to develop one of the research components in the next phase of the Ungspråk project, namely interactive sessions with participants. In these sessions, students will be presented with their answers from Section 3 of the questionnaire and have the opportunity to discuss and reflect on them. Besides improving the overall quality and validity of the findings, the interactive sessions will address an important ethical issue in research in education: the fact that participant students are not usually invited to interact with and give feedback on the data they help generate (Pinter 2014). Another benefit of this approach is that all participants involved (students, teachers and researchers) might gain a more nuanced and elaborate understanding of what it means to be multilingual. A detailed discussion on the design and implementation of the interactive sessions and their ethical, epistemological and pedagogical implications can be found in Haukås et al. (2021).

Section 4: biographic information

In addition to investigating variables directly related to language learning, our research questions also look into whether having a multilingual identity can be correlated to other factors such as gender, school grades and time spent abroad. Consequently, the final part of the questionnaire consists of factual questions about these topics. This also includes asking for information about pupil's first-choice form of Norwegian (Bokmål or Nynorsk), in order to examine possible differences between these two groups, where Nynorsk users may be regarded as a minority group in the Norwegian multilingual context. In addition, the pupils are invited to add any comments on the questionnaire or on language learning in general before submitting the questionnaire.

Discussion

Creating a valid questionnaire cannot and should not be reduced to the statistical components concerned with construct validity or reliability. Instead, the validity process starts as soon as researchers decide on the need for investigating a given phenomenon. The two main objectives of this article were to present a new questionnaire, Ungspråk, aimed at exploring secondary school students' multilingualism and multilingual identity, and to describe the several validation procedures adopted during the process of its development.

During the initial process, it is vital that the researchers involved reach a mutual understanding of which questions to be asked and which theoretical framework to base the contents of the questionnaire on given the multitude of theories of and approaches to multilingualism and multilingual identity in our field. This admittedly time-consuming process is perhaps particularly important when researchers from different countries, and with different linguistic repertoires, experiences and belief systems get together to create a new project, as was the case in the Ungspråk project. At the same time, this diversity is extremely valuable for critically examining own beliefs and practice shifts of perspectives, which we believe ultimately leads to higher quality research outcomes (El Ayoubi 2001). For example, our various conceptualisations of multilingualism needed to be clarified and also how 'multilingual identity' could be defined and meaningfully explored in a questionnaire study with young participants.

Just as important as reaching a mutual understanding within the research group is to actively seek feedback from experts outside of the group. When developing our questionnaire, we relied on the expertise of other researchers in the field, language teachers, professional questionnaire

developers, a think aloud protocol with a pupil, translators, and ultimately the analysis of collected data from two pilots. All these steps helped us in creating a valid tool for examining pupils' multilingual identity, multilingual habits and other related variables.

In this paper, we wanted to provide readers with details of the developmental process that can be useful when adapting the questionnaire to other contexts. However, when using a research tool, it is vital to always consider its validity in each particular context, as no language learning takes place in a vacuum (Hofstadler et al. 2020). Language learning in school, for example, is part of an education system and is dependent on a range of factors at national and institutional levels that may influence how and how often languages are taught, how languages are valued, who decides to study multiple languages and the expectations of the participants. Likewise, language learning and use outside of school are influenced by factors such as language status, the degree of multilingualism in a given society and who is referred to as being multilingual. As mentioned earlier, two main objectives of the Ungspråk study are to collect students' own definitions of what it means to be multilingual and, based on students' own definitions, ask them if they identify as multilingual. Given that the word 'flerspråklig' (multilingual) is frequently employed in public debates in Norway to refer exclusively to people with immigrant backgrounds (Haukås Forthcoming), we wanted to avoid any use of the term until those questions were asked in the third section of the questionnaire. Consequently, we needed to take the Norwegian context into consideration when structuring the questionnaire, something which may not be necessary in other contexts.

Conclusion

The results of the validation processes suggest that the questionnaire Ungspråk is an appropriate instrument for investigating young learners' multilingual identity and related factors such as their language habits, beliefs about multilingualism, open-mindedness and future multilingual selves. Based on our observations during data collection in piloting schools, the questionnaire is easy to use and acceptable to learners. Furthermore, it fulfils stringent criteria of reliability and validity. However, the Ungspråk questionnaire can also be applied as an awareness-raising tool for teachers and students in the language classroom across contexts. By exploring and discussing the answers to the questionnaire, both teachers and students may broaden their perspectives on how multilingualism is perceived and practiced by young people and who may identify as being multilingual. They may also get new ideas on how multilingualism can be conceptualised and used as a valuable resource in the classroom.

Notes

1. The compound noun Ungspråk consists of the words 'ung' (young), and 'språk' (language(s)). In Norwegian, 'språk' is both the singular and plural form of the noun and thus may refer to one or several languages. The choice for a non-transparent word alludes to the linguistic diversity of the learners and the possibility of their self-identification as monolingual or multilingual. The questionnaire is available as Additional Material.
2. Considering that English is taught since year 1 of regular schools in Norway, we decided to include it as an option for answering the questionnaire for students who wanted to challenge themselves by answering in English. Furthermore, for some newly arrived students and depending on their language backgrounds, English could be easier for them to understand. Nevertheless, most students decided to answer in Norwegian.

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Article 3

Researching intercultural competence in language learners: Gaps between theory and methodology

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Researching intercultural competence in language learners: Gaps between theory and methodology

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Abstract

Traditional approaches to intercultural competence (IC) in language learning have been criticised for reproducing cultural differentialism, a theoretical perspective which emphasises that people are different due to essential distinctions between their ethnic or national cultural background. While differentialist views have been recognised as problematic in the theory of IC, it remains to be examined whether and how cultural differentialism is reflected in the methodological tools used in empirical research in the field. To shed light on this issue, the article analyses five questionnaires studying IC or related concepts: the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001), the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer *et al*., 2003), the Intercultural Communicative Competence Instrument (Arasaratnam, 2009), the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (Portalla & Chen, 2010) and the Ungspråk Questionnaire (Haukås *et al*., 2021b). The analysis reveals that cultural differentialism persists at the level of methodology. However, the extent to which questionnaires reproduce it varies according to how notions of culture, identity, differences and similarities are reflected in the questionnaire statements. The paper also discusses the possible implications of using methodological tools that reproduce cultural differentialism. It also provides some recommendations that can help researchers avoid this problematic approach in an empirical study.

Keywords: intercultural competence, cultural differentialism, essentialism, foreign language learning

Introduction

The concept of Intercultural Competence (IC) is extremely polysemic, with different definitions across disciplines (Dervin *et al*., 2012; Perry & Southwell, 2011; Spitzberg and Changnon, 2009). In

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the field of foreign language learning, the most influential definition of IC was coined by Byram, who defines it as the capacity of language learners "to see relationships between different cultures—both internal and external to a society—and mediate, that is interpret each in terms of other, either for themselves or for other people" (Byram, 2000, p. 9). In other words, IC refers to the ability to understand differences and similarities "between cultures" and to serve as a mediator in an intercultural encounter. It is important to emphasise that when originally explaining his approach, Byram (1997) argued that "presenting 'a culture' as […] if there were only one set of beliefs, meanings and behaviours in any given country" is dangerous and that "when individuals interact, they bring to the situation their own identities and cultures" (p. 39). In other words, he recognised and mentioned the fact that societies are increasingly diverse and that other social distinctions and similarities, rather than only cultural ones, are also relevant for consideration in intercultural encounters (Hoff, 2020).

Byram's definition has had considerable impact in the field of language learning and intercultural education, yet some have regarded it as problematic. Based on a misreading and an inaccurate equation of "culture" with "national culture" (Byram 2021), scholars (e.g., Dervin, 2010; Dervin *et al*., 2012; Hoff, 2020; Holliday, 2011; Kramsch, 2009) have criticised it for pursuing principles of cultural differentialism—a theoretical approach which involves regarding people from different national cultures as being fundamentally and potentially irreconcilably different in values, beliefs, communication patterns etc. (Pieterse, 1996; Taguieff, 2001). The critics have argued that cultural differentialism is one of the major challenges within the broader field of intercultural communication (e.g., Dervin 2016, p. 103) and have addressed this problematic approach in research.

In spite of the attention to the problem of cultural differentialism at the theoretical level, scholars, however, have not yet examined whether and how this problem is reflected in the methodological tools used in empirical research on IC. The assumptions from which a methodological tool derives are likely to influence the data collected with this tool and, consequently, the results of an investigation. Therefore, a critical review of methodology is needed before the data collection. This paper aims to analyse how cultural differentialism is reflected in methodological tools applied in language learning research, and thus aims to generate insights useful for improving existing tools or developing new ones which better correspond with a non-essentialist and non-differentialist approach to IC.

To analyse whether and how cultural differentialism is reflected in research tools, the study focuses on a specific type of research methodology – quantitative questionnaires – and seeks to answer the following research question: *How do quantitative questionnaires applied in the field of foreign language learning research reflect the notions of culture, identity, differences, and similarities?* The study analyses five questionnaires commonly used to explore IC or related concepts in the field of foreign language learning. It discusses how these tools reflect the above notions and what implications this can have for empirical research as well as for respondents' IC development. The final part of the article makes some recommendations to help researchers avoid reproducing cultural differentialism in a research study.

Addressing the Problem of Cultural Differentialism at the Theoretical Level in Intercultural Education Research

In a broader sense, the term *cultural differentialism* refers to the theoretical perspective which suggests, first, that the world is divided into national cultures that are essentially different; second, that each culture is congruent with a certain population group; and third, that people from different cultures are different (Pieterse, 1996; Taguieff, 2001). Both in the social sciences and intercultural

communication research, scholars (e.g., Banks, 2016; Benhabib, 2002; Dervin 2016; Dervin *et al*., 2012; Holliday, 2010, 2011; Phillips, 2007; Young, 2011) have recognised that the differentialist perspective is theoretically and epistemologically problematic.

First, it has been criticised for considering cultures as separate entities defined and restricted by national and geographical borders and, thus, associated with ethnicity or nationality (Benhabib, 2002; Dervin, 2010; Holliday, 2010; Pieterse, 1996; Phillips, 2007; Turner, 1993). In contemporary studies, however, scholars (Benhabib, 2002; Dypedahl, 2018a; Holliday, 1999; Kramsch, 2013; Mikander *et al*., 2018) distinguish at least two major approaches to defining culture. It can either be traditionally associated with ethnicity, nationality and country, or can refer to broader concepts. For example, some scholars (Banks, 2016; Benhabib, 2002; Barrett, 2016; Dypedahl, 2018a; Kramsch, 2009, 2013) suggest defining culture as a framework of references that a particular group of people shares and that group members commonly refer to in understanding the world and their own and others' actions. In this broader sense, culture can be associated not only with an ethnic or national group but with any group of people, including religious groups, neighbourhoods, work organisations, sexual orientation groups, generational groups, and families (Barrett, 2016; Dypedahl, 2018a). All these types of groups have their own particular, "small" (Holliday, 1999), cultures. The latter implies as well that "all people belong simultaneously to and identify with many different groups and their associated cultures" (Barrett, 2016, p. 19). Ethnic or national groups, thus, represent only one of many types of cultural groups with which people can identify.

Second, cultural differentialism has been criticised for an oversimplified view of peoples' identities and a stereotypical representation of the Self and the Other (Benhabib, 2002; Dervin, 2010; Holliday, 2010; Phillips, 2007; Turner, 1993). In this context, the Self refers to one's image of oneself (e.g., as a member of a cultural group), whereas the Other refers to an image of a dissimilar person (e.g., a representative of a different cultural group), which is required to define oneself through opposition. By emphasising cultural differences between people, differentialists tend to consider the Self and the Other as representatives of different ethnic or national groups. Ethnic or national culture, therefore, becomes a "badge" of identity and of differences between people (Turner, 1993, p. 412). Critics argue that to a certain extent, ethnic or national culture has always provided this mark of identity and social distinction, but what is problematic is that within the differentialist approach, it becomes "a synonym for identity, its main marker and differentiator" (Benhabib, 2002, p. 1). This simplified view underestimates or completely ignores that other factors, such as gender, social class, and age, also constitute identity and can distinguish as well as represent similarities between people.

The above criticism of cultural differentialism stems from non-essentialist views (Baker, 2012; Banks, 2016; Banks & Banks, 2019; Benhabib, 2002; Holliday, 2011, 2010; Kramsch, 2009, 2013), which have been widely promoted in the social sciences, humanities and intercultural communication research over recent decades. Non-essentialism implies that identity is multidimensional, that is, an individual has not one, but rather multiple identities due to self-identification with various social groups based on gender, age, social class, ethnicity, religion, race, education, language, and professional affiliation. Each category constitutes a certain facet of a person's identity. National or ethnic culture, thus, plays the role of only one of many possible dimensions that create differences or similarities between people. According to the non-essentialist approach, these identity dimensions cannot be separated from each other; they are interwoven, constructing the complex and unique identity of a person.

The non-essentialist approach changes the overall understanding of diversity. According to this perspective, it is deemed mistaken to consider any identity marker (e.g., gender, ethnic culture or age) separate from its interconnection with others. This approach implies that differences, as well as similarities, between people cannot be purely ethno-cultural or based only, for example, on gender.

They are always complex and emerge out of the intersection of many and varied identity dimensions. Hence, in an interaction between two foreigners, it is not only their ethnic or national cultures that make them distinct but also their gender, social class and professional affiliations, among others. In addition, the latter categories, if they coincide, can constitute similarities between people, for instance, if these foreigners are women, teenagers or academics. A research study that takes only one dimension as the main marker of differences between people underestimates the complex character of identity structure and yields to a simplistic view of the Self and the Other. Moreover, such a study risks ignoring diversity within social groups, whether these groups are ethno-cultural or national or based on gender or social class (Benhabib, 2002; Okin, 1999; Phillips, 2007; Young, 2011).

In recent years, non-essentialist views have become dominant in the theory of intercultural communication and language learning research. Increasingly, scholars tend to agree with the non-essentialist argument that taking only ethnic or national culture as a marker of identity is problematic. Among them, Wahyudi (2016) argues that identity is complex and, thus, IC "should be seen from a variety of lenses, not only from culture alone" (p. 149). Other researchers (e.g., Deardorff, 2019; Dypedahl, 2018b) have begun to make a non-essentialist approach explicit in the definition of IC. In one of her latest works, Deardorff (2019) relates IC to "the skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to improve interactions across difference, whether within a society (differences due to age, gender, religion, socio-economic status, political affiliation, ethnicity and so on) or across borders" (p. i). In this definition, IC encompasses various diversities rather than focusing on ethno-cultural or national differences. Dypedahl (2019) has also defined IC as "the ability to relate constructively to people who have mindsets and/or communication styles that are different from one's own" (p. 102). By introducing this broad definition of IC, Dypedahl underlines that differences between people are not just related to nationality but can also be products of other factors such as the communication with family and at workplace or the influence of popular culture and online communication.

Some scholars have responded to the criticism of cultural differentialism by incorporating a critical stance in their approaches to IC (e.g., Baker, 2012; Dervin, 2010; Dypedahl, 2018b; Hoff, 2014; Wahyudi, 2016). For example, Dervin (2010) introduced an alternative model of IC (which the author terms "proteophilic competence") based on "the appreciation of diverse diversities of the Self and the other" (p. 166). The concept of "diverse diversities" in his approach refers to Pieterse's (2004) statement that all people are distinct in terms of habits, opinions and discourses, irrespective of geographical boundaries or their ethno-cultural or national belonging. Acknowledging that individuals have multiple and composite identities, which are revealed differently in different contexts, Hoff (2019) stresses that IC must be understood as relating to the ability "to navigate conflict, contradictions, complexity and ambiguity" (p. 444) in contemporary postmodern societies, rather than to the empathetic tolerance of otherness.

As discussed above, critiques of cultural differentialism have prompted an increasing number of scholars to move towards a non-essentialist perspective in conceptualising culture and IC. However, this change in conceptualisation does not imply that the non-essentialist perspective has been automatically adopted by scholars working with empirical research. While providing definitions of IC which do not directly reflect differentialist ideas, scholars may, nevertheless, pursue the principles of cultural differentialism when working on empirical studies or developing instruments for the data collection (e.g., Arasaratnam, 2009; Portalla & Chen, 2010; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001). For example, Portalla and Chen (2010) – authors of the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale that will be analysed further in this article – conceptualise IC "as an individual's ability to achieve their communication goal while effectively and appropriately utilizing communication behaviors to negotiate between the different identities present within a culturally diverse environment" (2010, p.

21). If culture is considered as referring to beliefs and practices of any social group and identity as encompassing various sociocultural dimensions, this definition can easily be interpreted within the non-essentialist paradigm. However, what is problematic in this and many other approaches to IC (e.g., van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001), is that researchers neither provide any explicit definitions of culture, nor explain what they mean by "intercultural" or "culturally diverse environment" when clarifying the theoretical background of their methodological tools. Moreover, rather than emphasising and strengthening non-essentialist views, authors tend to include some markers indicating that they associate culture with ethnicity or nationality. This problem will be discussed in detail later in the results section of this article.

In what follows, I will examine how the theoretical shift from cultural differentialism to non-essentialist and non-differentialist perspective has been reflected at the level of research methodology. For this purpose, I chose four frequently used in the field questionnaires as well as a newly developed tool, the Ungspråk Questionnaire, and analysed how they approach notions of culture, identity, differences and similarities.

Methodology

Scholars (Fantini, 2009; Matsumoto & Hwang 2013; Sinicrope *et al*., 2007) have suggested a variety of methodological instruments that can be used to study IC in the context of foreign language learning and intercultural communication research. For instance, Fantini (2009) names more than 40 tools. They differ in terms of the theoretical models of IC on which they are based, research purposes, fields of implementation and type of methodological approach (quantitative vs. qualitative). Moreover, methodological instruments differ in terms of the focal concepts they aim to investigate. Many instruments do not evaluate IC per se but rather focus on other relevant concepts associated with it, for example, intercultural sensitivity (Bhawuk & Brislin, 1992; Chen & Starosta, 1997; Hammer *et al*., 2003), intercultural effectiveness (Portalla & Chen, 2010), multicultural effectiveness (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001), pluriculturality and interculturality (Byram *et al*., 2009), personality traits (Kelley & Meyers, 1995) and behavioural patterns (Koester & Olebe, 1988).

To select appropriate methodological instruments for our analysis, certain criteria were introduced. First, in order to provide comparability between tools, a particular type of instrument was selected, specifically, quantitative questionnaires based on a Likert scale. Questionnaires were given preference due to their ease of application and their common usage in research on IC. Second, among these questionnaires, only those that assess one or several attitudinal aspects associated with IC, such as open-mindedness, curiosity, cultural empathy, acceptance/appreciation of differences, tolerance and respect were selected. These particular aspects were emphasised because they underpin most of the theoretical models of (see, for example, Byram, 1997; Deardorff, 2006; Dervin, 2010). Third, only questionnaires developed for or commonly used in language learning research were included. Finally, due to recent developments in theories of intercultural communication, only questionnaires developed or updated in the last 20 years were included in the analysis. In total, five questionnaires that met these criteria were identified: the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2001), the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer *et al*., 2003), the Intercultural Communicative Competence Instrument (ICCI) (Arasaratnam, 2009), the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES) (Portalla & Chen, 2010), and the Ungspråk Questionnaire (Haukås *et al*., 2021b).

To examine whether and how the selected instruments address cultural differentialism, the questionnaires were analysed in three steps. First, the manner in which the tools address the notion of

culture was considered, as well as whether they imply an association between culture and ethnicity or nationality. Second, the extent to which the questionnaires use ethnic or national culture as the main marker of identity and differences between people was examined. Third, the degree to which the tools take into account similarities as well as differences between the Self and the Other was examined.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents the results of the analysis. First, it indicates the theoretical assumptions from which the considered questionnaires stem. Second, it demonstrates how the notions of culture, identity, differences and similarities are reflected in the statements of the questionnaires.

First, it was found that the tools considered derive from different theoretical approaches to culture and identity. Most of the questionnaires - specifically, the IDI, the IES, the MPQ and the ICCI - are theoretically based on the differentialist approach. This means that they stem from assumptions that associate culture with ethnicity or nationality and consider culture the main marker of identity and differences between the Self and the Other. For example, the authors of the MPQ underline that they designed the tool to assess individuals' multicultural effectiveness, defined as the capacity to operate successfully in a new cultural environment (van Oudenhoven & van der Zee, 2002). A new cultural environment here refers to a new national or ethno-cultural context, with which a foreigner, whether it is the Self or the Other, has to deal. For example, van der Zee and van Oudenhoven (2000) consider the Chinese context as a new cultural environment for a Dane, thus, associating culture with nationality and regarding one's national belonging as the main marker of identity in an intercultural encounter.

The same is relevant to the IES, which measures intercultural effectiveness as a behavioural aspect of IC. The authors neither provide any explicit definition of culture nor explain what they mean by "intercultural." However, their position becomes clearer when they discuss intercultural communication as "posing additional complexity" in interactions between people and state that "each person has a significant and separate cultural identity" (Portalla & Chen, 2010, p.23). This distinction of cultural dimension from other facets of identity indicates its association with nationality or ethnicity, rather than with other multiple dimensions, such as gender, age, professional affiliation. Hence, in its theoretical framework, the IES also focuses on ethnic or national belonging as the main identity marker in intercultural communication, thus pursuing the ideas of cultural differentialism.

Result 1. The notions of culture, identity, differences and similarities in the theoretical frameworks of the questionnaires: A variety of approaches

The IDI, which is based on Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) (1993), also stems from the differentialist views. The DMIS explicitly links culture to ethnicity by considering various stages of intercultural sensitivity as *ethno*centric or *ethno*relative. Moreover, in the clarification of Bennett's model, Hammer *et al*. (2003) explicitly associate the Other with a foreigner or an immigrant without mentioning other forms of diversity based on gender, age, sexual orientation, professional affiliation, etc. The researchers state that people with one of the ethnocentric stages of intercultural sensitivity (*Denial*) experience cultural differences "as associated with a kind of undifferentiated other such as 'foreigner' or 'immigrant'" (p. 424). Therefore, it can be concluded that theoretically the IDI stems from the differentialist approach, as well as the MPQ and the IES.

Table 1 *An overview of the questionnaires*

	Questionnaire	Theoretical framework (approach to IC)	Statements			
			The notion of culture is used in the statements	**Culture is associated with ethnicity or nationality**	**Culture is used as the main marker of identity and differences**	**Focus on differences vs. similarities**
1	Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (MPQ) (2001)	Based on cultural differentialism	Yes	No	No	Only some statements are focused on differences.
2	Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)	Based on cultural differentialism	Yes	No	Yes	Most of the statements are focused on differences. Similarities, if mentioned, imply the elimination of differences.
3	Intercultural Communicative Competence Instrument (ICCI)	Based on cultural differentialism	Yes	Only in the first statement	Yes	Statements are focused on differences except statement #6, which mentions similarities between "people from different cultures."
4	Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES)	Based on cultural differentialism	Yes	No	Yes	Statements are focused on differences except statements #8, #17, and #19, which mention similarities between "culturally different" people.
5	Ungspråk Questionnaire	Based on non-essentialist views	No	Not applicable	Not applicable	Statements are focused on differences

The ICCI is different from the considered above questionnaires in the sense that the reference to the differentialist approach in its theoretical framework is not explicit. Moreover, in designing the ICCI, Arasaratnam (2007) attempted to take into account the criticism of cultural differentialism. The

author recognises that due to the growing migration and mobility in the world, "it is becoming increasingly difficult for one to pinpoint one's own cultural identity/affiliation," and therefore, researchers and practitioners involved in researching IC should stop thinking "in terms of national/ethnic boundaries or even in terms of cultural taxonomies" (p. 71). However, instead of applying a non-essentialist approach and considering diverse dimensions of identity, the author rather seeks to ensure that the questionnaire does not associate one's identity with a particular ethnicity or nationality. In other words, she seeks to avoid the representation of the Self and the Other as members of specific ethnic or national groups, i.e. as a German and a Spaniard. However, ethnic or national culture as a generic category remains the main identity marker in an intercultural encounter. Therefore, the overall theoretical framework of the ICCI pursues the principles of cultural differentialism.

The Ungspråk Questionnaire, on the contrary, derives from the assumption that identity is complex and diverse, and that ethnic or national culture represents only one of many dimensions that construct it (Haukås *et al*., 2021a). The authors emphasise that differences between the participants in an intercultural encounter cannot be reduced only to ethnic or national distinctions but are also based on gender, age, social class, etc. These views on culture, identity and differences reflect the non-essentialist perspective.

Result 2. The notions of culture, identity, differences and similarities in the statements of the questionnaires: A discrepancy with the theoretical framework

The analysis also revealed that questionnaires' statements do not necessarily mirror the declared theoretical assumptions. Hence, there can be a discrepancy between how scholars discuss the notions of culture, identity, and differences and similarities in the theoretical frameworks of their tools and how these notions are reflected in the statements of the questionnaires.

First, a discrepancy can emerge due to the lack of clarity regarding the notion of culture. For example, in Arasaratnam's (2009) tool, all ten statements address the notion of culture. However, only one of them associates it with (supra-) ethnicity: "I often find it difficult to differentiate between similar cultures (ex. Asians, Europeans, Africans, etc.)" (p. 9). The other nine statements do not provide any explanatory example: "I feel that people from other cultures have many valuable things to teach me," "Most of my friends are from my own culture," "I feel more comfortable with people from my own culture than with people from other cultures" (p. 9–10). Although these statements contain the term "culture," they do not indicate whether the respondents should continue to associate culture with ethnicity or supra-ethnicity. However, given that the item referring to (supra-) ethnicity is the first one in this questionnaire, it is likely that the respondents will implicitly use this category as a reference throughout the other nine statements of the questionnaire.

The same is relevant to the other questionnaires based on the differentialist approach to IC, such as the IDI, the MPQ and the IES. For example, the IDI refers to culture in such statements as: "People should avoid individuals from other cultures who behave differently," "People from our culture are less tolerant compared to people from other cultures," "Family values are stronger in other cultures than in our culture," "When I come in contact with people from a different culture, I find I change my behaviour to adapt to theirs" (Hammer *et al*., 2003, p. 434). Statements in the MPQ that address the notion of culture include "Gets involved in another culture" and "Feels uncomfortable in a different culture" (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven 2001, p. 286–287). Although these questionnaires theoretically derive from the differentialist approach to IC, their statements do not contain any explicit association of culture with ethnicity or nationality. They do not provide any explanation or clue regarding how respondents should approach this notion. In these questionnaires, the absence of clarity regarding the notion of culture may be explained by the fact that they were developed before

the recent paradigm shift in intercultural education theory. The initial versions of the IES and the MPQ date back to 2000 (see Chen & Starosta, 2000; van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000). The theoretical framework of the IDI, which is the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, refers to even earlier works by Bennett (1993). Due to the prevalence of the differentialist approach, the notion of culture was used in questionnaires in its most common sense at that time, that is, related to ethnicity or nationality. Therefore, an explicit definition of culture was not considered necessary.

However, due to the current variety of approaches to defining culture, the absence of any explicit indication of how respondents should define it can raise a problem of interpretation. Sercu (2004) argues that respondents represent a heterogeneous group of people that "may not have a *common* body of knowledge" (p. 83). Due to individual characteristics such as age, sex, nationality, level and type of general education, prior knowledge and life experience, respondents can apply different definitions to the same concepts. Therefore, if the questionnaire does not provide any reference to a specific approach to culture, some respondents may refer to the traditional differentialist framework and consider culture as an attribute of a national community or its native members (Holliday, 2009; Kramsch, 2013), whereas others might apply a broader definition and consider culture as an attribute of any social group.

Second, a discrepancy between the theoretical framework of a questionnaire and its statements can emerge due to the lack of clarity regarding the notion of differences. Most of the tools based on the differentialist approach aim to present the Self and the Other as culturally, that is, ethnically or nationally, different. For example, the IES, the ICCI and the IDI reflect differentialist views of people by using such expressions as "culturally different counterparts," "people from different cultures," "people from other cultures," or "people from my own culture." The same is relevant to some statements of the MPQ, such as "Feels uncomfortable in a different culture" and "Get involved in other cultures." In this case, "different" and "other" can be interpreted as referring to "distinct" or "unsimilar." According to the questionnaires' theoretical frameworks, the differences are meant as ethno-cultural or national. Yet, due to the absence of any indication of ethnicity or nationality, the meaning of differences, in fact, will depend on how respondents define culture.

The other questionnaires, the Ungspråk and the MPQ (in most of its statements), focus on interpersonal relations and measure particular personality traits associated with IC, rather than IC per se. Consequently, they emphasise general rather than cultural differences between the Self and the Other. In the statements, this is reflected by the exclusion of the term "culture." For instance, the Ungspråk contains the following statements measuring open-mindedness: "I like that people have different opinions," "I try to get to know people that are different from me," "I like that there are differences between myself and other people." In practice, this exclusion of "culture" can incite respondents' reflection on other markers of identity and differences besides ethnicity or nationality. However, this may equally lead to the problem of interpretation regarding the term "differences."

Depending on their own views, respondents might define diversity and differences in various ways. Jokikko's (2005) study on teachers' interpretations of intercultural competence shows that educators can define differences in, at least, three different ways. First, they can apply the differentialist framework and define differences in terms of visible markers, such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, language and race. Second, they might refer to differences as invisible markers, including family history, sexual orientation, political opinion, learning style and worldview. Third, most of the informants in the study reported that they perceived differences as personal and individual rather than linked to a person's belonging to any social group or ethnicity/nationality. Jokikko's findings can be relevant to any other group of informants, including young language learners. Students, who often form their perception of culture and differences under the influence of adults, including their teachers, can reproduce the same meanings as their educators. Therefore, when a questionnaire

measuring learners' IC does not contain the notion of culture and shifts the focus from cultural differences to general ones, this does not necessarily imply that respondents will automatically follow this shift. Some respondents might consider ethnicity or nationality as the main marker of identity and differences between people, whereas others might consider differences to refer to invisible markers or personality traits.

Moreover, in relation to the third focus of the analysis, it was found that, regardless of the theoretical assumptions, all the analysed tools emphasise differences rather than similarities between people. For example, in the IES and the ICCI, similarities are mentioned in only a few statements as existing between "culturally different counterparts" or "people from different cultures," for instance, "I have a lot in common with my culturally different counterparts during our interaction" (the IES) and "I often notice similarities in personality between people who belong to completely different cultures" (the ICCI). In the case of the Ungspråk, although the questionnaire aims to incite reflection on various aspects of identity of the Self and the Other, similarities between people are not mentioned in the statements at all. This approach might be problematic and reproduce cultural differentialism if respondents define differences only as ethno-cultural or national. In the case of the IDI, similarities between people are highlighted only in a particular part of the questionnaire, which reflects one of the six stages of intercultural sensitivity development. This part emphasises similarities as universal human features, for instance, "People are the same despite outward differences in appearance." However, this emphasis on similarities is made by minimising or eliminating cultural or any other differences between people. This is equally problematic, because it ignores the complexity and uniqueness of a person's identity, and thus, simplifies the relationship between the Self and the Other.

Summary of the results

Taken together, the findings suggest that even though the problem of cultural differentialism has been addressed in theoretical research, it persists at the level of quantitative research methodology. Most of the questionnaires (i.e., the IES, the IDI and the MPQ) used in the field stem from theoretical assumptions that associate culture with ethnicity or nationality and consider it the main marker of identity and differences in an intercultural encounter. These views reflect the principles of cultural differentialism and serve as a basis for the theoretical frameworks of these questionnaires. At the same time, due to the recent shift in the theory of intercultural communication research, the authors of the latest tools seek to take into account non-essentialist views when designing their questionnaires (e.g., the ICCI and the Ungspråk). They aim to and, to varying extents, succeed in avoiding the reproduction of differentialist views of identity and culture in their tools. However, the findings indicate that neither traditional nor non-essentialist approaches to IC are adequately reflected in the questionnaires themselves. The references to such notions as culture and differences can be unclear in the statements and make it problematic to identify which theoretical approach a tool reflects. Consequently, whether or not a questionnaire reproduces cultural differentialism often depends on respondents' interpretation of the above concepts. These findings can have both methodological implications and consequences for the respondents' intercultural perspectives.

Implications for Research and Respondents' IC Development

The present findings are significant in at least two major respects. First, they can have important consequences for empirical research and its results. The findings indicate that to a certain extent, all the considered questionnaires lack clarity regarding how respondents should define culture, differences, the Self and Other, when facing these concepts in the statements of the questionnaires. If these notions are not clarified before the data collection, respondents can apply different, even mutually exclusive, approaches and definitions. For example, some informants can relate culture and

differences to ethnicity and nationality and associate the Other with a foreigner. Some respondents can apply broader definitions and take into account other aspects of diversity and identity, such as gender or age. If researchers neglect this, the study could yield unreliable results.

Second, the findings may have important implications for the development of respondents' IC. Foremost, if a questionnaire in its statements reproduces cultural differentialism by explicitly associating culture with ethnicity – or supra-ethnicity in the case of the ICCI – there is a probability that the use of this tool may facilitate the strengthening of essentialist views and fostering negative stereotypes among respondents. For example, the emphasis on ethnicity/nationality as the main marker of identity may prompt respondents to overlook or underestimate other aspects of identity that can be more significant in face-to-face intercultural communication, such as gender, age, social class, language repertoire, personal views and interests. Moreover, the emphasis on differences rather than similarities may impel them to look at the Self and the Other through the lens of contrasts, which may lead to fostering the view that foreigners, immigrants and members of ethnic minorities are a priori dissimilar, and there are no commonalities between *us* and *them*.

The same implications are associated with the questionnaires that do not explicitly reproduce cultural differentialism in their statements but, due to the unclear use of concepts, do so implicitly. If the notions of culture and differences or the meaning of expressions such as "people from different cultures" are not clarified before the data collection, there is a high probability that respondents, who have not been previously introduced to the non-essentialist perspective, will apply essentialist views. Hence, it can be assumed that the use of questionnaires aimed at studying learners' IC will lead to paradoxical results. Instead of evaluating IC for its further promotion, the use of these questionnaires will impede its development by reinforcing negative stereotypes and prejudice.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This article has examined to what extent and how cultural differentialism, which has been criticised in theories of intercultural communication, is reflected in five questionnaires designed to study IC and related concepts. Taken together, the findings of the study suggest that the differentialist approach persists at the level of methodology, which reveals a gap between theory and methodology in the field. However, the extent to which the examined methodological tools reproduce differentialist views varies depending on how the notions of culture, identity and differences are reflected in the questionnaire statements. The use of tools that reproduce cultural differentialism can have negative implications for both empirical research and for the development of IC. Hence, researchers in the field should critically review the tools designed for investigating IC when choosing an instrument for their study.

To avoid reproducing cultural differentialism, researchers may consider revising methodological instruments by following some recommendations. First, it is worth considering which theoretical approach to IC a tool reflects in its instructions and statements or questions. This can be done by analysing how the notions of culture, identity and differences are presented. Their association with ethnicity and nationality, as well as an emphasis on the distinction between people, indicates that the tool reproduces differentialist views and, thus, can reinforce negative stereotypes towards representatives of ethnic and national groups. On the other hand, the consideration of identity as complex and diverse, and ethnicity or nationality as only one of many possible markers of identity and differences between people, indicates that the tool reflects non-essentialist views. Such an instrument should also emphasise both similarities and differences between the Self and the Other, rather than put forward only ethno-cultural or national distinctions. However, it should be kept in mind that the above indications may not be clearly presented in a tool or be absent. Hence, the

theoretical framework that a questionnaire reproduces will in fact depend on respondents' interpretation of culture, identity and differences. Therefore, the second and the most important recommendation is to clarify the approach to these notions before the data collection. This clarification can be made by introducing necessary adjustments in the tool itself or by having a discussion with the respondents before they work with the tool.

The questionnaires examined represent only a small number of the existing tools designed to study language learners' IC. However, the findings can also be relevant for other instruments applied in the field, including qualitative ones. Hence, more research is needed to investigate whether and to what extent other tools reproduce cultural differentialism and what adjustments need to be made.

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Article 4

The link between multilingualism, language learning and open-mindedness in secondary school students in Norway

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The link between multilingualism, language learning and open-mindedness in secondary school students in Norway

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Abstract

A positive link between open-mindedness and multilingualism suggested in intercultural psychology research (e.g., Dewaele & Botes, 2020; Korzilius et al., 2011; Dewaele & Oudenhoven, 2009) has also been implicitly assumed in Norway's Core Curriculum (NDET, 2017) and in the curricula for English (NDET, 2019a) and Foreign Languages (NDET, 2019b). However, little empirical research has been conducted to explore how becoming multilingual, especially through learning foreign languages at school, can be connected to the development of students' open-mindedness. The present study addresses this gap by exploring open-mindedness in lower secondary school students (n=593) learning one or two foreign languages in school. In addition, other factors related to students' multilingualism, such as their multilingual identity, migration background, experience living abroad and having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, are also considered to better understand the complex relationship between open-mindedness and multilingualism in the school context. By analysing the data collected with the Ungspråk questionnaire (Haukås et al., 2021a), the study reveals no particular relationship between open-mindedness and students' migration background and experience of living abroad. However, it indicates that open-mindedness is positively linked to L3 learning at school, multilingual identity and having friends who use other languages at home. These findings have significant pedagogical implications suggesting that promoting learning a second foreign language at lower secondary school, developing students' self-identification as multilingual and encouraging the interaction with peers speaking further languages may contribute to the enhancement of open-mindedness among students.

Keywords: *open-mindedness, multilingualism, multilingual identity, foreign language learning, L2, L3*

In Norway, core democratic values of global citizenship and tolerance for diversity are reflected in the National Core Curriculum (2017), the central document providing direction for teaching and training in all subjects of primary and secondary school. The document states that the school's primary tasks, among others, are to prepare students "to live together with different perspectives, attitudes and views of life" (p. 7), "to participate' in a diverse society",

and "to open doors to the world and the future" (p. 8). The document suggests that, through promoting democratic values and attitudes, schools will teach students to respect the fact that people are different, will counteract prejudice and discrimination, and will ensure that there is room for collaboration, dialogue and disagreement (NDET, 2017). The document also emphasises the linguistic diversity of Norwegian society and considers "being proficient in a number of languages … as a resource, both in school and society at large" (Core Curriculum, p. 7).

In addition to the National Core Curriculum, several subjects have formulated the aim to promote democratic values, one of them being the Foreign Language subject. The curriculum for this subject suggests that knowledge of several languages and language learning "open[s] up more ways of interpreting the world, help[s] to create curiosity and engagement and contribute[s] to preventing prejudice" (NDET, 2019b, p. 3, authors' translation). Thus, being and becoming multilingual is explicitly linked to students' better understanding of and openness towards cultural diversity.

While both documents suggest that being multilingual and learning foreign languages are strongly connected to students' developing democratic values and open and unprejudiced views towards diversity, there has been little research to support this claim empirically, especially in school settings. To explore this connection, we study students' open-mindedness, a psychological quality which, in intercultural psychology research, is often associated with a person's predisposition to develop open and unprejudiced attitudes towards differences (van der Zee & Oudenhoven, 2000). Drawing on the quantitative data collected with the Ungspråk questionnaire (Haukås et al., 2021a), we look at the possible links between open-mindedness and a number of relevant factors in students who study one (English) or two foreign languages (English plus Spanish, German or French) in Norwegian lower secondary schools. Specifically, we explore how students' open-mindedness is connected to learning a second foreign language at school, their self-identification as multilingual, and other factors such as having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, their migration backgrounds and their experience living abroad. By exploring a range of variables, we aim to estimate how being multilingual and learning foreign languages at school affect students' open-mindedness in comparison to other relevant factors.

Regarding the terms used in this article, it is important to clarify that we refer to the language subjects learned in school as L1, L2 and L3, although this may not be the chronological order these languages were learned by some students. Consequently, we refer to Norwegian as *L1 at school,* the first foreign language studied at school (English) as *L2 at school* and the second foreign language (typically Spanish, German or French) as *L3 at school* (see, for example, Hammarberg [2010] for a discussion of the various concepts in the field).

However, many students know one or more languages in addition to the three language subjects in school, so the languages studied in school may actually be their L4 or Lx. Also, Norwegian is not the first (or native) language for all students. They could have Sami or another national minority language as their first language(s), or they could speak one or more home languages other than Norwegian due to their own or family members' previous immigration to Norway. Furthermore, students with a migration background represent a heterogeneous group. Some were born in Norway and are fully proficient in Norwegian, considering it their first/native language, whereas others have recently arrived and have just begun to learn Norwegian (Vikøy & Haukås, 2021). Consequently, referring to students with a migration background as a homogeneous group can be problematic. Therefore, it is important to clarify that, within this study, we refer to students with a migration background as those participants who do not perceive Norwegian or any other national Indigenous or minority language as their first/native language. By doing so, we assume that this criterion is a strong indicator of students' migration background. This approach also allows us to avoid asking students directly about their and their parents' ethnic or national backgrounds.

The paper continues by clarifying some key theoretical concepts and proceeds with an overview of research studies on open-mindedness in foreign language learning research, applied linguistics and intercultural psychology. We then present our research questions and introduce our research instrument, the Ungspråk questionnaire (Haukås et al., 2021a), which was developed specifically to investigate students' multilingualism and its connection to open-mindedness and other relevant factors in school settings. Our findings are based on the analysis of data collected from 593 lower secondary school students in Norway.

Theoretical framework and literature review

Defining the key concepts and the context

The central theoretical concepts of this study are open-mindedness, multilingualism and multilingual identity. These terms have a variety of meanings among scholars and in different contexts. Consequently, they need to be defined for the purpose of this study.

Open-mindedness. The Cambridge dictionary (McIntosh, 2013) relates open-mindedness to a person's receptiveness to new ideas and defines it as "the quality of being willing to consider ideas and opinions that are new or different to your own". Being open to new and different ideas can be considered an aspect of openness to experience (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2020; Costa & McCrae, 1997), which is one of the five key psychological traits constituting personality – together with extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1987). From an epistemological perspective, open-mindedness also refers to the ability to be aware of one's fallibility as a believer and to acknowledge the possibility that anytime one believes something, one could be wrong (Riggs, 2010; Hare, 1979). In addition, scholars in intercultural psychology, whose approach we adopt in this study, consider open-mindedness to be a predictor of how individuals will deal with intercultural situations (van der Zee & Oudenhoven, 2013). They refer to open-mindedness as the ability to be open and unprejudiced towards outgroup members and towards different norms and values (Dewaele & Oudenhoven, 2009; van der Zee & Oudenhoven, 2000). According to this perspective, open-mindedness is vital to understanding others' views and values and, thus, to cope with differences and diversity in an effective manner (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2020; van der Zee & Oudenhoven, 2013; Wilson et al., 2013; Dewaele & Oudenhoven, 2009).

Like any other psychological trait, open-mindedness develops dynamically over time under the influence of both internal and external factors. Researchers suggest that open-minded people are more inclined to reflect on various possibilities, to listen to and take seriously alternative views (Riggs, 2010), to respect diversity (McCrae & Costa, 2003), and to reconsider their social, political and religious values (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Van der Zee

and Oudenhoven (2000) also suggest that people who have a high level of open-mindedness tend to have an open and unprejudiced attitude towards other groups, cultural values and norms. Low scores on open-mindedness, on the other hand, are associated with a tendency to defend perceived stability and safety and an acceptance of authority and traditions (Nekljudova, 2019). Furthermore, lower scores on open-mindedness are linked to bias attitudes and a tendency to judge and stereotype other groups (Huxley et al., 2015; van der Zee & Oudenhoven, 2000).

Open-mindedness also shapes a person's communication behaviour. According to McCrae and Sutin (2009), open-minded people tend to be more curious and attentive when meeting a new person. They are also ready to see commonalities between their own and a partner's perspectives and identities (Nezlek et al., 2011). In addition, they are likely to have friends with different backgrounds, for example, of the opposite sex or another ethnic group (Laakasuo et al., 2017). In the case of disagreement, open-minded people are also generally more inclined to consider their interlocutor's views on an issue, not necessarily agreeing, but demonstrating an understanding of the other's reasoning (Nezlek et al., 2011).

Multilingualism and multilingual identity. Multilingualism is defined and understood in a number of ways, both among scholars and among people in general (Cenoz, 2013; Haukås, in press). In the framework of this study, however, multilingualism refers to "the dynamic and integrated knowledge and/or use of more than one language or language variety" (Haukås et al., 2021b, p. 84). According to the Curriculum for the Foreign Language Subject (L3 at school), all students in Norway are already multilingual when they start a second foreign language in grade eight (NDET, 2019b). Although multilingualism is never defined in the curriculum, this assumption probably derives from the fact that the students can communicate in two languages or more when they start learning an L3 at school. First, they study the official national languages: two variations of Norwegian (Bokmål and Nynorsk) and/or Sami languages. The Sami languages are usually studied in the regions of the country that are recognized as traditional areas of Indigenous Sami populations. Second, the students learn English as a first foreign language (L2 at school) from grade one. In addition to the multilingualism acquired in school settings, students with immigrant backgrounds, or born to parents with immigrant backgrounds, may know additional languages. According to Statistics

Norway (2021), 18.5% of people living in Norway belong to this group. Moreover, most students use local dialects and typically understand multiple dialects of Norwegian (Haukås, in press). It is also not uncommon for students in Norwegian schools to be receptive multilinguals of Swedish and Danish (Zeevaert, 2007). Thus, in grade eight, when they can choose to study a new language in the Foreign Language Subject (typically Spanish, German or French), one can safely assume that these different ways of acquiring knowledge of multiple languages make *all* students in Norwegian schools already *multilingual.*

Nevertheless, while all students in Norway can be considered multilingual, their self-identification as such can differ from the researchers' perspective and from that of the curriculum (NDET, 2019b). Therefore, to include the respondents' perspective on their multilingualism, we introduce the concept of *multilingual identity* in our study. With reference to Fisher et al. (2020), multilingual identity can be defined as one's explicit self-identification as multilingual 'precisely because of an awareness of the linguistic repertoire one has' (p. 449). According to several scholars (Fisher et al. 2020; Henry 2017; Henry & Thorsen 2018; Ushioda 2017), awareness and self-identification as a multilingual can be a potentially significant and empowering factor influencing the willingness to invest time and effort in learning new languages and in maintaining the languages one already knows. Moreover, based on the analysis of students' associations related to learning multiple languages, Henry and Thorsen (2018) suggested that learners' reflection on whether they are multilingual may be linked to the development of personality traits such as openness, empathy and curiosity. Ożańska-Ponikwia (2012) revealed that "a feeling of being a different person" when using different languages is connected to higher scores on open-mindedness in multilingual users, among other factors. In addition, some scholars (Busse, 2017; Aronin, 2016) have argued that multilingual identity can be related to and can influence other dimensions of identity, such as beliefs, attitudes, and personal life scenarios, making it interesting to explore the link between multilingual identity and open-mindedness.

Previous empirical research on the connection between open-mindedness, multilingualism and other language learning-related variables

Research in intercultural psychology suggests a positive connection between open-mindedness and multilingualism, operationalised as the knowledge of and proficiency in

several languages. For example, in a study exploring the effect of multilingualism on personality traits, Dewaele and Botes (2020) found a significant positive connection between multilingualism and open-mindedness in 651 multilinguals from around the world. A positive link between open-mindedness and multilingualism was also observed by Korzilius et al. (2011), who studied the relationship between personality dimensions and foreign language mastery in business professionals in a Dutch-based international company. Dewaele and Oudenhoven's (2009) study involving 79 London teenagers aged 13–15 with different ethnic backgrounds also showed that participants with a migration background who were proficient in and actively used several languages scored high on open-mindedness. However, in their peers who were learning only one foreign language in school, there was no link between multilingualism and open-mindedness. Similarly, a study conducted by Pederson (1997) found no connection between intercultural sensitivity and learning one foreign language in school. It is important to emphasise here that while learning one foreign language in school has been, to some extent, considered a factor related to open-mindedness, studies that explore how learning an additional *second* foreign language can be linked to students' open-mindedness are still missing in the field.

Other scholars (e.g., Gross & Dewaele, 2018; Mellizo, 2017; Dewaele & Stavans, 2014) indicate that more research involving participants of school age is needed, as several studies suggest that the link between open-mindedness and multilingualism can be different in younger multilinguals than in adults (Gross & Dewaele, 2018; Melizo, 2017). Dewaele and Stavans (2014), for example, found no connection between the number of languages that young multilinguals know and their open-mindedness. However, frequent use of many different languages, linguistic and cultural heterogeneity within the family and exposure to different languages and cultural values appear to be important for participants' open-mindedness.

As previously mentioned, scholars (Forbes et al., 2021; Fischer et al., 2018) have suggested that self-identification as multilingual may be an important factor in language learning and may promote students' multilingualism. Furthermore, Fielding (2021) points out that promoting learners' multilingual identity may help enhance their intercultural understanding. In a forthcoming study by Tiurikova and Haukås (in press), language

teachers have also suggested that there is an interconnection between seeing yourself as multilingual and being open-minded and that the development of both may help advance students' intercultural competence. However, this potential connection remains empirically unexplored.

Among other predictors of open-mindedness with relevance for language learning in school contexts, researchers have identified interactions with people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds (Petrovic & Zlatkovic, 2009; Williams, 2005). Some studies show that, in the case of teenagers, intercultural friendship can be a particularly significant factor for the development of intercultural sensitivity and positive attitudes towards diversity (Chocce et al., 2015; Pederson, 1997). Researchers have also explored open-mindedness and associated factors in relation to participants' migration backgrounds, with a range of different findings regarding the interconnection between these factors. Similar to the findings in Dewaele and Oudenhoven (2009), a higher level of intercultural sensitivity was found in students with a migration background by Morales (2017) and by Ruokonen and Kairavuori (2012). Other studies, however, have shown that multilingual students with an immigrant background scored lower on openness to change than students without an immigrant background (Gross & Dewaele, 2018; Dewaele & Stavans, 2014).

Similarly, there is no consensus among researchers on whether the experience of living abroad is significantly linked to open-mindedness and other associated psychological factors. On the one hand, numerous studies (Tompkins et al., 2017; Dewaele & Wei, 2013, 2012; Medina-Lopez-Portillo, 2004; Olson & Kroeger, 2001) have confirmed that the experience of living abroad is likely to be positively linked to the development of intercultural skills and personality traits that are important for constructive intercultural communication. However, Williams (2005) specified that living or studying abroad can enhance these skills only if people interact with the locals. On the other hand, Dewaele and Wei (2012) showed that cognitive empathy, defined as the ability to see the world from an interlocutor's point of view, is not connected to the experience of living abroad in multilingual speakers.

Following from the previous research, which has provided inconclusive results, the current study sets out to investigate the link between open-mindedness and multilingualism in lower secondary school students, in particular. Specifically, the study focuses on the differences between those who learn one (English) or two foreign languages (English plus

French, German or Spanish) in school and those who identify as multilingual or not. Furthermore, it seeks to explore potential links between open-mindedness and three other factors that can also be relevant for the chosen age group and educational context, namely, students' friendships with peers whose first language is not Norwegian, the experience of living abroad, and migration background.

Research question and hypothesis

We seek to answer the following research question:

To what extent can open-mindedness in lower secondary school students be linked to L3 learning at school, self-identification as multilingual, having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, migration background, and experience living abroad?

Given the insights gained from previous research, although they are inconclusive, we hypothesise that all the above factors are significantly linked to students' open-mindedness.

Methodology

Research instrument

To answer our research question, we developed the Ungspråk questionnaire (see Haukås et al., 2021a, for a detailed account of the development and validation of the questionnaire). This questionnaire allows the exploration of students' multilingualism, multilingual identity, open-mindedness and a number of other variables. It has four main sections. Section one explores students' multilingualism through questions about which languages the respondent studies at school and which languages they know. For each language the student reports learning or knowing, the student is asked whether they perceive this language as their first/native language or not.

Section two investigates students' open-mindedness, among other aspects. In total, the construct includes 10 statements, to which responses are provided on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' (Table 1). The statements were developed based on an analysis of five questionnaires, including the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (Van der Zee et al., 2013), which considers open-mindedness to be one of

personality traits predicting a person's unprejudiced attitudes and constructive behavior in intercultural encounters. However, the Ungspråk questionnaire seeks to reflect a non-essentialist and non-differentialist paradigm in intercultural education. Instead of focusing on ethno-cultural and stereotypical national differences between people and contexts, as documented in other questionnaires (see Tiurikova, 2021 for further discussion), the Ungspråk questionnaire assumes that the identities of interlocutors in intercultural encounters are complex and diverse. Thus, differences between people cannot be reduced to ethnic or national distinctions. Cronbach's alpha for the construct 'open-mindedness', reported by Haukås et al. (2021a) when piloting the questionnaire, was 0.75. The Cronbach's alpha test run with the dataset of the current study was 0.79, which proved the validity of the Ungspråk questionnaire.

Table 1. Statements composing the construct 'open-mindedness'

1.	It would be better if all people in Norway shared the same opinions.
2.	There are different ways of being Norwegian.
3.	I like to get to know new people.
4.	I would rather only be with people that I know from before.
5.	I would prefer if everyone around me had the same opinions as me.
6.	I like that people have different opinions.
7.	I like to talk with people that have different opinions than myself.
8.	I like that there are differences between myself and other people.
9.	I try to get to know people that are different from me.
10.	I am interested in many different things.

Section three explores students' self-identification as multilingual. First, they are asked to provide their own definition of a multilingual person. Then, they are asked if they consider themselves to be multilingual by answering 'yes', 'no' or 'not sure'. For further analysis, the two latter answers were merged into one category to distinguish students who explicitly

identify themselves as multilingual ('yes' responses) and those who do not ('no and 'not sure' responses).

Section four includes questions about students' friendship with people whose home languages are other than Norwegian, their experience of living abroad, and other factors that can be significant in relation to students' multilingualism, multilingual identity, and open-mindedness. As mentioned earlier, students' migration background is assumed if they do not identify Norwegian or any national minority language as their first/native language. Students with a migration background could have either moved to Norway during childhood or been born in Norway to immigrant parents.

The questionnaire was administered digitally on the SurveyXact platform. It was available in two languages, Norwegian and English, to provide students with some autonomy and to make sure that the questions were understood by all. Newcomers to Norway who struggled with understanding both of these languages were assisted either by their teacher or by one of the researchers when answering the questionnaire.

The research project, including the questionnaire, was submitted for ethical assessment to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). After approval was received, the questionnaire was piloted twice to verify its validity (for details, see Haukås et al., 2021a).

Participants

We invited lower secondary schools in urban and rural areas around Bergen, Norway, to take part in our study. Seven schools accepted our invitation. In total, 593 students (m = 276, f = 317) agreed to participate. Their mean age was 13.5 years old, and they were all in year 8 of lower secondary school. Although they may not identify as such themselves, all participants can be referred to as multilingual for the reasons mentioned earlier. In our study, most of the students were learners of a second foreign language (L3) at school (85%) in addition to the first foreign language (English; L2 at school), which is compulsory. Of the students, 297 were learning Spanish (50%), 109 were learners of German (18%), and 99 were learning French (17%). In total, 522 students reported that Norwegian was their first language, whereas 71 students reported that neither Norwegian nor any other national minority language was their first/native language. The latter group is referred to as students with a migration background in the context of this study.

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Data collection and analyses

Data collection took place at the schools during class hours. At least one researcher was present at each session to answer any questions regarding the completion of the questionnaire.

For data analysis, we used SPSS version 25. Learning an L3 vs. only the L2 (English) at school, self-identifying as multilingual, having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, having a migration background, and having experience of living abroad were approached as dichotomous variables ('yes' or 'no' answers). The construct 'open-mindedness' was approached as a continuous variable. Since the sample size (n = 593) was enough to assume normal distribution, we chose to run parametric tests for further analyses (Piovesana & Senior, 2018).

To find out which factors were statistically significant in relation to open-mindedness and which were not, we ran independent samples *t*-tests. To understand the importance of the *t*-test results and to allow comparisons between studies, we calculated the effect sizes of the differences between groups (Cohen's *d*).

Results

The results of the independent samples *t*-tests with corresponding calculations of effect sizes (Cohen's *d*) for each factor are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. An overview of *t*-test values and effect sizes

	Students	*N*	*Mean*	*SD*	*T-test*	*p value**	*Effect size (d)***
1.	Learning only the L2 at school (English)	88	3.92	0.66	-4.1	$p < 0.001$	0.47
	Learning an L3 at school (Spanish, German or French)	505	4.2	0.58			
2.	Self-identification as multilingual	396	4.22	0.56	-3.65	$p < 0.001$	0.3
	No self-identification a multilingual	197	4.04	0.65			
3.	Friends with home languages other than Norwegian	406	4.26	0.53	4.89	$p < 0.001$	0.65
	No friends with home languages other than Norwegian	83	3.89	0.79			
4.	Migration background	71	4.13	0.58	-0.53	$p = 0.6$	0.07
	No migration background	522	4.17	0.6			
5.	Experience living abroad	78	4.1	0.65	-1.28	$p = 0.2$	0.16
	No experience living abroad	498	4.19	0.56			

* The value was significant at $p < 0.05$

** 0.2 = small, 0.4 = medium, 0.6 = large (Cumming & Calin-Jageman, 2018)

Statistically significant factors in relation to open-mindedness

Learning an L3 at school appeared to be a statistically significant factor in relation to students' open-mindedness. Learners of an L3, whether Spanish, German or French (n = 505) showed a higher level of open-mindedness (M = 4.2, SD = 0.58) than learners of only the L2 at school (n = 88, M = 3.92, SD = 0.66) (t (591) = -4.1, $p < 0.001$). Cohen's d indicated that the effect size was medium to large for L2 vs. L3 learning at school ($d = 0.47$).

Furthermore, the results of the independent samples t-test showed that the 396 students who self-identified as multilingual (those who answered 'yes' to the question 'are you multilingual?') scored higher on open-mindedness (M = 4.22, SD = 0.56) compared to the 197 students who did not know or did not identify as multilingual (M = 4.04, SD = 0.65). The t-test result (t(591) = -3.65, $p < 0.001$) indicates that this difference between groups is statistically significant. The value of Cohen's d ($d = 0.3$) indicates a small to moderate effect size.

Having friends with home languages other than Norwegian appeared to be a statistically significant factor as well. Students who reported having such friends (n = 406) scored higher (M = 4.26, SD = 0.53) than those who reported not having such friends (n = 83, M = 3.89, SD = 0.79) (t(487) = 5.28, $p < 0.001$). Cohen's d indicated that the effect size was large for the factor of having friends with home languages other than Norwegian ($d = 0.65$).

Factors with no statistical significance in relation to open-mindedness

The independent samples t-test revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in open-mindedness between students with a migration background (n = 71, M = 4.13, SD = 0.58) and without a migration background (n = 522, M = 4.17, SD = 0.6) (t (591) = -0.53, $p = 0.6$). The same result was obtained for the factor of having experience living abroad. Those who have lived abroad (n = 78, M = 4.1, SD = 0.65) did not score significantly differently from those who have no experience of living in another country (n = 498, M = 4.19, SD = 0.56) (t (574) = -1.28, $p = 0.2$).

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to investigate to what extent open-mindedness can be connected to lower secondary school students' multilingualism and related variables. The main findings are that learning an L3 at school (Spanish, German or French), self-identification as multilingual and having friends with home languages other than Norwegian are factors that are likely positively linked to students' open-mindedness.

A statistically significant difference between students learning two foreign languages at school and those learning only English may hint at the particular role of learning an L3 at school in developing this psychological trait. To the best of our knowledge, no studies have yet compared the open-mindedness of students' learning the L2 (English) as well as an L3 in school settings. However, our findings may partly correspond to the results of previous research that found that learning a first foreign language was not a factor in developing open-mindedness and related psychological traits. For instance, Dewaele and Oudenhoven (2009) and Pedersen (1997) found no connection between learning one foreign language at school and students' open-mindedness or related qualities. Given the results of these studies and our findings, we may assume that, in contrast to learning only one foreign language, which typically begins in primary school, actively deciding to study a second foreign language in secondary school is positively linked to students' open-mindedness.

A possible explanation for the discrepancy between L2 and L3 student learners in this study might be the novelty of knowledge and experience that learning a new foreign language (whether it is Spanish, German or French) brings to secondary school students. As stated in both the English curriculum (NDET, 2019a) and the Foreign Language Subject curriculum (NDET, 2019b), learning a new language includes learning about new ways of interpreting the world, developing curiosity and helping students become more open towards differences. Nevertheless, one may argue that learning only English as a foreign language at school can, to a lesser extent, be associated with new experiences and new knowledge in the Norwegian setting compared with learning a second foreign language. Due to its status as a global lingua franca, English has a special place in Norwegian society and school education. It has long been in use in society and in the education system, and it is also broadly available in the media, on the internet, and elsewhere. Thus, students in Norway are widely exposed to the

English language, as well as to the cultures of English-speaking countries. In fact, secondary school English teachers in Norway report that many students feel that they know enough already and that there is little new to learn (Haukås et al., 2021). Furthermore, as the status of English as a global language is strengthened (Crystal, 2003), it is perceived more often as a fundamental skill in the educational system (Graddol, 2006). Consequently, students increasingly may associate learning English at school with necessity, utility, advantages, social capital and power (Ushioda, 2017) rather than with discovery, curiosity, opening new perspectives and so on. It is interesting to note that this transition of the English language from a "foreign language" to a fundamental skill has been reflected in the Norwegian curriculum, where English is no longer referred to as "a foreign language".

Along with learning an L3 at school, students' self-identification as multilingual also appeared to be significantly connected to their open-mindedness. This finding provides empirical evidence for other, mainly theoretical, studies (Fielding, 2021; Tiurikova & Haukås, in press), which posit that explicitly identifying as multilingual can be connected to open-mindedness and intercultural competence and that multilingual identity negotiation is likely to help advance this competence in language learners. While scholars have indicated that self-identification as multilingual can be connected to students' motivation and investment in language learning (Forbes et al., 2021) and academic achievements (Rutgers et al., 2021), our study, thus, contributes to the field by suggesting one more potential benefit of developing students' multilingual identity.

It is worth mentioning, however, that the students completed the questionnaire after learning an L3 at school for approximately one year. Thus, we do not know whether learning an L3 and self-identification as multilingual contributed to increased open-mindedness among the students, or whether those who decided to study an additional foreign language and identified themselves as multilingual did so because they were more open to and curious about new things. This causality dilemma requires further exploration of the possible links between language learning, multilingual identity, and open-mindedness (see, for example, Pfenninger [2021] and Larsen-Freeman [2017] for discussions on the problem of causality).

Higher scores on open-mindedness in students who have friends with home languages other than Norwegian confirmed the studies by Mellizo (2017), Petrovic and Zlatkovic (2009), Williams (2005), and Pederson (1997), who related a higher level of intercultural

sensitivity and intercultural adaptability to exposure to diverse linguistic and cultural environments and intercultural experience and friendship. The powerful effect size of this result ($d = 0.65$) suggests that promoting more activities in school that invite students from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds to interact with each other and to learn more about each other's backgrounds could be fruitful in enhancing all students' open-mindedness. However, such efforts should be made continuously and systematically, as brief interventions probably have limited effects (Vezzali et al., 2019; McKeown et al., 2017).

Interestingly, a migration background and experience living abroad appeared not to be linked to the students' scores on open-mindedness. Consequently, our findings contradict the studies by Morales (2017), Ruokonen and Kairavuori (2012) and Dewaele and Oudenhoven (2009), who found a positive connection between students' migration background and intercultural sensitivity or open-mindedness. Similarly, our findings are at variance with the results of studies by Tompkins et al. (2017), Dewaele and Wei (2013) and other studies that showed that the experience of living or studying abroad was likely to be positively connected to psychological factors facilitating intercultural communication. These conflicting results related both to migration background and stays abroad are reminders of the fact that the contexts and populations of the studies need to be taken into consideration when comparing results. For example, a lower score on open-mindedness among immigrants may reflect the need for stability among children who have recently fled war zones or contexts with a lack of political or economic safety, as suggested by Gross and Dewaele (2018). As for living abroad, the results are also probably highly dependent on the contexts and the purpose for living abroad. For example, Norwegian children who spend one year at a school in Spain administered by Norwegians are perhaps less likely to develop their open-mindedness than children who go to an international school with a strong emphasis on diversity. Therefore, our study supports Williams' (2005) conclusion that immersion in different linguistic and cultural environments and intercultural communication with locals are likely to be more significant for open-mindedness than just living or studying abroad. Furthermore, adult students who decide to study abroad for a year are likely to be more open-minded in the first place, whereas children who are forced to move abroad to follow their parents may develop different attitudes.

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Conclusion

Our research explores the link between secondary school students' open-mindedness and a number of factors related to their multilingualism. The study revealed that this psychological trait is likely positively linked to learning an L3 at school, self-identification as multilingual, and having friends with home languages other than Norwegian, whereas migration background and experience living abroad did not show any statistically significant connection with open-mindedness. In addition, the calculation of effect sizes of the differences between groups for significant factors provided some nuanced insights into the complex interplay between open-mindedness and the considered factors. The study found that while having friends with other home languages and learning an L3 at school seemed to be the most important factors, students' self-identification as multilingual was also significantly associated with open-mindedness.

Given the potential link between open-mindedness and a positive attitude towards cultural and linguistic differences found by previous research in intercultural psychology, our findings may carry important pedagogical implications. First, they suggest that learning an L3 at school may indeed be connected to promoting democratic values in secondary school students, as stated in the Norwegian Core Curriculum (2017) and the Curriculum for Foreign Languages (2019). Second, introducing activities that would help students not only enrich their linguistic repertoires but also develop their multilingual identity are likely to be beneficial for promoting tolerance and positive attitudes towards diversity. Finally, actively supporting and promoting activities in schools so that all students, regardless of their ethnic, cultural or linguistic background, can interact with peers who understand or speak languages other than the school language subjects can also be important for enhancing students' open-mindedness and promoting democratic values.

While this study contributes to research investigating the relationships among language learning, multilingualism, and open-mindedness, it should be acknowledged that to better understand the reasons why certain factors are linked to open-mindedness and how they may affect the development of this psychological trait, more research is needed. In addition, complementing the findings from the questionnaire with additional qualitative methods, such

as semi-structured interviews and case studies, could be a fruitful path to triangulate the data and increase the robustness of the findings. Finally, using our 10-item scale and an adapted version of the Ungspråk questionnaire (Haukås et al. 2021a) in other educational, political, national and geographical contexts with the same or different age groups and with other language constellations at play could bring further important perspectives to the field.

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Book chapter 5

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