

Language Use in Higher Education

the Student Perspective

Trude Bukve

Thesis for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)
University of Bergen, Norway
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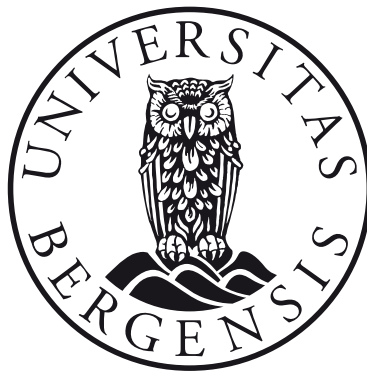
UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN



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In memory of my father, Odd Bukve

Scientific environment

The dissertation was written between January 2014 to January 2019 at the Department of Linguistic, Literary and Aesthetic Studies (LLE), Faculty of Humanities at the University of Bergen (UiB). During my period as a PhD Fellow, I was supervised by Professor Øivin Andersen at UiB and Professor Anne Holmen at the Centre for Internationalisation and Parallel Language Use (CIP), Copenhagen University (UCPH).

During my time as a PhD scholar, I was given the opportunity to be a visiting scholar at CIP, KU from January 2015 to April 2015. The Nordic group for parallel language kindly let me take part in one of their meetings in Helsinki in 2015, offering me important insights into how different academic institutions view and work on language use within HE. I have also been a member of and participated in research programmes organised by the *Norwegian Graduate Researcher School in Linguistics and Philology* (LingPhil) throughout my PhD period. I have also participated in the research group *Conditions and Strategies for Developing Language Competences* at LLE, and the national research community *Sosiolingvistisk nettverk* (SONE). In February 2018, I was given the chance to hold a Master Class led by Associate Professor Janus Mortensen, (CIP, UCPH) on language policy research in the Nordic countries.

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At the department I have been lucky enough to take part in a supportive milieu, and to this I owe special thanks to my fellow PhD colleagues, and other colleagues at the department. I have enjoyed our Tuesday lunches, coffee breaks, study groups, and last but not least all the interesting discussions we have had, and will have. I owe a special thanks to Synnøve Myking who kindly proofread and commented on some of the chapters in the synopsis and article 3. Johan Myking also gave me highly valuable feedback on the sociolinguistics of higher education. I would also like to thank all the highly competent people who welcomed me to CIP in 2015. Their insightful contributions at the very start of my project, and also their valuable comments in the development and revisions of my survey, gave me a good head-start early in my work with this thesis. I am also very grateful for the workshop Camilla Nissen arranged on our behalf at CIP in December 2017. It gave me much needed feedback and new perspectives on my research. I would also like to thank Janus Mortensen for reading and commenting on my work as part of my Master class in 2018. These comments gave me renewed motivation for exploring new paths in my research.

In August 2018 I started as an Assistant Professor at the Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. Here, I have been welcomed by a highly competent and

supportive academic milieu. My educational training as a general linguist is challenged every day when I have to apply my theoretical knowledge to practical questions, and demonstrate to students why solid knowledge of grammar is important for the future teachers and preschool teachers. I owe a special thanks to Eli Bjørhusdal for reading and commenting on the final draft of this synopsis, and Janne Sønnesyn, for taking on the immense job of proof-reading my article manuscripts, as well as the synopsis. Elin Monstad gave me invaluable help by reviewing and giving me feedback on my methodological approach. Kaisa Pietikäinen helped me translating Finnish student comments. Kiitos! All errors that remain are my own.

A special thanks is owed to all the students participating in my study. Without their contributions this thesis would never have seen the light of day! This is also true for all the universities that allowed me to distribute the survey, and the staff who helped me in the best way possible.

I have also received a ton of help from my family in this period. Especially my parents and parents in law, for their encouraging words and for looking after our daughters when needed. I am ever grateful to my mother, Gunn Wenche, for always being there to support me. I owe thanks to my three favorite persons in the world, Amalie, Selma Ovidie and Hedvig. I could never ask for a better crew of brilliant and bold daughters. Gunnar, my best friend: Your meticulous reading and commenting, not only on my second and third drafts, but on my thirtieth drafts of every article and the synopsis have been invaluable. Without your support and generosity, this period would indubitably have been much harder.

During this period, my greatest supporter, my father Odd passed away. From my early childhood he introduced me to literature and sparked my interest in languages, and especially in how languages shape and are being shaped by the world around us. I hand in my thesis at the same faculty where my father earned his degree forty years ago before becoming a teacher in English and Norwegian language and literature. His enthusiasm for my work and the many weekly calls to talk about the latest developments in my research are sorely missed. I dedicate this thesis to him.

Samandrag

Målet med denne avhandlinga har vore å undersøke studentar sine haldningar til dei språklege praksisane dei møter i utdanninga si, og å finne ut om og korleis studentperspektivet kan informere språkpolitikken i høgare utdanning. To av tre studium som inngår i denne avhandlinga undersøker skilnader i haldningar til språklege praksisar på gruppenivå, og ser nærare på variablar som til dømes land/institusjon, fagfelt, kjønn og språkleg sjølvtilitt. Medan desse to studiane baserer seg på kvantitative analysar, ser eg i artikkel tre på studentperspektivet gjennom å gjere ei innhaldsanalyse av kommentarfeltet i undersøkinga.

Spørjeundersøkinga vart distribuert til studentar på sju universitet, i dei fem nordiske landa. Studentar innan fagområda rettsvitenskap, naturvitenskap og filosofi deltok. Grunnen til at eg valde nettopp desse faga, var dei ulike tradisjonane dei representerer, og at desse gjev seg utslag i ulike tilnærmingar og haldningar til språk, både i forskning og undervisning. Medan naturvitenskapane er eit felt som har ein utstrekt bruk av engelsk, brukar ein i lita grad engelsk innanfor rettsvitenskap då faget i større grad baserer seg på rettslege dokument som er skrivne på nasjonalspråket. Språkleg sett så kan desse to felte meir eller mindre plasserast som to motståande polar på ein skala. Dei språklege trekka innanfor fagfeltet filosofi teiknar derimot eit litt anna bilete. Medan både det eller dei lokale språka, samt engelsk ser ut til å vera viktige språk innanfor faget, har også andre språk, som til dømes tysk og fransk spela ei viktig rolle i utviklinga av faget. Til tross for desse skilnadene er dei eitt felles trekk ved alle faga eg har undersøkt, og det er at ingen av dei er reine EMI-program der all undervisning går føre seg på engelsk. Målet med denne avhandlinga er difor å undersøke kva erfaringar studentane har med bruken av både lokale språk og engelsk i utdanninga.

Studie 1 undersøker i kva grad haldningar til språkbruk, opplevingar knytt språk og læringseffekt, samt språkleg sjølvtilitt knytt til engelsk, varierer mellom fagfelt. Totalt 346 studentar på eit av dei norske universiteta deltok i denne undersøkinga.

Ein majoritet av studentane rapporterte at dei lærte mest effektivt på fyrstespråket sitt, og fyrstespråket var i stor grad norsk.

Eit av måla med denne undersøkinga var teste haldningar i samanheng med fagfelt, og å finne ut om ei høg grad av engelsk pensum også leda til meir positive haldningar til engelsk (m.a.o. ei eksponeringshypotese). Tidlegare forskning (Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011) fann ein samanheng mellom høg grad av undervisning på engelsk og positive haldningar til EMI hjå danske universitetslektorar. I undersøkinga mi fann eg at uavhengig av fagfelt, så var majoriteten av studentane positive til engelsk og det potensielle utbyttet det å lære seg engelsk som ein del av utdanninga kunne vere. Det eg ikkje fann var ein klår samanheng mellom mengda av pensum på eit gitt språk og haldningar til det språket. Samanlikna med studentar innan faga naturvitskap og rettsvitskap, hadde filosofistudentar mest pensum på engelsk, men haldningane deira til engelsk var også minst positive. Desse funna vil difor ikkje støtte ei eksponeringshypotese. I staden kan det verke som at studentane sine språkhaldningar i større grad overlappar med dei språka som vert brukt i tidsskrift innan det aktuelle fagfeltet. Ei forklaring kan vere at studentane innan dei ulike fagfelta vert sosialiserte inn i eit sett med haldningar som er knytt til fagspesifikke språkideologiar.

Eit anna fokus i studium 1 var korleis språkleg sjølvtilitt påverkar haldningar til engelsk. Eg fann at språkleg sjølvtilitt i engelsk i større grad kunne predikere haldningar til engelsk, enn fagfelt kunne. Studentane som var trygge på eigne språkevner i engelsk var også meir positive til engelsk. Denne sjølvtilitten korrelerte også positivt med studentane sine planar om å reise på utveksling, og eg fann at studentane som hadde planar om å studere utanlands i snitt var signifikant meir positive til eigne engelskferdigheiter enn studentane som ikkje hadde desse planane.

Målet i studie 2 var å utforske i kva grad haldningar til språk i academia kan forklarast gjennom kjønnskilnader. Nyare forskning har etterspurd undersøkingar der ein fokuserer på kjønn og språk i høgare utdanning (Macaro, Curle, Pun, An, & Dearden, 2018).

Resultata frå min studie indikerer at både menn og kvinner har positive haldningar til engelsk i høgare utdanning, men at dei kvinnelege studentane er noko mindre trygge på sine egne engelskferdigheiter og rapporterer at det er noko meir utfordrande å bruke engelsk i studiekvardagen. Medan eg i studie 1 fokuserte på disiplinskilnader, tematiserer denne studien heterogeniteten ein finn innad i same fagfelt og kva konsekvensar dette har for den språklege praksisen som studentane møter i utdanninga. Spørjeundersøkinga blei sendt ut til to universitet, eit i Noreg og eit i Finland. Totalt 571 studentar deltok, 305 kvinner og 258 menn.

Studie 3 brukar metodeblanding for å utforske studentane sine perspektiv på språket i akademia. Her kombinerer eg ein innhaldsanalyse av eit oppe kommentarfelt i undersøkinga med kvantitative data knytt til fagfelt, studieland, alder, kjønn og språkleg sjølvtilitt i engelsk. Studentar frå alle dei fem nordiske landa var inkluderte i prosjektet mitt, men det var for låg responsrate i Sverige og for få kommentarar i den danske undersøkinga. Innhaldsanalysen baserer seg difor på kommentarar frå studentar på dei tre norske universiteta, samt det islandske og det finske. Totalt deltok om lag 1250 studentar, og desse er inkluderte i den kvantitative delen av studien. Av desse kommenterte 110 studentar i det opne kommentarfeltet og gjennom analysane henta eg fram 12 kommentarar som illustrative døme.

I analysane brukte eg ei stegvis tilnærming i NVivo der eg fyrst gjorde førebuaende analysar på alle kommentarane for å finne tema som gjentok seg. Seinare grupperte eg desse i tre generelle tema: *språkleg sjølvtilitt og behov for språkkurs, forelesar sine språklege ferdigheiter i målspråket og parallellspråksbruk og korleis den påverkar læring*. Som eg allereie har synt i dei to fyrste studia så er studentar med god språkleg sjølvtilitt generelt positive til engelsk i utdanninga, men gjennom innhaldsanalysen fann eg også at studentar, uavhengig av språkleg sjølvtilitt, etterspurde eit større fokus på sjølve språket i utdanninga, samtidig som dei også stilte spørsmål ved det dei opplevde som tilfeldige språklege praksisar innan utdanninga si. Basert på desse kommentarane diskuterer eg anvendegheita av to viktig omgrep innan nordisk språkpolitikk og forskning på og for høgare utdanning, nemleg parallellspråksbruk og engelsk som lingua franca (ELF). Eg fann at trass i at

både parallellspråk og ELF er innført som eit ledd i å handtere språk i høgare utdanning, så har den språklege praksisen som dei representerer lite støtte i studentkommentarane i undersøkinga mi.

Dei tre studiane som utgjer denne avhandlinga gjev eit klårt bilete av dei komplekse språklege praksisane ein finn i akademia, og kor vanskeleg det er å utforme ein språkpolitikk som passar alle dei ulike brukargruppene og alle dei ulike føremåla til institusjonen. Vidare har forskinga mi synt kor viktig det er at førelesarar og dei som utformar språkpolitikken er medvitne om kva rolle språket spelar i studentane si læring. Me lyt anerkjenne at læring gjennom ulike språk kan vere utfordrande, spesielt i starten. Språklæring bør difor sjåast på som ein sentral del av det å lære eit fag, og bør sjåast som ein sentral del av ein student sitt læringsutbyte. Ein bør difor gjennomføre meir målretta tiltak for å utvikle språkstrategiar som tek hensyn til språklæringa si rolle i høgare utdanning.

Abstract

The present thesis has aimed to investigate students' attitudes towards language practices in their education, and to investigate if and how these voices can inform language policy making in higher education (HE). Two of the three studies that make up the present thesis, investigate group-level differences in attitudes towards language practices, focusing on variables such as country/ institution, disciplinary field, gender, and language confidence. The third study investigates students' perspectives on language practices through a content analysis of survey comments.

The survey was distributed to students at seven universities across the five Nordic countries, within the three disciplines law, philosophy, and natural sciences. My reason for singling out these disciplines is found in the different traditions and characteristics they represent, traits that manifest themselves in very different approaches and attitudes towards language(s), both in research and in teaching. The natural sciences is a field with an extensive use of English, while law is characterised by being in part based on legal documents written in the national language. Language wise, these two fields can be placed more or less at opposite poles on a scale. The language traits within the field of philosophy paints a more complex picture. Whereas the local language(s) and English seem to be important within the discipline, other languages such as German and French have played a significant role in shaping the field. Despite these differences, one common characteristic of all three fields is that in the universities where I have conducted my research, none of them are pure EMI programmes where teaching is conducted in English exclusively. Hence, this thesis explores how students experience the use of both local language(s) and English in their education.

Study 1 looks into the extent to which attitudes towards language use, perceptions regarding language and learning effect, and language confidence in English vary between disciplinary fields. A total of 346 students at a Norwegian university participated in the study. A majority of the students reported to learn most efficiently in their first language (L1), and for most students their L1 was Norwegian.

One of the aims of this study was to investigate attitudes in conjunction with study field, and to find out whether high English syllabus load led to more positive attitudes towards English (i.e. an “exposure hypothesis”). Previous research (Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011) found a correlation between Danish university lecturers’ high teaching load in English and positive attitudes towards the language. I found that independent of study field, students displayed positive attitudes towards English and the potential benefit of acquiring English skills as part of their education. I did not, however, find a clear correlation between students’ amount of syllabus in a given language, and their attitudes towards that language. Compared to natural science and law students, philosophy students had a higher amount of syllabus in English, but their attitudes towards English were less positive than those of natural science students and equally positive to those of law students. These patterns do not support the exposure hypothesis. Rather, the attitudes seem to align with the languages used in journal articles within the given field. This could suggest that students are socialised into common language attitudes and language ideologies within the fields.

Another focus of study 1 was if and how language confidence influences attitudes towards English. I found that language confidence in English, to a greater extent than disciplinary background, predicted attitudes towards EMI. Students who were confident in their own skills were also more positive towards English. In addition, language confidence also correlated with students’ plans to study abroad. Students who planned to study abroad were on average significantly more confident in their English skills, than those students who did not have such plans.

The aim in study 2 was to explore the extent to which attitudes towards language(s) in academia can be explained through gender differences. There has recently been a call for investigations concerning gender and language in academia (Macaro et al., 2018). With study 2 I sought to contribute to this body of research.

My results suggest a complex pattern where both male and female students report positive attitudes towards EMI. However, female students are also slightly less language confident, and report more challenges coping with English in their studies. Whereas study 1 had a focus on disciplinary differences, this study thematises the

heterogeneity that exists within the different study fields and the implications this has for the language practices students are met with in their education. The survey was distributed at two universities, one in Norway and one in Finland. In total, 571 students participated, 305 women and 258 men.

Study 3 explores the student perspective using mixed methods. In this study I combine content analysis of students' feedback in an open commentary field with quantitative data concerning students' disciplinary field, in which country they studied, their age, gender and language confidence. Whereas students from all five countries were included in the study, due to too low response rate in the Swedish study, and few comments from the Danish students, the comments presented in this study represent the three Norwegian universities, and the universities in Iceland and Finland. In total, approximately 1250 students participated in the study and are included in the quantitative part of the study. Of these, 110 students gave additional comments and through the analyses, 12 were extracted as illustrative quotes.

In the analyses, I used a stepwise approach in NVivo, where I conducted preliminary analyses on all student comments to discover recurring themes and later to group these under three broad themes. The themes include: *language confidence and the need for language courses*, *lecturers' competence in the target language*, and *parallel language use and its implications for learning*. As suggested in studies 1 and 2, students with high language confidence are generally positive towards EMI, however, the content analysis also show that both high and low confident students call out for a greater focus on language in their education, and they further question what they perceive as coincidental language practices in their studies. Based on these comments I discuss the applicability of two significant concepts in Nordic language policies and language research within HE, parallel language use and English as lingua franca (ELF). I find that both concepts, though initially implemented as means to manage language use within HE, seem to have little support when analysing students' comments concerning language practices within their education.

All three studies show that students' perspectives on, and experiences with, the language practices in their education can be understood through theories connecting

language use to socialisation and social identity within the disciplines, as well as gender and confidence.

The three studies also clearly show the complexities of language practices within academia, and the difficulty of developing one-size-fits all policies that are viable for all areas of the institution. My research has pointed to the necessity of an awareness of language for lecturers and policy makers in the development of institutional language policies. We must acknowledge that learning through different mediums of instruction can pose a challenge for students, especially within their first years of studies. Language learning needs to be viewed as a central goal for students' learning outcomes, and languages need to be given a special focus in the learning of a subject. In conclusion, more deliberate effort should be made to develop language strategies that consider the role language learning should play within HE.

List of Publications

- Bukve, T. (2018): “Students’ Perspectives on English Medium Instruction: A Survey-based Study at a Norwegian University”. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*.
- Bukve, T. (In review): “Students’ perspectives on language use within higher education – exploring gender differences in Norway and Finland”. Manuscript submitted for publication in *Apples – Journal of Applied Language Studies*.
- Bukve, T. (In review): “Fast track to success or derailing communication? Exploring students’ views on the role of languages in Nordic higher education”. Manuscript submitted for publication in *Current Issues in Language Planning*.

The paper “Students’ Perspectives on English Medium Instruction: A Survey-based Study at a Norwegian University” is reprinted with permission from the Nordic Journal of English Studies. All rights reserved.

List of abbreviations

EFL – English as a foreign language

ELF - English as lingua franca

ESL – English as a second language

SLA - Second language acquisition

HE - Higher education

HEI - Higher education institution

LPP - Language policy and planning

L1 – First language

L2 – Second language

NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data

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1. Introduction

The present thesis concerns the students' perspectives on language use within Nordic higher education (HE). In this thesis, the term *language use* describes the choice between foreign and local language(s) for instruction that students are met with in their everyday studies. Language use in HE is not monolithic. Choices are made for which languages to use in lectures and which languages the syllabus should be in, as well as for which languages the students should use when writing assignments and speaking in class. Often, these choices are made by the institution, faculty, department, or the individual lecturer, not by the students.

Language use in higher education institutions (HEIs) is often the subject of debate, both within and outside academia. Research on language(s) in HE has taken different approaches, understanding the implications language use has for students, lecturers and the general public. I place my research within the field of applied linguistics, which can be described as a transdiscipline where theories and methods from a variety of fields intersect around types of language issues (see Halliday, 2001; Hult & Johnson, 2015). My own contribution to the field has been to employ sociolinguistic and sociological theories as tools for investigating students' perspectives on language use. I analyse these perspectives within the context and current debates of language policy in Nordic HEIs, and it is these debates that have inspired my research project. Notwithstanding, these policies are not the main analytical entity of my research project, as my focus is on the students' perspectives.

The present thesis is article-based, comprising three studies and an introduction to and contextualisation of these studies (hereafter "the synopsis"). This synopsis outlines the overall research design of my thesis, and expands on the themes, theories, and methodologies presented in the three studies.

1.1 Language debates in Nordic higher education

While this thesis primarily analyses questions of language use through the student perspective, the language situation in the Nordic countries and the institutional

language choices in the sector are important parts of the context for the analyses. All of the five Nordic countries (Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Iceland) can be included in the “expanding circle” of countries that have adopted English as a foreign language (EFL) (Kachru, 1990). With regards to language policy and planning (LPP), the Nordic countries, along with the Netherlands, have, as noted by Lam and Wächter (2014), been particularly prone to implement English in teaching and syllabi. Petersen and Shaw (2002, p. 359) explain that the “‘internationalised university’ is (...) a bilingual academic environment, with both input and production in two languages across a wide range of subjects”. According to Airey, Lauridsen, Räsänen, Salö, and Schwach (2017) this can be explained as a result of institutional and politically motivated changes.

Within the Nordic higher education institutions, there has been considerable debate over language use in the last decades. This debate is partly a consequence of increased internationalisation efforts within the sector, where one strategy has been the implementation of English as the academic lingua franca (Hultgren, Gregersen, & Thøgersen, 2014). Concerns have been aired regarding the anglicisation of HE and its possible negative effects on the local languages’ role within the universities (Gregersen, 2012) and for society at large (Sandøy & Kristiansen, 2010). Further, the increasing use of English as *the* language for research and HE have led to the question of whether English’ impact on language use in the Nordic societies, has moved English from being a foreign language to a second language (Phillipson, 1992). Ljosland (2008) explains this through Kachru’s model, where English has moved from the expanding and norm-dependent circle to the outer, norm-developing circle. In the present thesis, English is more or less consistently referred to as students’ L2. By using this term, I do adhere to Phillipson’s take on English, however I am merely referring to the use of English, not giving any suggestions to the quality of their L2.

Phillipson (2006) discusses whether knowledge of English has become more or less indispensable in order to succeed in academia. Due to the internationalised university, English is a language that students and academics must draw on in their institutional

practices, and can therefore be seen both as communicative practices and academic cultures (Blommaert, 2010). In the Norwegian context, Ljosland (2008) asks whether this development has been at the expense of the local language(s). This question could just as easily be asked in reference to the language situation in the other Nordic countries.

1.1.1 Politics of language in the Nordic context

In all Nordic countries, there is the political debate concerning the role of the Nordic languages and English in the educational sector. The debate is twofold. On the one hand, these institutions are expected to “internationalise”. On the other hand, the research and educational sectors need to establish an agreed-upon terminology in the local languages to be used in both research and dissemination.

The concept of internationalisation covers a broad range of developments within the academic institutions and society at large, and the definition of internationalisation will necessarily depend on the context in which we use it. Altbach and Knight (2007, p. 290) define internationalisation as the “policies and practices undertaken by academic systems, institutions and individuals to cope with a global academic environment”. Internationalisation efforts might serve a variety of purposes. An important goal is to increase the recruitment of international students and scholars¹ (Linn, 2014). However, De Wit (2002) states that “as the international dimension of higher education gains more attention and recognition, people tend to use it in the way that best suits their purpose”. For the purposes of the present study, I define internationalisation as “the implementation of English in lectures and syllabi, to adjust to, and prepare students for, an increasingly globalised society in general, as well as the educational system and work life, specifically” (see study 1).

The use of local languages on the other hand, is warranted through its importance for the publicly funded universities in their efforts to make their research available to the general public (Gregersen et al., 2014; Hultgren et al., 2014). Other key themes in the

¹ Common to these definitions is the treatment of languages as a tool. Some authors have pointed out that the use of English as a means for internationalisation can be viewed as a part of a greater “neoliberal turn” in HE (Davies & Bansel, 2007; Holborow, 2013).

literature include students' learning (Airey & Linder, 2006; Kuteeva & Airey, 2014), teachers' attitudes towards, and competence in English (Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011; Thøgersen & Airey, 2011; Werther, Denver, Jensen, & Mees, 2014), and how anglicization of HE could lead to domain loss (Haberland, 2006; Linn, 2010).

1.2 Aims

1.2.1 Rationales and motivation

A general aim in this project has been to study students' attitudes in light of the current language discourses and trends in Nordic HE, as referred to in the previous sections, and furthermore to investigate if and how students' perspectives can be used to inform policy making in higher education. By "students' perspectives", I mean information that describes the students' experiences of and attitudes towards language practices in their day-to-day studies, especially concerning which language(s) their lecturers use for teaching and for reading material in the courses they attend.

The topics investigated in this thesis have developed through a research-based interest. I place my project within a broad definition of language policy and planning (LPP) research. Theory inspired by sociolinguistic and sociological traditions has been an important starting point for designing the research and formulating research questions. By theory, I here mean a set of concepts that are used to define and/or explain some phenomenon (Silverman, 2013). Even if I have not implemented any single, overarching theoretical framework for the thesis as a whole, I make use of several supporting theories when explaining the findings in the three studies. In this work, theories concerning disciplinary characteristics, social identity, socialisation, gender, and confidence have been central in the interpretation of the results. Common to the different perspectives employed in this thesis is the aim to include linguistic, sociolinguistic and sociological approaches to the study of language perspectives in academia. The sociolinguistic approach to studying language use and practices within HE has been employed by, among others, Ljosland (2008) and Salö (2017). One of the main differences between their approach and mine, lies in the methodology. Ljosland and Salö have mainly employed qualitative approaches, while I primarily

chose a quantitative route, with some support from the qualitative content analysis. The overall aim with my approach has been to detect systematic group differences in how students view language practices within their education.

In addition to being theoretically driven, I believe that my research is also, to a certain extent, steered towards more intervention-oriented purposes. My findings can offer a broad understanding of the factors affecting the successful development of language policies within HE. By gaining insights into students' attitudes towards language practices in higher education we are better positioned to judge whether the language policy documents developed in the sector are based on realistic premises. The interest in thematising language use in HE, and thereby offering insights for improving language policies is not unique to my project, as this has also been a common focus in previous research (Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012; Gregersen, 2009; Gregersen et al., 2014; Hultgren et al., 2014; Jónsson, Laurén, Myking, & Picht, 2013; Linn, 2010; Ljosland, 2008, 2010). My goal is to add to this existing knowledge, and that the results of my research can be put into use in the development of improved language policies and practices in HE.

1.2.2 Research questions

The four main research questions examined in this thesis are:

How do students at Nordic HE institutions view the role of English and local language(s) in their education?

How can language confidence be seen as a mitigating factor influencing students' views on language(s) within their education?

Are there systematic gendered or disciplinary differences in language confidence and attitudes towards the language(s)?

What can students' perspectives tell us about the suitability of current language policies?

In order to elaborate on these, quite broad, research question, they have been divided into nine sub-questions. I have investigated these questions through three empirical

studies that have been presented in three research articles. Table 1 presents an overview of the thesis as a whole, and the three research articles.

Table 1 Synopsis of the thesis and the three studies.

Study purpose	<i>To gain a deeper understanding of the different factors that underlie perspectives on language use in HE, and whether these perspectives can give us insights concerning the suitability of current language policies.</i>		
Main research questions	<p>(1) <i>How do students at Nordic HE institutions view the role of English and local language(s) in their education?</i></p> <p>(2) <i>How can language confidence be seen as a mitigating factor influencing students' views on language(s) within their education?</i></p> <p>(3) <i>Are there systematic gendered or disciplinary differences in language confidence and attitudes towards the language(s)?</i></p> <p>(4) <i>What can students' perspectives tell us about the suitability of current language policies?</i></p>		
	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3
Title	<i>Students' Perspectives on English Medium Instruction: A Survey-based Study at a Norwegian University</i>	<i>Exploring gender gaps between confidence, normative attitudes and perceived practices in English Medium Instruction – a comparative study between Norway and Finland</i>	<i>Fast track to success or derailing communication? Exploring students' views on the role of languages in Nordic higher education</i>
Aim(s) of the study	To investigate the extent to which perspectives on disciplinary differences, confidence and student mobility can act as explanatory variables for attitudes towards EMI and L1 in the academic context.	To explore gender differences in perspectives on language use within the HE context, analysing data from two major universities, one in Norway and one in Finland.	To explore students' experience with language use, and to investigate how they reflect on the different roles that languages play within the study context. To provide a critical discussion of parallel language use and ELF on the basis of student feedback on how they perceive language roles and status of, different languages within their study context.

Research questions	<p>(1) How confident are students in their own English skills?</p> <p>a. Is it possible to find systematic differences in confidence between disciplinary fields?</p> <p>b. Do students' confidence in their English skills correlate with their plans to study abroad?</p> <p>(2) How do students view EMI?</p> <p>a. Do the attitudes towards EMI vary systematically between disciplinary fields, and are any such differences reflecting differences in syllabus load?</p> <p>b. To what extent is it possible to detect patterns of differences in attitudes towards EMI associated with individual self-confidence?</p>	<p>(1) To what extent do male and female students differ in their self-reported skills in English?</p> <p>(2) Is there a gendered pattern in how students evaluate the normative and perceived practices of language use within the two HE institutions?</p> <p>(3) Are the gendered patterns consistent across disciplines and countries?</p>	<p>(1) How do students from different academic backgrounds reflected upon the languages used in their education in general?</p> <p>(2) Do students perceive English and the local language(s) to be advantageous or disadvantageous in their education, and if so, how?</p> <p>(3) Can their perspectives inform universities and lecturers when developing language policies?</p> <p>(4) What conceptual frameworks are relevant for language management in HE, and how do these relate to students' attitudes expressed in the study?</p>
Design	Cross sectional design	Cross sectional design	Mixed methods design
Sample	346 students at a major Norwegian university.	542 students at two major universities, one in Norway and one in Finland.	1250 students from seven Nordic universities
Data	Survey data, with fixed answers to a 5-point Likert-scale.	Survey data with fixed answers on a 5-point Likert-scale.	<p>Survey data</p> <p>Student feedback extracted from open commentary fields</p>
Supporting theories	Disciplinary fields Confidence	Gender and confidence	English as lingua franca Parallel language use
Analysis	<p>Quantitative analyses using SPSS version 25.</p> <p>Regression analysis and comparisons of mean scores</p>	<p>Quantitative analyses using SPSS version 25.</p> <p>Regression analysis and comparisons of mean scores</p>	<p>Comparisons of mean scores using SPSS version 25.</p> <p>Qualitative content analysis using NVivo</p>

1.3 Domain loss

A central concern in Nordic LPP has been the concept of domain loss, referring to the situation where a language loses territory and cannot be used in all areas of a society, caused by the massive influx of another dominant language.² In the Nordic HE context, the dominance of English is regarded by some as a threat to the status of local languages within the sector, and has been discussed from various perspectives by numerous researchers (see Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012; Ferguson, 2007; Haberland, 2006; Hultgren, 2016; Jónsson et al., 2013; Linn, 2014; Ljosland, 2003, 2014).

Research has demonstrated that language use in the educational context is related to a variety of ideological stances and practices. The implementation of English is often connected to the “internationalist” discourse, where university leaders see language as a means for instrumental goals such as university ranking (Hultgren et al., 2014). Linn (2010) stresses the importance of attracting incoming students, and also for local students to be familiarised with English to prepare them for working in an international environment. The opposing discourse, termed the “culturalist” discourse by Hultgren et al. (2014), values the importance of the local language(s), and much time is devoted to the monitoring and regulation of these languages. At the practical level, much research has been devoted to study the effect teaching in an L2 has on students’ learning (see for instance Airey, 2010; Airey & Linder, 2006; Hellekjær & Westergaard, 2002). Ultimately, both ideologies and practices shape students’ perspectives on what role different languages play within given disciplinary fields.

Talking about domain loss rests on the assumption that we can divide a language into specific domains, as proposed by Fishman (1972). In this sense, domain refers to a situation where resembling types of language use by interlocutors, context, and topics affect what language(s) that are used (Bjørhusdal, 2014). This definition is closely connected to the division between *essential* and *complete languages* (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2006). The Declaration on the Nordic Language Policy (2006) states

² Salö (2016, p. 19) notes that “the perceived impact on English in Sweden has raised some concerns of macrosocial as well as more specific linguistic prominence”.

that all Nordic languages have equal status, but at the same time play different roles. This is made explicit through the division of essential and complete languages, where ‘complete’ refers to the situation where a language can be used in all areas of society, whereas an ‘essential’ language is used within a community for official purposes, e.g. education and legislation (2006). The increased use of English in Nordic academia has spurred the debate of whether the Nordic languages are at risk of losing their status as complete languages, as expressed by the Nordic Council of Ministers (2006).

The languages included in this study fulfil the conditions for being both essential and complete. However, there is a general worry that this status is challenged, due to the significant impact English has had on HE.

The concept of ‘domain loss’, often referred to as the situation where national languages ‘lose terrain’ to English within specific spheres of society (Hultgren, 2013), has been a recurring theme in both public and academic debates (Salö, 2016). However, Jónsson et al. (2013) point to the vagueness and the double meanings following these debates. Far from all discussants perceive the role of English to constitute a problem, or there is at least a difference in the extent to which the influx of English is perceived as a problem. Nor do all agree to what exactly the negative consequences of the increasing use of English are.

As the present thesis is written from the perspective of the students, the concept of domain loss and the potential challenges this would pose for the local language(s) due to the hegemonic status of English in academia, has not been given much focus in my three studies. However, even though safeguarding the local language(s) has not received attention in the present thesis, the implications that domain loss in academia hold for students, i.e. through availability of syllabus in different languages, lecturing language etc., is very much evident in my work. The discussion of domain loss and its ripple effect in all levels of HE therefore serves as an important backdrop to the three studies that make up this thesis.

1.4 Parallel language use

To overcome challenges with language use, HE institutions in the Nordic countries have developed language policy documents clearly aimed at managing language in research and education. The Nordic countries have embraced *parallel language use* as an antidote to domain loss in HE (Gregersen et al., 2014; Jónsson et al., 2013; Nordic Council of Ministers, 2006). Parallel language use denotes an ideal where two (or more) languages coexist, and where one is not to be a subordinate of the other (Harder, 2008). The Declaration on the Nordic Language Policy stresses the importance of simultaneous acquisition of very good skills in a Nordic language, and at least one ‘language of international importance’, as well as good skills in another foreign language. Finally, the declaration singles out four important areas of work: *language comprehension and language skills, the parallel use of languages, multilingualism, and the Nordic countries as a linguistic pioneering region* (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2006). Especially the two points concerning language comprehension and the parallel use of English and the languages of the Nordic countries, have carried importance for the present project.

Despite the aim of a strategic implementation of parallel language practices within the university sector, which was based on the recognition of the important roles language(s) play in the HE context, the concept of parallel language use has been criticised for being vague and for having an unclear practical application (see Hultgren, 2014; Kuteeva, 2014; Mortensen, 2014; Thøgersen, 2010). Jónsson et al. (2013) call for a more clearly defined differentiation between parallel language use as a language political principle, a strategic concept, and the individual skills of the language users. The concept has further been criticized for being a mere political slogan that has shifted the focus from more urgent needs, like the enhancing of disciplinary linguistic skills (Airey & Linder, 2008; Kuteeva & Airey, 2014). Hultgren (2014) argues that the concept of parallel languages, at least in the context of Danish HE, is treated differently at state and university level. Whereas parallel language use is introduced at state level as a means for protecting the national languages, at the university level it is introduced with the aim to implement EMI. We

can see these two uses of the parallel language concepts as encompassing two distinct and inherently conflicting policies, respectively a ‘language safeguarding policy’ and an ‘internationalisation policy’. These differences in meaning and interpretations of concepts such as parallel language use could ultimately stand in the way of adequate and viable solutions to the challenges that could arise from the various approaches to language practices in HE (Jónsson et al., 2013).

For the sake of the present thesis, I employ the view of parallel language use as the practice of two or more languages in the educational context, where English and the local language(s) are given special prominence. More specifically, I have chosen to include study programmes that display very different language practices and attitudes concerning the preferences for English or the local language(s). Further, my focus has been on students’ perspectives on the language(s) they meet in the syllabus and at lectures, giving less attention to the political dimension where parallel language use is implemented as a policy concept for language management in HE and at national level. However, as the three different studies thematise how students’ perceive language practices within HE, my aim has been to contribute to the existing research on the viability, and further improvement of language management within the HE institutions. My contribution to the discussions on language policy documents and how the different concepts are read and interpreted has therefore been approached through the bottom-up level, through students’ voices.

1.5 Structure of the synopsis

The synopsis is organised as follows:

In the present chapter I have stated the research questions, and presented the rationales and motivations for conducting this research. I have also given an overview of the research designs of the three studies that make up the thesis. Further, I have introduced the current language debates in Nordic HE, focusing especially on the concepts of domain loss and parallel language use.

The contextualisation of Nordic language policies in HE is further elaborated in chapter 2, where I discuss the background of, and previous research within, language

policy development in Nordic HE institutions, and research into language use and practices within the educational context.

Chapter 3 focuses on the various theoretical foundations that have been employed in the three studies, ranging from the sociolinguistic and language sociological concepts such as attitudes, socialisation, and social identity, to the cognitive psychological concept of confidence. The theoretical frameworks, concepts, and methodological approaches in this dissertation have been chosen from a wide array of disciplinary fields.

The present dissertation offers a view that students' language attitudes in academia are strongly influenced by socialisation processes handed down through bequeathed stances within an academic field, when judging appropriate language use. This is not only evident in the three articles, but also in how the present synopsis is organised. I start with a discussion of the sociolinguistics of HE with regards to language policy planning (LPP), followed by a more thorough treatment of language attitudes at the personal level, which is the primary object of investigation in my dissertation.

Throughout this discussion language use and attitudes is first and foremost treated as a social phenomenon, in that language practices are influenced by the students' social contexts. However, I also see cognitive processes as important factors when explaining language attitudes. The last part of this chapter introduces confidence, an important cognitive factor influencing language use and language attitudes.

In chapter 4, I explain the methodological approach of this thesis. A main point that I stress is that the choices of methods must follow from the research questions, not the other way around.

Chapter 5 gives an overview of the three studies comprising the present thesis. The studies set out to shed light on students' perspectives on language use within HE, insights that offer important perspectives that should be of relevance for policy-development in Nordic higher education. Each summary is introduced with preliminaries and a broader contextualisation.

Concluding remarks are presented in chapter 6, where the four main research questions are discussed in light of the three studies.

2. Background

In this chapter I present the language situation in the Nordic countries and Nordic HE institutions. I also discuss the relevance of language policy research for this thesis.

2.1 The Nordic laboratory

The present study investigates how the language practices at universities in the five Nordic countries (Iceland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland) are perceived by students within HE institutions in these countries.

The Nordic countries all share significant societal characteristics, exemplified by the Nordic welfare model, publicly funded universities, and thereby free access to higher education, in addition to being among the most gender equal societies in the world. Further, it is also important to keep in mind that HE institutions possibly share more similarities between countries, than with other state-funded forms of organisations. Since the Nordic countries have almost entirely publicly funded universities, policies aimed at employees and students are therefore essentially public policies, and are as such intended to steer the conduct of the individuals (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard, & Henry, 1997). Whereas language policy documents have been developed both nationally and within several of the Nordic higher education institutions (HEI), the Declaration on Nordic language policy (Nordic Council of Ministers, 2006) aimed at steering the direction in which the Nordic countries should work to manage language(s).

In spite of the similarities, there are also some distinct differences between some of the Nordic countries when it comes to the linguistic context. At the linguistic level, the Scandinavian countries and Iceland, together with the Swedish-speaking population of Finland, make up the northern branch of the Germanic languages. Whereas this branch belongs to the Indo-European languages, the Finnish language belongs to the Finno-Ugric branch with roots to the Uralic languages. Concerning the mutual intelligibility between these languages, the three Scandinavian languages are perceived to be so similar that communication is possible without prior instruction

(Gooskens, 2007), termed ‘semicommunication’ by Haugen (1966). Some language policy documents specify that the three languages which enter into the Scandinavian languages are equally suitable in terms of teaching (see for instance Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2009). This would of course mainly apply to the Scandinavian region, as well as the Swedish-speaking Finns. It is, however, less applicable to Icelandic and Finnish speakers in these HE institutions. Another key point in the Norwegian and Finnish HE language policy documents concerns how to manage the two official languages, Norwegian Bokmål and Norwegian Nynorsk and Finnish and Swedish (Norwegian University of Science and Technology, 2009; University of Helsinki, 2014; University of Oslo, 2010), as part of their responsibility to maintain and develop the national languages.

A large number of students who do not speak one of the local Nordic languages enter into study programmes, which makes semicommunication impossible. One could question whether the Nordic HE institutions really are too small to develop terminology and the domain-specific local language(s) for academic purposes, as pointed out by Airey et al. (2017), since the semicommunication we expect of students should also apply to the research community.

Responding to the need for a lingua franca in teaching and research, language policies developed at Nordic HE institutions often resort to the introduction of English when addressing the need for internationalisation (see for instance University of Helsinki, 2018; University of Oslo, 2010). As explained above, the increase of English in Nordic HE can be explained through the relative small number of Nordic L1 speakers in HE institutions in these five countries which would make the development of local language terminology too time consuming and costly (Airey et al., 2017).

Alternatively, it could be seen as a result of a neoliberal turn where language is a key factor in the globalisation processes (Holborow, 2013). In any case, the transition to English is helped by the fact that people in the Nordic countries are generally thought to have good communicative skills in English. Education First (2018) places the Nordic population among the most proficient English users in their global study.

I find that these factors make comparisons between different groups, both within and across countries, highly interesting, and the Nordic region poses as an interesting study object when it comes to how policies are developed, managed and implemented into practice. It also makes for a highly interesting case for investigating language attitudes at the individual level.

2.2 The impact of language policy development and language management for the present study

Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, p. xi) define language policy as a “body of ideas, laws, regulations, rules and practices intended to achieve the planned language change in the society, group or system”. They further stress that planning can occur only when such policies exist, and they thereby include language planning as part of the policy concept. This paints a picture of language policy as a top-down approach, linking it to planning and legislation at the authoritative level. Johnson (2013), however, emphasises that far from all language policies are intentional and/ or planned, and suggests that bottom-up initiatives can be equally substantial. This is to some extent also acknowledged by Kaplan and Baldauf (1997, p. xi), who note that language policies can be realised at a number of levels, from the “very formal language planning documents and pronouncements to informal statements of intent”.

Hornberger (2015, p. 9) states that LPP issues arise daily and everywhere, they are present in the media, in day-to-day human encounters, and concern everything from literacy levels at the workplace and language in advertising to English’s role as a global language. Looking into the historical development of the research field of LPP, Ricento (2000) divided its development in the latter half of the twentieth century into three phases, (1) decolonization and state formation from the 1950s to 1960s, (2) critical research paradigms focusing on inequalities of access to education in the 1970s-1980s. Finally, in the 1990s, economic mobility and globalisation were followed by an increased awareness of linguistic rights within LPP. These developments were accompanied by methodological developments within the field of LPP. Whereas Vikør (2007, p. 99) defines the field of LPP as centred around

discussions on and the development of codification and standardisation principles, Bjørhusdal (2014) splits the field into two distinct courses concerning how we define the objects of study. Whereas the first path deals with linguistic rights and political theories on language, the second is oriented towards language sociology.

As pointed out by Jónsson et al. (2013), the connections between language, culture and policy are complex, and this makes it impossible to have complete control over actions and reactions when instigating language policy planning. Bjørhusdal (2014) and Hornberger (2015) show that the field of LPP is intrinsically connected to fields of sociolinguistics and language sociology. Bjørhusdal (2014) also points out that language sociology looks into questions of power structures in language use and how certain languages have developed hegemonic status within certain linguistic markets (Bourdieu, 1977). This perspective is clearly valuable for the study of English and its status within HE over the last decades, and not least is it highly relevant when investigating the role local language(s) play within HE.

In the present thesis, both paths are important and I would therefore argue that the thesis could not be placed in either one of the two categories exclusively. These two traditions then, and the range of sub-disciplines that are intrinsically connected to them, have been important in my line of research. In addition, language policies and the operationalisation of these within the Nordic HE have been important through the whole research process. However, their relevance is closely connected to students' views on language choices and practices within their education.

I am concerned with how the language policy planning seems to negotiate the language practices that relate to the division of English as a global language and its effect on the local language(s), and how individuals perceive the language practices they experience in their education. I focus on how students' perspectives on language choices and practices at the bottom-up level can inform policy decisions at top-down level. So while language policies and Nordic LPP are of interest in this study, they are always viewed in light of the students' voices. That is, I see the policies as constituting a political and institutional framework influencing the language practices

that students experience, and I try to bring into view how the students' voices can inform the language policy development within HE.

3. Attitudes - institutional practices and students' beliefs

Language attitudes are at the core of the present thesis. Drawing on theories from sociolinguistics, sociology and social psychology, the chapter presents different conceptions of attitudes, and how attitudes influence and are influenced by social identity and language confidence.

3.1 Attitudes

Baker (1992) suggests that the theory of language attitudes should be grounded in general attitude theory. In line with this view on the sociolinguistic take on attitudes, Ryan, Giles, and Sebastian (1982, p. 7) suggest that an attitude directed specifically towards language may be defined as “(...) any affective, cognitive or behavioural index of evaluative reactions towards different language varieties or their speaker”. The purpose of the present study has been to explore students' attitudes towards language use.

The concept of attitudes is not without its controversies. From a social constructionist standpoint, attitude research has been criticised for generating “a poor image of people's contextually, situated (...) and variable evaluative practices” and that “the very search for stable, measurable, incorporated ‘attitudes’ is essentially unwarranted” (Soukup, 2013, p. 252). In my opinion, such criticism fails to appreciate how research into attitudes in fact can include context in very meaningful ways. The premises in this criticism are however correct in pointing out the underlying assumption of attitude research that there is something out there to measure. Soukup (2013, p. 253) explains this as “the existence of a measurement ‘target’ – of some coherent entity of an inner state: an ‘attitude’”. In the present thesis, I have chosen to employ Eagly and Chaiken's (1993, p. 1) definition of attitudes as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favour or disfavour”. According to Eagly and Chaiken (2007), this definition allows one to differentiate between the inner tendency that

makes up the attitude and the evaluative responses expressing the attitudes. Further, attitudes are closely tied to a range of neighbouring concepts like beliefs, social identity, personal identity, and stereotypes. These are concepts that have proven highly valuable for explaining attitudes towards the languages students meet in their everyday studies.

Hogg and Vaughan (2005, p. 152) explain attitudes as “made up of a cluster of feelings, likes and dislikes, behavioural intensions, thoughts and ideas”. Since the analyses presented in this thesis is based on survey data, I find a discussion on the complexity inherent in the concept of attitudes to be important. I do not treat attitudes as a uniform concept, and in the following I discuss types of attitudes and how they relate to the present research.

3.1.1 **Implicit and explicit attitudes**

Attitudes can be either *implicit* or *explicit*. Gawronski and Bodenhausen (2006, p. 692) define the two-folded concept in the following way:

(...) most attitude change models that do distinguish between explicit and implicit attitudes consider implicit attitudes to be stable evaluative representations stemming from long-term socialization experiences. Explicit attitudes, in contrast, are conceived as more recently acquired attitudes that contrast with the old presumptively stable, implicit attitude.

Gawronski and Bodenhausen argue that implicit and explicit attitudes should be understood in terms of underlying processes, associative for implicit attitudes and propositional for explicit attitudes. Furthermore, the theory of implicit and explicit attitudes gives insight into how attitudes change and evolve, whether by socialization or through other means. I have chosen to describe attitude as a concept closely tied to social identity. As attitudes towards language use in the educational context may be closely connected to group socialisation (see for instance Duff, 2007), there is little to gain in interpreting the attitudes expressed by the students as a measure of personal traits. In this respect, language socialisation is a central concept, which, according to Ochs (2002, p. 106) is “rooted in the notion that the process of acquiring a language is part of a much larger process of becoming a person in society”.

3.1.2 Integrative and instrumental attitudes

Another distinction is the one made between *instrumental* and *integrative* attitudes. These two orientations have played a significant role in the study on second language acquisition (Baker, 1992; Lasagabaster, 2002), and I have found them to play an important role for the study of language attitudes in HE. The instrumental dimension reflects pragmatic or utilitarian motives, such as improving or maintaining socio-economic status through the use of a specific language, while the integrative attitudes reflect social and interpersonal motives, such as the desire to identify to given groups and cultures (Lasagabaster, 2002; Oakes, 2001). Whereas the distinction between implicit and explicit attitudes explains how people may hold attitudes that they are unaware of, the division between instrumental and integrative attitudes highlights how attitudes can be influenced by either clear personal goals or the desire to belong to a specific group. In the present dissertation, the types of language perspectives that are revealed at personal and institutional level seem to fit well with the division of instrumental and integrative attitudes. Due to the fact that the data was collected through surveys, the division between implicit and explicit attitudes is more difficult to measure. If we were to look at the different perspectives on EMI, the division between students and the institution could be illustrated as in in figure 1.

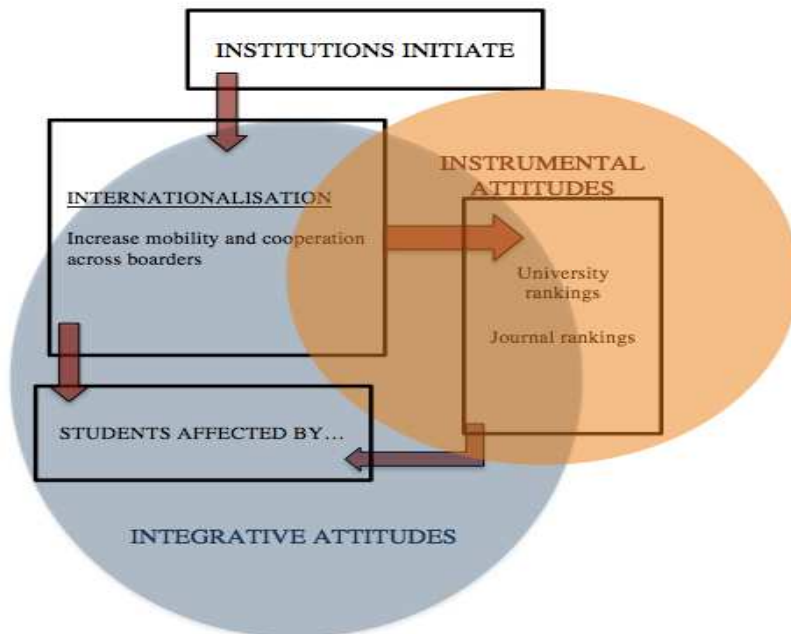


Figure 1 Instrumental and integrative attitudes. The model illustrates the interplay between instrumental attitudes and integrative attitudes when top-down policies regarding internationalisation are implemented into the educational setting

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between the types of attitudes investigated in this dissertation. At the institutional level, the view of language as a means for increasing activities partly driven by financial motivations could be ascribed to the instrumental attitudes towards the language in question. However, the top-down implementation of English also affects students, whose attitudes are not necessarily instrumental but who accommodate themselves to the language practices and ideologies that dominate their discipline. We can view the attitudes developed within this context as integrative attitudes, reflecting students' conscious or subconscious affiliation with the discipline they are enrolled in. This could be a result of socialisation processes, and to examine how these processes work at intergroup level, a helpful distinction would be that of *personal* and *social identity*.

3.1.3 Social identity

I use Tajfel and Turner's (1986) *social identity theory* as an interpretational framework to explain possible disciplinary differences in attitudes towards language(s) in the educational context. The concept of social identity is, "more than any other aspect of social theory, sociolinguistics' home ground" (Coupland, 2001, p. 18) and can be defined as "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1978, p. 63). Social identity theory suggests that "social categories (...) provide members with a social identity (...) [which] not only describe members but prescribe appropriate behaviour and specific tactics for members" (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005, p. 408), and further "social classification enables the individual to locate or define *him – or herself* in the social environment" (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p. 21). Using the distinction between the types of identities as a starting point, attitudes may be explained through an extension of social identity theory and its focus on intergroup perspectives in the social psychology of language (Hogg & Vaughan, 2005). They define *intergroup behaviour* as "[b]ehaviour among individuals that is regulated by those individuals' awareness of and identification with different social groups" (p. 392). Language use can be one defining feature of a field. Therefore, identifying with and conforming to the language norms can be a way for students to affiliate with the academic milieu that they are a part of. Students not able to master the language norms or unspoken policies within the academic discipline could then withdraw and not identify with the academic discipline.

When investigating the relationship between disciplinary fields and perspectives on language use in the educational context, one should take the range of academic traditions into account. By including study fields with various scholastic emphases and backgrounds, rather than focusing on a single academic field, we get a more complete picture of students' perspectives on language (as will be discussed more thoroughly in chapter 3.2.2).

3.2 Disciplinary knowledge and its implications on language(s) in HE

According to Airey and Linder (2009), what constitutes a discipline is the coexistence of individuals who together create a shared way of knowing, encompassing coherent systems of concepts, ideas and theories. The nature of the academic disciplines that make up the university is multifaceted. We develop and transmit knowledge from lecturers to students in highly field-specific cultures and structures. Further, to succeed students should have access to the ways of knowing of disciplines (Saunders & Clarke, 1997). Airey (2011, p. 3) refers to this as disciplinary literacy, which he defines as “the ability to appropriately participate in the communicative practices of the discipline”.

3.2.1 **Disciplinary differences**

It is reasonable to assume that disciplinary differences can include differences in the use of English and attitudes towards its proper role in education and research.

Kuteeva and Airey (2014, p. 545) point to comments from academic staff working within the social sciences, humanities and the sciences and stress that “[t]he use of English varies significantly across different disciplines and is closely related to disciplinary knowledge-making practices and the placement of the discipline between the academy [and] the society (...)”.

In the present dissertation I have relied heavily on the distinction of disciplinary knowledge as proposed by Biglan (1973) and further developed by researchers like Becher and Trowler (2001) and Neumann (2001). In his article, Becher (1994) groups the different modes of disciplinary knowledge based on the typologies of Biglan (1973) and Kolb (1981):

Table 2 Broad disciplinary groupings

Biglan	Kolb	Disciplinary areas
Hard pure	Abstract reflective	Natural sciences
Soft pure	Concrete reflective	Humanities and social sciences
Hard applied	Abstract active	Science-based professions
Soft applied	Concrete active	Social professions

From Becher (1994, p. 152)

The three academic fields chosen for the present thesis represent soft applied sciences (law), soft pure sciences (philosophy) and hard pure sciences (natural sciences). This field-specific culture is modelled through different typologies. Based on the assumption that educational fields vary in the form that academic knowledge is organised, the framework of matching categories of knowledge fields (Becher, 1989; Neumann, 2001; Neumann, Parry, & Becher, 2002) can be used to extract academic fields that exhibit different characteristics, and differ in their internal make-up.

The present distinction of study fields, which is based on their epistemological characteristics, aligns with other methods for categorising knowledge fields within research and higher education. Airey's (2011) disciplinary literacy triangle, divides disciplines based on three types of literacies and discuss the extent to which different knowledge-making processes are a result of different educational goals. Kuteeva and Airey (2014, p. 540) argue that an element of each "will be present for all academic fields". Whereas I initially sought to place the three disciplinary fields, philosophy, law and natural sciences, within Airey's literacy triangle, I found that the differences between the disciplines were clearer and easier to grasp when I applied the division of hard, pure, soft and applied fields.

Although classifying disciplinary groups into hard, pure, soft and applied sciences is useful, there is not a clear-cut line between the fields. Some disciplines could be found to share characteristics with more than one disciplinary field. Hence, they might belong to more than one of the broad headings within the analytical framework. Referencing the division between disciplines based on matching categories of knowledge fields, Trowler (2014) begs for caution when placing too

much emphasis on the homogeneity within a field. He proposes analysing disciplines through the properties connected to Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance, which would also take into account the heterogeneity within a given field, either when looking at the division between research and teaching, or when comparing disciplines across institutions and countries.

As important as this critique is, I chose to select students based on the matching categories of knowledge fields because this theoretical framework provides fertile ground for generating predictive hypotheses about the attitudes of students from different disciplines. Perhaps this is precisely because of the somewhat rigid essentialism that its critics have taken the framework to task for. The broader group-level differences are at the centre of attention in my study, and the matching categories theory is useful insofar as it gives a clear suggestion of which direction disciplinary background—alongside the other explanatory factors included in the analysis—will nudge the students' attitudes.

The classification of academic fields should not be interpreted as a definite distinction of study fields, but rather as a means for explaining and extracting different fields of study on the most marked epistemological features within the given academic tradition.

In the following, I discuss the three disciplines I have chosen to include in my study, in light of the respective categories of knowledge fields.

Hard pure sciences – Natural Sciences

The natural sciences fit into the category of *hard pure sciences*, characterised by the “cumulative, atomistic structure, concerned with universals, simplification and a quantitative emphasis” (Neumann et al., 2002, p. 406). Knowledge is built in a brick-by-brick fashion and the factual understanding of concepts and principles is highly regarded. The quantitative nature of the hard pure fields is also reflected in the “atomistic structure (...) prefer[ing] specific and closely focused examination questions to broader, essay-type assignments (...)” (p. 408). The preferred approach seems to be to focus the curriculum around the fixed, cumulative and quantitatively

measurable, and large group lectures, followed by some laboratory work and fieldwork sessions (Neumann et al., 2002).

The soft pure sciences: Philosophy

Philosophy is classified as a *soft pure science* characterised by the “reiterative, holistic, (...) concerned with particulars and having a qualitative basis” (p. 406). Assessment tasks emphasise knowledge application and integration, usually in essay or explanatory form (p. 408). Assessment concerns testing candidates’ levels of sophistication, as well as to indicate the degree to which they display understanding of the more complex matters associated with the field (Neumann et al., 2002).

The soft applied sciences: Law

Within the *soft applied sciences*, primary focus in the assessment situation concerns “the enhancement of professional practise and aiming to yield protocols and procedures” (Neumann et al., 2002, p. 406). In contrast to the pure disciplines, applied fields are “concerned with the accumulation of knowledge by a reiterative process shaped by practically honed knowledge and espoused theory” (p. 408). Returning to Airey’s (2009, p. 10) definition of scientific literacy as “(...) both the ability to work within science and the ability to apply science to everyday life”, it could be argued that through their educational pathway, law students to a greater extent than the other two student groups, are reminded of their future line of duty. Their ability to apply science to their professional practice runs as a thread throughout the study course.

Table 3 Defining features of disciplinary fields

Hard pure – Natural sciences (chemistry and physics)	Soft pure – Philosophy	Soft applied – Law	Hard applied³
Cumulative, atomistic nature Linear and hierarchical, building up brick by brick towards contemporary knowledge Less, or no, focus on critical perspectives Quantitative curriculum objectives Instructive, focused around the fixed, cumulative and quantitatively measured curricula	Reiterative, holistic nature Returning with increasing levels of subtlety and insight into familiar areas of content Develop critical thinking is their forte Qualitative curriculum objectives Constructive and interpretative, focus on knowledge-building processes	Accumulation of knowledge, by reiterative processes shaped by practically honed knowledge and espoused theory Qualitative curriculum objectives When validating knowledge, both rely less than the pure fields on examining conflicting evidence and exploring alternative explanations Practical experience is highly regarded, but may reveal itself in different ways	Progressive mastery of techniques in linear sequence, based on factual understanding Quantitative curriculum objectives

Based on (Becher & Trowler, 2001; Neumann, 2001; Neumann et al., 2002).

3.2.2 How does the disciplinary division relate to language practices within the fields?

For the sake of the present study I argue that the different knowledge-making processes referred to in table 3 necessarily must affect not only the language practices within the different studies, but also which language(s) that dominate within the field. The three disciplines included in my study differ in how language(s) are treated and viewed. An interesting classification is the one found in Skudlik (1990), who characterises disciplines as Anglophone where there is a more or less exclusive use of English, moderately Anglophone fields where English predominates, and lastly disciplines where the local language(s) dominate. The three disciplines in this study can be placed within the three different categories, albeit with some divergence

³ The hard applied sciences are not represented in the present study.

between which languages dominate in research and which languages dominate the syllabus within the disciplines, as will be discussed more thoroughly in chapter 5 and study 1.

3.3 Language confidence

Whereas disciplinary fields can account for some of the systematic differences influencing attitudes, I have chosen to use students' confidence in their receptive and productive English skills as a measure in the studies. Self-confidence can be defined as a belief and trust in one's general abilities or in the abilities needed for specific situations or activities (Colman, 2015). My reason for introducing confidence into the explanatory model was to explore whether confidence could be an important predictor for students' perspectives on language(s) within their studies, as it has already been proven to be imperative for academic performance (Leman, 1999; Read, Francis, & Robson, 2001; Robson, Francis, & Read, 2004). I have brought confidence into this thesis as an important addition to the analytical model explaining differences in attitudes and perspectives on language use, both within and across the disciplinary fields.

Previous research provides many examples of the importance of confidence for students in higher education. Confidence is identified as an important factor for academic performance (Robson et al., 2004), and high confidence is recognized as imperative for the ability to present convincing arguments and enter examinations anticipating success (Leman, 1999; Read et al., 2001). Herrmann, Bager-Elsborg, and McCune (2017) found that learners often define themselves in terms of the contexts where they feel competent, and vice versa, disidentify with the communities, their ideologies and practices, where they perceive a lack of confidence.

In this thesis, I have operationalized self-confidence as the students' self-reported skills in the productive (talking, writing) and receptive (listening to and understanding, reading) realms. While some may find the inclusion of self-reported skills to be a poor replacement for more objective measures of language proficiency, this approach has the benefit of being a far more accurate gauge of the students'

confidence. Further, to specify that I have looked specifically at students' own perceptions of their skills in a language and not their general self-esteem and self-confidence, I have chosen to make use of the term *language confidence*, when discussing the impact of confidence on attitudes.

4. Methodology

In this chapter, I present and discuss the methodological choices that I have made throughout my work on this thesis. The main issues that I deal with are 1) the choice of overall research design, 2) the collection of data, 3) the construction of statistical measures and the process of assessing the soundness of the statistical analyses, and 4) how my personal stance has influenced the research process.

4.1 Research design

In my opinion, the researcher is best served by formulating an aim for the research and some preliminary research questions before choosing which methods to employ. A researcher who reverses this sequence will run the risk of ending up with uninspiring research questions and inconsequential findings.

The present research is based on data collected through survey research, which according to Boberg (2013) has been a more common approach in dialectology than in sociolinguistics. LPP research has previously concentrated on large-scale national censuses, demographic surveys, as well as self-reported language use and attitudes in questionnaires aimed at solving language problems at national and/or regional level (Hornberger, 2015). Present day studies have shifted towards ethnographic on-the-ground- methods. Hornberger points out that even if large-case studies and questionnaires have been challenged by more qualitative focuses, e.g. through ethnographic studies, it is not the case that earlier methods have been discarded. The field has merely embraced an expanding methodological toolkit. Further, whereas earlier works of LPP have been criticised for being too technically oriented in the historical-structural approach to LPP, seeking to unmask the hidden language ideologies that underlie language policies, current research is to a great extent invested in, and focus on the agency of social actors in the policy implementation (see Lin, 2015).

As my project was of a primarily empirical nature, aiming to study the attitudes of students, it was a given that I should – in one way or another – engage with students

to let their voices be heard. Before choosing the means of letting their voices be heard, however, I had to deal with the question of which students I had in mind when designing this research project.

4.1.1 **Narrowing the scope**

Previous research (see chapter 2) has presented the Nordic countries as an area in which the introduction of English in HE institutions has been pushed further than elsewhere (Lam & Wächter, 2014). At the same time, the local language(s) have maintained a strong position within HE institutions (Gregersen et al., 2014) and the concept of parallel language use is especially well-established in Nordic LPP. As they share similar economic, societal, and cultural traits, the Nordic countries have also been pointed to as an area well suited for conducting research on the effects of language policies (Airey et al., 2017). Therefore, I chose students at universities in these countries as my main study objects.

Having singled out the Nordic countries and universities, I needed to decide whether or not to take a case-centred approach, where the data collection and analysis would be centred on one university at a time. This approach would have made it possible to follow the language policy and planning in each country in more detail. Moreover, gathering data in this fashion could have yielded interesting comparisons of the different trajectories that the policies of each university and country has followed. However, although this approach could have yielded interesting comparisons of the language policies in each country, it would also have shifted the focus from my main object of study, namely from students to the institutions. I therefore chose an approach that relied on a broader cross-sectional design rather than on case-by-case comparison. As a result, sources such as institutional or national policy documents are used mainly to contextualise the students' attitudes.

The choice to only include bachelor students was based on the assumption that the first years of study is crucial in how well students adapt to HE (see for instance Consolvo, 2002; Gerdes & Mallinckrodt, 1994). I wanted to test whether language was perceived to be one of the challenges that new students needed to tackle.

4.1.2 Strategies for data collection

After deciding to use a sample-based approach, I still had to settle upon a qualitative or quantitative approach to data collection. A qualitative approach could mean performing in-depth-interviews with students at Nordic universities, or perhaps using an ethnographic, observational approach to the study. The latter approach has been employed by several Nordic researchers (Ljosland, 2008; Mortensen, 2014; Nissen, 2018), yielding interesting results concerning students' and lecturers' perspectives on language within academia.

Whereas researchers in the Nordic context have conducted survey research on language use and language attitudes within the academic context (Bolton & Kuteeva, 2012; Jensen, Denver, Mees, & Werther, 2013; Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011; Ljosland, 2008; Werther et al., 2014), these studies were either small-scale studies, or conducted within a single country or institution. To my knowledge, no studies in the Nordic context have been performed studying language attitudes within academia from a quantitative cross-national perspective, including background variables such as discipline/field, gender, age, years into their degree, and previous education.

A quantitative approach would imply reaching out to the students through the use of a survey. I chose the quantitative route as my main approach in studies 1 and 2, while study 3 has taken a mixed-methods approach, including both quantitative data and student feedback from an open commentary field.

More importantly, previous works (see for instance Costa & Coleman, 2013; Hellekjær, 2010; Ljosland, 2010, 2015; Macaro et al., 2018; Salö, 2016) have already explored important aspects of the use of English in HE. Using these studies as a basis, the present thesis aims at presenting a broader quantitative approach to the study of language attitudes in HE. Salö (2016, p. 3) reasons that “large-scale studies and small-scale studies complement and necessitate each other (...) because different aspects of empirical reality tend to be disclosed at different magnitudes of zoom”. To this, I would add that large n studies can account for the impact of national, societal, and cultural differences, and that by comparing student attitudes in different countries, interesting patterns could emerge.

The qualitative studies and the single-institution focus are not sufficient to obtain a clearer picture of how language use is experienced by different student groups within HE. This has also been stressed by Macaro et al. (2018) in their comprehensive review of EMI studies with a global scope. By employing a quantitative, rather than a qualitative approach that covers the Nordic region, my project gives the theory greater leverage, in that it is being applied to a greater number of students and institutions. While the qualitative approaches excel in ideographic, contextual descriptions, the quantitative approach allows us to more rigorously assess the usefulness in applying general theories to a material. This is not a project limited to testing hypotheses derived from established sociolinguistic theories. Still, it is a project with a defined theoretical basis, and the quantitative analyses are utilised to evaluate the parsimoniousness and powers of explanation of the different sociolinguistic and sociological theories that I have employed in the thesis.

Whereas my main approach in this project, as described above, has been quantitative in nature, I have also made use of qualitative methods. The third study would in my opinion qualify for a label as a mixed-methods study, as it used qualitative content analysis of the free-text comments provided by students participating in the surveys. These comments were extracted from an open commentary field presented at the end of the survey. I have also analysed the language policy documents, using qualitative document analysis techniques.

This avenue of investigation, combining the statistical analyses with content analysis, has led me into thinking about the themes of my research in wholly new ways. One example is the role of confidence. In study 1 and 2, I found students with lower language confidence to be less positive to the use of English. However, analysing students' comments showed that despite high language confidence, some students' found the use of English to be problematic. This is exemplified with a student comment from study 3, who rated herself at 4 points in all skills:

I learn very well in English, but unfortunately, I would not dare to ask about anything in lectures, in front of everyone (Norwegian female natural science student, aged 24).

In conclusion, I am firmly convinced that the most fruitful research comes from not putting the methodological cart before the research design horse. This entails applying the appropriate method – and if need be, methods in plural – and not the convenient method.

4.2 Data collection

4.2.1 Study populations

Seven universities were chosen as venues to conduct my research. In Norway, three universities participated: the University of Oslo (UiO), the University of Bergen (UiB), and the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). One university was included from each of the other four Nordic countries: Copenhagen University (UCPH) in Denmark, University of Iceland (UI) in Iceland, Gothenburg University (GU) in Sweden, and finally, the University of Helsinki in Finland (UH). Table 4 presents an overview of the features of the seven universities relevant to the project.

Table 4 An overview of the seven universities included in this study

	UiO	UiB	NTNU	UCPH	UI	GU	UH
Total number of students	28 000	16 900	40 000	38 000	13 300	38 000	33 000
Disciplinary fields included in the study	Law Philosophy Chemistry Physics	Law Philosophy	Philosophy Chemistry Physics	Law Philosophy Chemistry Physics	Law Philosophy Chemistry Physics	Law Philosophy Chemistry Physics	Law Philosophy Chemistry Physics
Official language policy	√	√	√	–	√	√	√

4.2.2 Survey design

The survey totalled 23 questions, broadly divided into four categories: biographical information, information relating to students' reports of use of language in the courses they were enrolled into, attitudes towards language skills and mediums of instruction, and a concluding open-ended (free-text) question.

The fixed questions and statements regarding attitudes towards language use were presented for students to evaluate on a Likert-scale ranging from 1-5. The items covered the following topics: self-reported English skills; usefulness of English and the respective Nordic language in areas related to further studies, research and dissemination; self-confidence using English in the educational context; languages and learning effect. I designed the questionnaire myself, as I could not identify any established agreed-upon surveys or indexes for this type of study.

Even though, as discussed in the previous chapters, several studies have been conducted within this field of research internationally, in the Nordic context at least, I did not find any that addressed students' perspectives in a way that would satisfactorily answer my initial research questions. In the process of formulating my research questions, I did however seek inspiration from previously conducted surveys in related areas, such as studies on lecturers' experiences with teaching in English and their attitudes towards English (Jakobsen, 2010; Jensen & Thøgersen, 2011); de Cillia and Schweiger's (2001) questionnaire which focused on teaching in English within three different disciplines, namely mathematics, history, and sociology; Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra's (2012) research on local and international students' attitudes towards multilingualism; Lueg and Lueg's (2015) research on students' gender and socioeconomic class in relation to their language choices in a bachelor programme; Kirilova and Schou's (2015) survey addressing students' language needs and experiences in studies abroad; and Bolton and Kuteeva's (2012) large-scale study on staff and students' attitudes towards English as a medium of instruction. In addition, the questionnaire design was informed by a questionnaire that I developed as part of my master's thesis, where I conducted a survey of students' attitudes towards Norwegian and English financial terminology within the field of economics (Bukve, 2012). Whereas the questionnaire developed for the present study primarily

focuses on English compared to the use of local language(s), the questions allow us to explore how students within the three⁴ disciplinary fields perceived both English, the local language(s), and multilingualism as part of their education

Emic and etic conceptualisations – challenges in survey translations

The original questionnaire was created in Norwegian, and subsequently translated into English, Danish, Finnish, Swedish, and Icelandic.

Behling and Law (2000) address the challenges that may arise in survey translations, distinguishing between *etic* constructs, which are constructs that exist in identical or near-identical forms across a range of cultures, and *emic* constructs, which are constructs that are limited to a single culture. Traditionally, this division focuses on the problems arising when attempts are made to introduce surveys developed in Western conceptual frameworks to other parts of the world (Behling & Law, 2000). According to this notion, the different historical and sociological backgrounds of the Nordic countries would necessarily lead to different conceptual frameworks, even though such differences are small compared to the differences between Western and non-Western frameworks (see for instance Airey et al., 2017).

However, even if there are small differences in constructs between the Nordic contexts due to the similarities in their languages and/or their cultures, one cannot completely rule out the possibility of issues related to semantic, conceptual, and normative equivalence (Behling & Law, 2000). To avoid the potential challenges that could arise from lack of semantic equivalence, each version was either translated by a native speaker, or quality-assessed by one after I had drafted the initial version. However, due to limited time and resources, the questionnaires were not retranslated into English to check the consistency between translations. Looking back, this would have been advantageous in order to make sure that questions were perceived the same way by all students, independent of their questionnaire language. However, only three of the approximately 1200 students who participated in the survey commented on the

⁴ Whereas not all universities offered all study programmes, the number of disciplines vary from two to four. See table 4.

language of the questionnaire, and of these, one student commented on the default messages given by the questionnaire software, which was out of my control.

Lack of conceptual equivalence across cultures refers to how researchers can judge whether they really study the same phenomenon when it is applied to different contexts (Behling & Law, 2000). In my view, this could be a potential problem when investigating language attitudes, both because of different academic cultures, but also because of how the history of language may have influenced the cultures of the different countries. To solve the potential challenges created by lack of conceptual equivalence the surveys were translated or proofread by an L1 speaker. This is to ensure the proficient understanding of the language, as well as the intimate knowledge of the given culture (Birbili, 2000).

4.2.3 **Method of distribution**

I used the web-based tool SurveyXact to design, code, and distribute the questionnaires. SurveyXact has a range of options for customizing the questionnaire, including the option for the respondent to choose his/her language.

The distribution of the questionnaire differed between the universities. These different approaches were due to external factors, such as university policies regarding treatment of personal data, access to student information, and procedures for approving research projects. All universities received an email with information about the research project, the approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD), and a draft of the questionnaire. This process soon proved to be much more time-consuming than expected. The first challenge I encountered was to find the correct recipients of the email. These procedures proved to be different between countries and institutions. At some universities, administrative staff decided whether they found the survey to be adequate for distribution, whereas other universities demanded the approval of all lecturers at the different bachelor programmes before they would consider distributing the survey. Correspondences could last for as long as nine months before I got the final approval, and for that reason the different surveys were distributed, and data collected, within the timeframe of 2015–2017.

Only the University of Oslo and the University of Helsinki provided me with students' email addresses, so that I could distribute the survey myself. Crucially, this provided the opportunity to send reminders to students who had not responded to the survey. At the University of Bergen, the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, and the University of Reykjavik, I provided administrative staff with the survey whereupon they distributed it to the students, leaving me with no option to target non-responders with reminders, nor were the universities willing to send such reminders on my behalf. At the University of Gothenburg, the survey was made available at the university's homepage. This approach was initially used at the Copenhagen University as well, but due to low response rates online, I was allowed to distribute questionnaires to students on campus in Copenhagen.

These different approaches did, unsurprisingly, affect the overall number of students that chose to participate in the study. The goal of the data collection process was to start out with a Norwegian university in the first term after the initial questionnaire had been completed, and then continue with the other universities using the same mode of distribution as soon as the translated versions were completed. This goal, however, proved to be too optimistic, for the reasons outlined above.

One major challenge in the project is the relatively low response rate, which will be discussed in 4.3.3. To some extent, this could be explained through the mode of distribution and the difficulty of recruiting willing respondents for online surveys. The problems I encountered entail that not all data sets are fit for statistical comparison. Only the third study includes data from all universities, as this study did not require a country by country comparison. The free-text comments comprise a rich qualitative material, and while only the Finnish, Icelandic and Norwegian data were used in the formal analyses for study 3, the comments gathered from all five countries have provided a background that has informed my research project.

4.2.4 Reliability and validity

Assessing reliability and the truthfulness of answers

When addressing reliability in surveys, we must consider that the observed responses to some extent could be inaccurate representations of unobserved, latent variables. Developing the survey items, I made sure to add questions that diverged only slightly from other questions in the survey. After conducting the survey, I could then assess the correlation between such pairs of questions using *Pearson's r*, and having performed these tests, I could conclude whether the respondents had answered consistently throughout key items of the survey.

But what if the respondents consistently respond in an untruthful way? One of the most vexing reliability problems one may encounter when performing survey research is social desirability. This issue arises when respondents seek to answer in what they perceive to be a socially acceptable way, rather than responding truthfully. However, this issue is more acute in situations where questions concern sensitive issues such as substance abuse (see Krumpal, 2013 for a discussion on social desirability bias and sensitive information). As this is not the case for the questions in this survey, I consider that the responses are less likely to be compromised by social desirability bias.

The number of response categories

The choice to include a Likert-scale and to treat my data at ordinal/interval- level was a deliberate choice to make it possible to perform certain parametrical statistical analyses. Having the respondents evaluate questions using a numbered scale allowed for calculating mean scores for single variables or sets of variables. It also gave me the opportunity to construct indexes, and to furthermore use these indexes as response and predictor variables (see following chapters 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 on composite measures and statistical analyses).

When it comes to the design of the questionnaire, I have considered whether it would have suited some of the questions better if the five-point scale was substituted by for instance a seven or nine-point scale. The question of what the optimal number of response categories is has been discussed for a long time, but never truly resolved

(see for instance Preston & Colman, 2000). I deliberately chose to have an odd number of response categories, so that the respondents who did not lean either way would have an opportunity to choose a middle option. More available options might improve the reliability of the answers (i.e. students would be able to find an option as close as possible to their “true” feeling). On the other hand, respondents might feel that choosing between too many categories is too cognitively taxing, and hence they would tire of the survey more quickly. This might reduce the reliability of the answers and even possibly increase the chance for dropping out of the survey.

In general, I think the choice to go with a five-point scale has not had adverse effects on the reliability of the results. However, in hindsight, I find that there is one set of questions that might have been better served using a more detailed scale. These are the questions of the respondents’ receptive and productive language skills. A large proportion of the answers to these questions were in the uppermost part of the scale, that is 4 or 5. Had I employed an extended seven-point scale to these questions, I could have gotten more nuanced measurements of the language confidence statements. Those answering 4 on the five-point scale would probably have placed themselves in either 5 or 6 on the seven-point scale, and those answering 5 on the five-point scale would probably have answered 6 or 7 on the seven-point scale. This would have made it possible to conduct more detailed analyses. However, it is important to note that the analyses of survey answers mainly rely on mean scores, and not individual scores. While it is not satisfactory to describe one single individual’s language confidence by only reporting a number on a five-point scale (or even a seven-point scale), the summary analyses of hundreds of students’ answers do not operate on the individual level. We assume that random variations in measurements “errors” (for instance that a 4.5 chooses 4 instead of 5, or 5 instead of 4) are cancelled out, and that we get a more precise picture when all answers are added together.

Construct validity

The construct validity has to do with whether the instruments – in this case the scores and items of the survey – measure the dimensions they are intended to measure (Preston & Colman, 2000). The first step in assessing the construct validity is judging

whether the items appear to measure the dimensions they are intended to measure – we assess the items' *face validity*. For this project, one of the most crucial steps in securing the construct validity of the items was to invite supervisors and colleagues with expert knowledge in the field to review the survey. For some of the most important dimensions in my research, self-evaluation of skills and attitudes towards EMI, I chose to construct indexes or composite measures, with the aim of improving the construct validity in my analyses. These composite measures are presented in the next section.

4.3 Measurements and analyses

4.3.1 Composite measures

The difficulty of establishing what is actually measured when conducting survey research on attitudes has been one of the main methodological challenges of my project. To overcome this possible hindrance, it has been necessary to define what type of attitudes I aimed to measure. I have therefore not treated attitudes as a single uniform concept, but rather elaborated on the versatile nature of the concept and how the research design may have determined what types of attitudes I have been able to measure.

In order to interpret attitudes towards EMI, I developed an index on the basis of statements from the survey. I chose three statements that together would encompass perspectives on English as an important language for future studies and career prospects. The statements describe similar, yet not identical aspects of EMI:

- (1) I feel better prepared for future work when I use English actively in my education.
- (2) It is important to learn how to use English properly for further studies and future work.
- (3) Accustoming oneself to using English is a competitive advantage when applying for jobs.

All three statements used for the index are worded so that a higher score denotes more positive attitudes towards the use of English and its potentially favourable outcomes.

A composite measure gives a more complete representation of the theoretical concept we want to investigate. It improves the quality of measurement by increasing the measure's content validity. While the index does not cover all possible aspects relevant for internationalisation in higher education, it encompasses important dimensions of attitudes towards EMI. As a tool for the analysis, this makes the index superior to reporting responses to single questions. We are not only interested in what students think of selected, isolated questions, but an understanding of the broader tendencies and systems of attitudes towards EMI. By combining similar variables, one can move towards a more complete representation of students' attitudes. In addition, using the index allows for analysing responses as interval scale data (Neuman, 2014, p. 226).

After selecting variables, statistical correlation was checked between the selected variables to ensure that the theoretical association between the statements was matched by a statistical association, i.e. that agreeing to one statement increases the likelihood that students would agree with related variables. The correlational analysis shows strong, yet not perfect correlations between the different statements (.56 - .66) included in the index. This is ideal, since a perfect correlation would indicate that we were merely measuring a single aspect of the EMI attitude, and the construct validity of the measurement tool would be questionable. Lastly, the index was tested using a reliability measure, Cronbach's alpha, giving an alpha of .734 (Finland) and .818 (Norway). This confirms that, in addition to resting on a sound theoretical rationale, the index is internally consistent (Chen & Krauss, 2004).

To measure students' confidence, respondents were asked to evaluate their own productive and receptive English skills. This included a separate five-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good) for the following skills: (1) speaking, (2) reading, (3) writing, and (4) listening to and understanding English. These variables were combined into one index, as a measurement of students'

confidence. The index was constructed and tested in the same way as the index of EMI. The correlation between variables in the index range from .65 to .79, and a Cronbach's alpha of .892 (Finland) and .910 (Norway) confirms that the measure is reliable.

4.3.2 Statistical analyses

I employed various statistical analyses, ranging from descriptive statistics to multivariate regression analyses, throughout the studies. I chose to sum up the answers to single questions as means for the study population as a whole, or for the various sub-groups, instead of displaying the frequencies of each alternative answers. As the Likert scales for the different statements were presented as an even scale ranging from 1 to 5, I judged the option of displaying mean scores to be methodologically sound, and also far more comprehensible for the readers, compared to the alternative.

I chose to use multivariate ordinary least square (OLS) regression analyses for some of the more complex analyses, as this approach indicates the relative influence of different predictor variables on a single response variable. These analyses were not performed using single questions as response variables. They were only used in conjunction with the composite measures, as these more fine-grained measures are closer to interval scale data and as such meet the assumptions of response variables for OLS regression analyses (Miles, 2007).

The predictor variables used in the regression analyses were of two measurement scales: dichotomous (dummy) variables and – in the case of regression analyses with the EMI index as response variable – an interval scale variable. To make sure that the models were specified correctly, and to assess the effects for different subgroups in the material, I added constructed product terms and added these to test the model specification. This procedure is explained in study 2.

I checked the underlying assumptions for each model. These assumptions are partly related to the error terms ϵ_i : Normal distribution of the error term $\epsilon_i \sim (0, \sigma^2)$, σ^2 constant for all i (homoscedasticity), and ϵ_i independent between all subjects. Furthermore, we assume that there is no multicollinearity present in the model; that

is, x_k should not be highly correlated with x_l if $k \neq l$. And, finally, the relationship between y_i and all x_{ki} should be linear (Lewis-Beck & Lewis-Beck, 2016).

The assumptions regarding the error terms were assessed using histograms and P-P-plots of residuals. These showed that the assumptions of homoscedasticity and normal distribution of the error term were not violated. Multicollinearity was assessed using collinearity diagnostics, which showed that the variance inflation factor (VIF) diagnostics all were well below the recommended thresholds of 10 (Lewis-Beck & Lewis-Beck, 2016). As my models were primarily consisting of dummy-coded predictor variables, the linearity assumption was only a potential issue in regard to the models where the interval scale skills index was used as a predictor variable. The assumption of linearity of the relationship between the skills index and the EMI index was assessed, and found to be met, using scatter plots of residuals for the different values of the skills index.

4.3.3 Qualitative analyses

According to Patton (2015, p. 541), content analysis refers to “any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings”. The analyses were performed in the computer software for qualitative data, NVivo. I found this software to be highly valuable in the process of identifying recurring patterns and themes, and for organising the data. As described in more detail in study 3, my analyses followed a stepwise approach. I first read all 110 student comments, and conducted some preliminary analyses to find recurring themes that could be of interest for the present study. I then identified three overarching themes for further analyses. The three overarching themes identified included *self-perceived competence and the need for language support*, *lecturer competence in the target language*, and finally, *parallel language use and its implications for learning*. Four illustrative quotes were selected for each of the three themes. Lastly, I presented a reconceptualised description for each of the three themes chosen through steps 1-4. As qualitative analyses are often inductive in the beginning stages, and then moves on to more deductive approaches (Patton, 2015), so can my approach to the data be seen as a mixture of inductive and

deductive analyses, throughout the different stages of the research process. Whereas the initial analyses of the data took on the inductive approach, where the aim was to discover possible themes and patterns. The latter part followed a more deductive form, where I explored whether the data in my study supported “existing general conceptualizations, explanations, results, and/or theories” (Patton, 2015), such as the concepts of parallel language use and English as lingua franca in the context of higher education.

4.3.4 **Response rates and external validity**

I have discussed the response rates in study 1 and 2, but the issue is important enough to mention briefly here as well.

The different types of distribution approaches lead to different types of biases and challenges that need to be accounted for. Whereas web-based surveys can reach a large amount of students in a much less costly and time-consuming manner than handing out questionnaires in persona at all seven campuses, the method does raise some questions concerning self-selection. Issues with self-selection are often raised when survey respondents are allowed to decide entirely for themselves whether or not they want to participate in a given survey (Lavrakas, 2008).

In the survey at the Norwegian university in study 1 and 2, the response rates were: 60% (philosophy), 60% (natural sciences) and 11% (law). One reason for the low response rate for law students was that students who reported to have studied for more than three years were removed from the analyses. It was not possible to calculate response rates for each field in the Finnish study, due to the way the emails were distributed. However, the response rate seems to be lower than in the Norwegian study. The most probable cause for the discrepancy in response rates between the two universities is, as I have pointed out in study 2, the mode of distribution, where students at the Finnish university received the invitation to participate at their university addresses. In any case, in both countries the response rates are, as often is the case in these types of surveys, lower than what one could wish for. Due to the mode of distribution, it was not possible to assess the response rate in any of the other surveys.

To what extent may we assume that the responses are externally valid, or representative of the attitudes of the average student at the university? Low response rates might lead to bias if the lack of responses are not occurring randomly with respect to the issues that are of interest to the analyses. That is, low response rates do not necessarily imply that our results have poor external validity if data is missing completely at random. Data would be missing completely at random when the probability of missing data on a variable Y is unrelated to the value of Y itself or to the values of the other variables in the data set. In this case, the descriptive and inferential statistical analyses will lead to unbiased results. However, there are no statistical tools that can help us determine conclusively whether the data is randomly missing (Allison, 2001). We need to deal with the question of external validity by using sound judgement and best guesses.

The issue of low response rates is more specifically a question of potential self-selection bias affecting the results of the study. In what, if any, way do the students who have chosen to respond to the survey differ from their class mates who chose not to participate? As I have shown in studies 1 and 2, the average age and gender of the respondents fit with that of the study population as a whole. In this way, at least, the respondents seem to be representative of their population. What we cannot know is to what degree their attitudes towards language use have prompted them to respond. To discount any self-selection bias in this respect seems to be a less tenable position. At least one would think that interest in the topic of language use is not uncorrelated to the choice of responding to the survey. However, such an effect would probably manifest itself so that for instance both those who are wholeheartedly supporting EMI, and those who strongly oppose EMI, choose to let their voices be heard. We can thus expect the respondents to harbour stronger convictions regarding language use than what is the case for the non-respondents. This should be taken into account when using the results of the studies.

4.4 Personal stance and reflexivity

A number of researchers have pointed out how personal experiences and identities influence the research process (see for instance Clark & Dervin, 2014; Finlay, 2002). Acknowledging that researchers are not neutral parties, but adhere to their own personal beliefs, values, and ultimately biases as analytical lenses when interpreting their data, is an important part of the research process. By properly addressing, disclosing, and making explicit one's personal stance, experiential knowledge, positions, and assumptions, one would only increase the validity of the research (Røkenes, 2016).

One important hallmark for *qualitative* research is the concept of reflexivity, which can be explained as an aim to examine how the researcher and the intersubjective elements could impact on and transform research (Finlay & Gough, 2008). One of the cornerstones of Bordieu's theoretical models is the concept of epistemic reflexivity, which is where a researcher breaks with pre-given viewpoints integrated into research questions, theories, concepts and analytical instruments inherited through disciplinary practices (Salö, 2016). Epistemic reflexivity can be defined as the "constant analysis of your own lived experience as well as your own theoretical and methodological presuppositions" (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005, p. 62). These preconceptions ascribed to researcher identity need to be clarified. Studying language does not render sociolinguists immune to their own language ideologies (Salö, 2016).

Ryan and Golden (2006) point out how research within the quantitative field seemingly avoids issues concerned with the definition of social boundaries, and further how these boundaries are contested and negotiated. They argue that a reflexive approach to the quantitative method should lead to a "deeper understanding about how, where, when, and by whom data were collected" (Ryan & Golden, 2006, p. 1198). While survey research of the kind that is presented in this thesis is mostly not subjective in its nature when it comes to the computational data analysis, the design phase of the project, where the researcher constructs the content and wording of questions, is highly influenced by the researcher's bias. So, too, is the interpretation of the data analysis (Patton, 2015).

My own researcher identity has been shaped by my experiences both as a lecturer in adult language learning and introductory courses for students within the field of general linguistics, and as a student of English, Psychology, Nordic languages and literature before earning my Master's degree in General Linguistics with a focus on socioterminology and students' attitudes towards language use within the field of economics. These experiences have influenced all aspects of my project, from the subject matter to the focus of my survey to my analyses and interpretations of the findings. I have been made aware not only of how language competency impacts the students' experiences of learning and academic accomplishments, and how students are socialized into an academic community, but also of the way universities sometimes neglect the importance of language in such processes.

This perspective has informed the way I have approached this thesis, but along the way, my preconceptions have been challenged by colleagues, by the scholarly debate, and most of all by the student voices I have found in my data material. Together, they have offered new insights into the positive role that both English, students' L1 and the local languages play in the academic context, and I firmly believe that multilingual educational contexts are a potential enrichment for students.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Although the questionnaire did not raise any questions that could be considered to invade a person's privacy, some ethical issues do emerge when conducting online research. First of all, in Oslo and Helsinki, students' email addresses were collected and loaded into SurveyXact. This means that respondents from these two universities were not treated anonymously, since it would have been possible to trace responses to the given email addresses. However, in the information email, students were made aware of this, and that data was to be treated confidentially.

Since private email addresses were only collected in Oslo and Helsinki, this has not been an issue at the other universities. Storing of IP-addresses could be a potential issue concerning students' anonymity; however, these have not been collected in the

present study. Finally, in agreement with NSD, all personal data was deleted after the end of the project period.

Students were also informed that participation was voluntary, and that by participating in the survey, they agreed to data being stored. However, they were also given the opportunity to omit responses to single items in the survey, and informed that they could withdraw at any time.

When performing descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, data are reported using sums, means and other forms of aggregation of data. In comparison, when reporting the free-text input received in the survey, I report data on an individual level. These data contain meanings that should be conveyed through my research in a way that maintains the integrity of the statements, both for analytical purposes, i.e. to avoid distorting the intentions and meanings of the respondents, and to honour the ethical obligation towards the students who have shared these thoughts through the survey. To achieve this, I have analysed all comments, not only by comparing different students' answers to the same questions, but also by analysing each comment on the basis of the other data given by the students in question. I am convinced that such a careful reading, which also includes the background and context of each comment, has worked as an important safeguard for maintaining the personal integrity of the students who have shared their experiences and perspectives with me.

5. Studies – contextualisation and summaries

In this chapter, I discuss the three studies included in the thesis and place them into a broader context. The studies are different in scope, research design, and with regards to the theoretical frameworks applied. Whereas the first article addresses students at one Norwegian university, I broaden the scope in my second article by including students from two universities in two different countries. In these two studies, which are both based on quantitative methods, my goal was to explore systematic patterns in language attitudes across disciplinary fields, gender and countries. The third article has adopted a mixed method-approach, using both statistical analyses and qualitative student feedback.

5.1 Study 1: Students' Perspectives on English Medium Instruction: A Survey-based Study at a Norwegian University

5.1.1 Preliminaries and contextualisation

Systematic reviews on language research within HE from Nordic (i.e. Airey et al., 2017; Nissen & Ulriksen, 2016) and global perspectives (Macaro et al., 2018) show that that there is a breadth of studies concerning language use in HE, and moreover that many of these studies touch on the phenomenon of EMI. However, few have investigated EMI, students' L1 and the local language(s) in the Norwegian context. By the same token, whereas several studies have identified self-confidence as an important factor influencing students' academic performance and learning motivation (see Clément, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Robson et al., 2004; Stankov, Morony, & Lee, 2014), to my knowledge, no research from the Nordic HE context has been devoted to the systematic study of how self-confidence and disciplinary field can affect students' perspectives on language use.⁵

⁵ That is not to say that languages in relation to HE has not been thoroughly investigated and debated (see for instance Brock-Utne, 2001; Hellekjær, 2010; Linn, 2014; Ljosland, 2011, 2015; Simonsen, 2004)

In addition to closing the gaps in the research concerning the impact of language confidence and disciplinary background on students' perspectives, I also set out to find out if the students' plans to study abroad were systematically correlated with language confidence. The present literature on student mobility offers a range of factors that could contribute to students' choice of whether to study abroad: socioeconomic background and parents' educational level (Di Pietro & Page, 2008; Lörz, Netz, & Quast, 2016; Wiers-Jenssen, 2011), gender and various forms of cultural capital (Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010), students' expected benefits from studying abroad (Petzold & Moog, 2017), and high school performance in foreign language skills (Di Pietro & Page, 2008). Lastly, Lueg and Lueg (2015) suggest that there is a social class bias in students' preferences for EMI programmes.

5.1.2 Summary

Internationalisation of higher education has led to an extensive implementation of English in Nordic higher education. Study 1 investigated the extent to which differences in attitudes towards languages were associated with specific disciplinary fields or the students' confidence in their English skills. It also assessed the correlation between language confidence and plans to study abroad. Further, the study aimed to map the extent to which syllabus language seemed to correlate with students' attitudes towards English and the local language, in this case Norwegian. The study was conducted at a major Norwegian university and included a total of 346 students. It was in this study that I developed two indexes, which acted as composite measures for students' confidence in their English skills, named the *skills index*, and attitudes towards EMI, named the *EMI index*. These indexes were tested using multiple regression, controlling for predictor variables such as gender, years into their study programme, and previous education. When analysing the EMI index as response variable, the skills index was used as one of the predictor variables.

The study showed that systematic patterns emerged between the three study fields. Natural science students had significantly more positive attitudes towards EMI than philosophy and law students. I used theoretical frameworks concerning socialisation and social identity to account for these patterns, arguing that in the natural science

field, English is commonly regarded as *the* language for research and scientific publication. I believe that this view also influences the students' attitudes towards EMI.

I also found that students with high confidence had significantly more positive attitudes towards EMI than students who were less confident in their English skills. Furthermore, confidence correlated positively with students' plans to study abroad, which could suggest that confidence in English is a predominant factor influencing students' choices of whether or not to go abroad as part of their education.

5.2 Study 2: Students' perspectives on language use within higher education – exploring gender differences in Norway and Finland

5.2.1 Preliminaries and contextualisation

Working with study 1, I found gender to be one of the variables which varied systematically across types of attitudes. Gender has proved to be an important explanatory variable for a range of behaviours connected to learning and higher education. Language studies suggest that women outperform men in actual English proficiency (Education First, 2016; van Der Slik, Roeland, & Job, 2015). However, when addressing potential factors influencing attitudes towards language use, it seems reasonable that self-confidence plays just as important a role as actual proficiency does. Students confidence, i.e. their belief and trust in their abilities (Colman, 2015) has also been identified as an important factor for academic performance (Robson et al., 2004, p. 8). High confidence is recognized as imperative for the ability to present convincing arguments and enter examinations anticipating success (Leman, 1999; Read et al., 2001).

The association between gender and confidence in performance-based situations has been investigated in other fields of research. In her study, Romaine (2003, p. 428) investigated classroom discourse. Her findings suggest that compared to their female counterparts, male students speak more in class and by that receive more classroom time. Romaine concludes that this uneven distribution of classroom time results in a

gender bias, which again may result in lower achievement levels and self-esteem for women. This has often been referred to as the 'chilly classroom effect', after a report by Hall and Sandler (1982). Harrop, Tattersall, and Goody (2007, p. 386) report that in their study, female students were perceived as more conscientious. Female students were also less confident and less likely to speak up in class, compared to male students. Moreover, female students experienced more difficulty than anticipated coping with exam stress and developing confidence with their own academic abilities. Further, research on learning style and classroom climate shows that while women perform better than men in many areas, some women report getting good grades despite their negative experiences with the classroom climate (Salter, 2003). Concerning general confidence in academic contexts, female students are reported to experience higher levels of academic stress and anxiety than male students (see Abouserie, 1994; Misra & McKean, 2000), and less likely to speak up in class (Sommers & Lawrence, 1992). In a recent study, Macaro and Akincioglu (2018) found little or no difference in how male and female students actually coped with EMI. Differences emerged, however, when looking into students' perceptions of the productive skills, where female students found it more difficult to speak in front of peers and lecturers than male students in their study did.

Despite the different views on the importance of studying gender differences in the educational context, as a sociolinguist I found it highly interesting that such systematic differences appeared in my material. Gender has often been viewed as an important background variable within other fields of sociolinguistics, such as dialectology (see for instance Vikør, 2003), and sociology (Lueg & Lueg, 2015). Despite the obvious importance that other fields of research have put on studying gender differences, little has been done within the context of educational research in connection to language in Nordic HE. However, being primarily a sociolinguist, and not an educational researcher, many of the variables I found to be most interesting in my data are highly inspired by the disciplines of sociolinguistics and sociology. Conducting a systematic review of the status of EMI internationally, Macaro et al. (2018) pointed out this gap and called for more research into the beliefs held by

female and male students as both L2 learning and certain academic subjects tend to be gendered.

5.2.2 Summary

Study 2 expanded on one of the main themes from study 1, language confidence, while also expanding on the theme of gendered differences in attitudes towards language use in HE. Using the same indexes, and for the most part, the same types of statistical analyses as in study 1, this study used a larger data material, by including the results of the survey at a Finnish university, in addition to those from the Norwegian university that was used in study 1. Including students from two countries, gave the opportunity to test whether gendered patterns occurred both within and across the two countries/ institutions. The analyses of the statements concerning the perceived language practices in HE, both separately and as composite indexes, showed that a majority of students were positively inclined towards EMI. A systematic pattern in both countries showed that female students on average were more positive towards EMI, however, they were also less confident in their English skills, and reported more difficulties in coping with English in their day-to-day studies, compared to male students. This study demonstrated the advantages of applying a multidimensional perspective when analysing gendered attitudes in HE. Further, it highlighted some of the practical challenges that HE institutions should acknowledge in order to implement language policies that meet the needs of students, by emphasising the heterogeneity that exists both across and within disciplinary fields.

5.3 Study 3: Fast track to success or derailing communication? Exploring students' perspectives on languages use in Nordic higher education

5.3.1 Preliminaries and contextualisation

Different types of language use within the HE context have long been the centre of attention within research on language use within the sector. Different approaches have been implemented to address the bilingual reality some students face in their

syllabus and in the teaching contexts. Among the most dominant approaches, we find parallel language use and English as a lingua franca (ELF). The concept of parallel language use is a common feature in language policy documents in Nordic HE (see for instance the language policies at University of Helsinki, 2018; University of Oslo, 2010). This approach is concerned with how to best deal with the proportion of two or more languages within HE. In contrast, the ELF framework focuses exclusively on English. Lingua franca can be defined as “any form of language serving as a means of communication between speakers of different languages” (Swann, Deumert, Lillis, & Mesthrie, 2004, p. 184). Its role should be defined as a common language for communication between non-native English speakers (see Mauranen & Ranta, 2009; Mortensen, 2014; Wilkins & Urbanovič, 2014). Whereas different types of Englishes apply to different contexts, so would different types of ELF be more relevant in one context or the other. Both frameworks have been hotly debated in the last decades, and whereas their approaches to handling language in the L2-context differ, it is relevant to see how students in such a learning environment experience the role of languages.

5.3.2 Summary

Whereas studies 1 and 2 analyse language attitudes through purely quantitative methods, the third study investigates students’ perspectives on the role of languages in Nordic higher education using a mixed methods-approach.

This study used data from surveys in all of the five Nordic countries. I analysed students’ free-text comments using a stepwise approach, conducting preliminary analysis on all student comments to crystallise recurring themes and then to group these under the three broad topics.

Analysing the commentary field, it became evident that the students had provided me with a rich qualitative material. I identified three overarching topics: (1) *self-perceived competence and the need for language support*, (2) *lecturer competence in the target language*, and (3) *parallel language use and its implications for learning*. Comments from twelve students were extracted by purposive sampling to represent the three topics.

The results showed that both English and the local language(s) are valued. Further, the results showed interesting views of what constitute preferred language practices within the three disciplines. One example being students' reflections of what is amiss with present language practices, namely that within all three topics addressed, too little emphasis on the stakes of language use led the communication to derail.

Another important finding in this study concerned the distinction between ELF and second language acquisition (SLA). Björkman (2008, p. 36) stresses the following distinction between ELF and SLA, "ELF research in general, unlike SLA, treats these non-standard forms not as errors but divergent forms or 'features'". However, taking into account the survey comments from this study, divergent forms or features did not seem to be perceived by students as merely varieties and not errors. To the contrary, some students criticised teachers who speak English as their second language for lacking in language proficiency, and they expressed distrust in these teachers' ability to adequately convey the information in the subjects that are taught. A similar criticism was directed at non-native teachers who teach in the local language.

Lastly, I explored how language confidence might influence the students' willingness to communicate in the classroom. What I found, was that even some students with relatively high confidence in their own English skills could feel intimidated by the prospect of speaking English in class. An overall conclusion of this study is that even if they value English as an important language for further studies and work, students might find the practical use of English in everyday studies to be challenging.

6. Concluding remarks

In this thesis I have investigated four broad research questions. These questions are stated and described in table 1, chapter 1.2.2. The overall aim of the thesis has been to gain a deeper understanding of students' perspectives on language use in their education, and whether these perspectives can give us insights concerning the suitability of current language policies. The three studies describe different aspects of students' experiences with language in HE. By conducting this research I believe I have contributed with an understanding of the various factors, e.g. language confidence and socialisation, which could affect students' perceived experiences in their first years of studies, and further I find these insights to be highly valuable for policy development within the sector.

6.1 How do students at Nordic HE institutions view the role of English and local languages in their education?

In all three studies, the analyses have concentrated on how students perceive languages to affect their everyday studies. I have investigated how students perceive the language practices within their education. Most students had a positive outlook on EMI and the potential benefits of mastering it. However, my studies revealed that the patterns of attitudes are much too complex to be reduced to a simple dichotomous relation where students are either in favour of English and opposed to the local language(s) or vice versa. When studying the differences in how students viewed the use of the local language(s) in their education, I found stronger evidence for disciplinary differences in attitudes towards local language(s) than in attitudes towards the use of English. Whereas law and philosophy students agreed more with statements depicting the favourable sides of using the local language(s), students within the natural sciences were significantly less positive towards these statements. This is discussed in section 6.3 below.

As explained in chapter 3.1.2, integrative and instrumental attitudes can be explained through different types of motives. Whereas instrumental attitudes reflect goal-oriented behaviour, integrative attitudes indicate social and interpersonal motives,

e.g. the desire to identify to certain groups. Based on the data from my surveys, a clear distinction between integrative and instrumental attitudes is not an easy one to make. An example is the disciplinary differences in attitudes towards EMI, which through the lens of social identity theory can be interpreted as stemming from interpersonal motives. However, in the three studies, I also found evidence for instrumental attitudes. One example of this is the students' positive attitudes towards the EMI index, as shown in study 1 and 2. The EMI index is partly measuring instrumental perspectives on the advantages of using English – such as whether the use of English is an advantage when applying for certain types of jobs.

In the surveys, students commented on how they perceived the language practices within their discipline. A majority of the comments in study 3 dealt with what best can be understood as a gap between students' perceptions of what seems to be the agreed-upon language practices within a field, and how students perceive to cope with these language norms. Some of the students call out for more conscious language choices in their education, and they report that lecturers do not seem to acknowledge how language(s) can affect students' learning experiences. These comments voice perceived challenges in situations where the medium of instruction is the L2 of either lecturers or students. What this study also shows, is that despite positive attitudes towards EMI, students call out for more consideration on aspects connected to language practices from lecturers.

One question emerging is therefore: which aspects of language use do students find to be challenging in their education? In the study of language use within HE, parallel language use is often illustrated through the analogy of railroad tracks (see for instance Jónsson et al., 2013). Figure 2 shows some of the potential “derails” that have been identified in the three studies, which may arise when two or more language(s) are used in the study context.

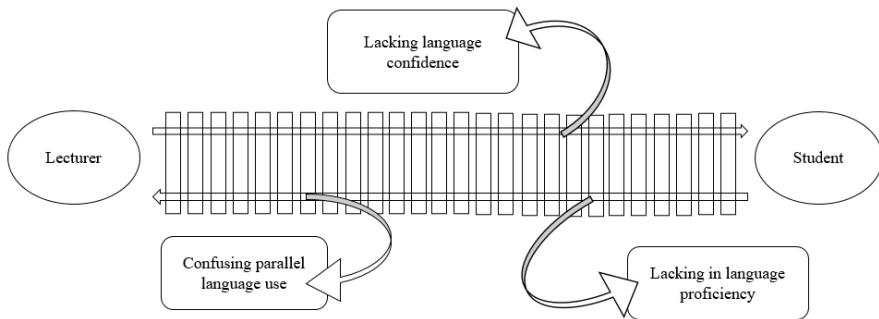


Figure 2 The railroad model. This model illustrates the barriers that students report to face in their everyday studies.

The first of these derailments has to do with the students' language confidence. This seems to steer much of their perspectives concerning the role of language in academia, and to some extent their reported behaviour in their day-to-day studies. This is described in more detail in section 6.2.

In addition to students' language confidence, another important derailment in this model concerns what students perceive as a lack in lecturers' language proficiency. The findings from study 3 indicated that although some students displayed a rather pragmatic view on lecturers' proficiency, being content with teachers choosing the language they felt most at ease with, others found poor language skills to disable their learning. Some even demanded native-like proficiency in the languages they taught in, independent of whether their L2 was English or the local language(s).

The third challenge that might cause derailments is what students perceive as confusing parallel language use. As discussed more thoroughly in study 3, the notion of parallel language use has been accused for being a politicised concept with little application in everyday language practices. Whereas policy documents refer to parallel language use as a way to manage the use of English and the local language(s) within HE, students in study 3 view the introduction of two languages to be a challenge. What has been stressed in the three studies, is the necessity for lecturers, and the universities, to acknowledge the language learning aspect in HE.

6.2 How can language confidence be seen as a mitigating factor influencing students' views on language(s) within their education?

A majority of the students perceived themselves as skilled in English but were more confident in their receptive than their productive skills. One of the aims of study 1 was to investigate how confidence might influence the students' attitudes towards English and their plans to study abroad.

Independent of disciplines, students with lower language confidence reported to be less positive towards the introduction of English in their studies. They also reported spending more time understanding and remembering content written in English, and they were less inclined to plan a stay abroad during their studies.

While one would not expect there to be a negative correlation between language confidence and attitudes towards EMI, I do not think that analysing the association between the two is a redundant task, or that the results of this analysis are inconsequential. For one thing, I think it is important to be able to analyse the strength of such an association, rather than just assuming that such an association exists. Moreover, through the analysis I found students' perceptions of their own language skills and whether these perceptions seemed to influence attitudes to be highly interesting. As already shown by scholars such as (Brown, 2000), attitudes are important factors that can affect students' learning outcomes.

Language learning was not a stated aim in any of the disciplinary fields included in my research; language was merely the medium of instruction. In this sense, encouraging the use of English could be seen as expressions of the institutions' instrumental take on languages in HE, where English is a mean for increased internationalisation. However, institutional policies are, by their very nature, instrumental. They state which means to employ in order to achieve specific goals. What is interesting here, is that institutions tend to have a fairly naïve view of how the instrument of English medium instruction actually works – it consists merely of flipping a language switch. The institutions have placed little or no emphasis on the language learning-aspect in their policies. Björkman (2014, p. 356) notes that

“university language policy documents do not tend to be long and detailed documents; they often provide general guidelines for the speech community at hand, leaving implementation to lower level actors”. However, this study shows that language *does* matter. Students voiced an aspiration for more language learning in their education.

Examining gender differences within the Norwegian and Finnish study context, in study 2, demonstrated that while female students on average were more positive towards EMI, they were also slightly less confident in their English skills, and reported more difficulties in coping with English in their day-to-day studies, compared to male students. See section 6.3 for a more thorough discussion of gender differences.

Moving beyond the purely quantitative analyses and applying a mixed methods-approach in study 3, proved to be a fruitful avenue of inquiry into the relationship between students’ reported language confidence and their attitudes towards language use. An important finding in this study concerned the relationship between students’ language confidence and their willingness to speak up in the classroom. It would be safe to assume that low confidence in one’s own English skills would make students less likely to speak up in class. My analyses of students’ comments in study 3, however, showed that even a student with high confidence refrained from asking questions in lectures, and found it challenging to read English academic texts. This suggests that even though a confident view of one’s own skills is important, willingness to communicate in an L2 (see for instance Clément, Baker, & Macintyre, 2003; MacIntyre, Baker, Clément, & Conrod, 2001) is affected by more than students’ perceptions of their own language comprehension.

6.3 Are there systematic gendered or disciplinary differences in language confidence and attitudes towards the language(s)?

In study 1, I looked into students at one Norwegian university and their attitudes concerning the use of English and the local language in their education. The analyses

showed that there were significant differences in attitudes between students from the three disciplines. However, these differences did not necessarily follow a pattern where students with the highest syllabus load in English reported to be more positive towards it.

The possibility that extended experience with a language impacts the attitudes towards the language has been discussed by Jensen and Thøgersen (2011). They formulate a hypothesis based on previous research, pointing to the expected effect of high contact with a language, e.g. English, and positive attitudes towards that language. Whereas this could prove fruitful in colloquial language, where language change is often initiated in a bottom-up fashion (see for instance Preisler, 1999; Vikør, 2003; Vikør, Kristiansen, & Sandøy, 2006), the same mechanism does not seem to be in play when language(s) are introduced in a top-down fashion, where students themselves are not in decision of the languages they meet in their education. Jensen and Thøgersen (2011) found evidence for the high contact-hypothesis in their study, however, despite finding evidence for students to socialise into the common language attitudes within a discipline, my findings also indicate that students, though being positive towards English, are aware of the challenges they might meet when studying in an L2. Since lecturers often teach in the same courses over a longer period of time, thus making learning easier, students meet each course for the first time.

Jensen and Thøgersen (2011) consider whether the faculties with the highest proportion of English are also the ones that are most vocal concerning the benefits of English. However, they also emphasise that the voice of the faculty does not necessarily reflect the perspectives of the individual lecturer. This parallels the findings from study 1, where I found that having a high syllabus load in English does not always translate into students having more positive views on the use of English in their education. In study 1, students within philosophy reported the highest syllabus load in English. A review of reading lists at the given university showed that students' reports on the syllabus language, matched the published reading lists quite well. However, students' attitudes towards EMI did not follow a pattern where high

contact with English led to students reporting more positive attitudes towards the language. Whereas natural science students were most positive towards EMI, philosophy students and law students, who are found at opposite ends of the scale concerning the use of English and the local language in their syllabus, were equally positive towards EMI. Further, whereas natural science students also reported somewhat negative attitudes towards the local language, law students and philosophy students to a greater extent reported positive attitudes towards the use of local language in their education and towards the local languages' important function in society at large. Finally, philosophy students were slightly more positive towards using more than English and the local language(s) in their education. Since these findings did not correlate with reading lists, but rather with the languages most common in academic publishing within the fields, this led me to find social identity theory, a cornerstone in sociolinguistics research, to be a more fruitful explanation for the students' attitudes than the high contact- hypothesis.

Study 2 investigated gender differences in confidence and attitudes towards EMI, as well as in their evaluations of the language practices they faced in their day-to-day studies. Female students reported to participate less in classroom discussions when the language of instruction is English. As can be expected from the differences between male and female students in levels of confidence, female students reported, to a greater extent than male students, that they spent more time understanding syllabus written in English. On average, female students also reported spending on average more time remembering English academic texts. In sum, there is a tendency that female students to a greater extent than male students find EMI to be challenging. Despite these results, women, in both Norway and Finland, were more positive towards EMI. This demonstrates that gendered attitudes towards language(s) in the educational context cannot be measured on an either-or scale, but rather must be measured from different perspectives, depicting students' confidence in using English, their normative attitudes towards English in the HE context and lastly, evaluations of the perceived language practices at the local institutions.

An interesting observation, which was not explored further in study 3, was the gender distribution in the comments who were selected for further analyses. In total, 11 of

the 12 comments were made by women. Since the analyses were theme-centred, not person-focused, none of the background variables were investigated before I had identified recurring themes, and selected the illustrative quotes made by the students. These comments have an interesting association to the analyses in study 2. As discussed in this study, the results suggested that gender differences in how students judge language use in their studies should not be framed as being in favour of either English or their L1. Their views were more complex. Whereas female students rated their own English skills slightly less positive than male students did, the two groups did not differ when comparing the answers of male and female students to questions thematising the advantages of EMI. Differences were found in questions focusing on the evaluation of EMI in practice, and female students, to a greater extent than their male counterparts, reported to experience challenges with language use. Table 1 in study 3 shows that the women selected for the content analysis, displayed good to very good skills in English. The male student, however, was less confident in his own English skills. Whereas one should be careful when drawing generalisations from such a small number of participants that have been purposefully sampled, an interesting pattern emerges, which lends support to the quantitative analyses in study 2, namely that confidence is an important mitigating factor, and that gendered differences in attitudes towards language use to a certain extent can be explained as resulting from language confidence.

The confident female students in this study acknowledge the importance of English in their education. However, they also voice concerns over how languages are implemented and practiced in the classroom. This indicates that whereas confidence is an important predictor for students' positive or negative attitudes towards a language, it is not the sole determiner for how they view the language practices and how these could affect their learning.

6.4 What can students' perspectives tell us about the suitability of current language policies?

In this thesis I have investigated how students perceive the language practices that they are met with within their first years of study. Dafouz and Smit (2016) criticise what they term a reductionist approach to language policy studies, which consists of primarily referring to policy statements, and call out for research that also consider the actual language practices that students and teachers engage in. Even though I have not undertaken an ethnographic study in the workings of this thesis, I have engaged in how students reflect upon language use within the sector. By doing this, my aim has been to voice what Dafouz and Smit refer to as the “potentially different and conflicting communicative and academic aims agents might be pursuing” (p. 401). What I have found, is that it is not possible to single out one factor that affects students' perspectives on the language(s) they meet in their studies. A number of explanations can account for language attitudes, and in the present thesis, I have examined some of them.

In my view, the findings from my research project are important when discussing the suitability of the current language policies within the sector. The three studies that make up the present thesis offer unique information concerning how the language policies affect an important group of stakeholders, namely the students. My findings also suggest that the language policies of some of the universities included in this research betray a much too simplistic view of the mechanisms that are at play when introducing different languages in HE.

A case in point is highlighted in study 3, in the discussion of the feasibility of conceptual frameworks such as parallel language use and ELF. Study 3 suggests that students ask for more language learning. Comparing these student voices with the views expounded by the ELF-school, it becomes apparent that there is a gap between students' experiences with their own and their lecturers' perceived lack of language comprehension, and ELFs' notion of 'language speakers', which downplays the importance of native-speaker norms. The students in this study seem to place importance on language proficiency and language learning, both for lecturers and

students. Furthermore, the students voice opinions that are incompatible with the view of themselves and their lecturers as merely speakers. This does not fit with the notion that they themselves, or lecturers, are merely 'speakers'. As previous studies have already pointed out (see for instance Ljosland, 2010), language use within HE is highly complex, and often English and the local language(s) are mixed.

Students clearly value both English and the local language(s) in their education. Nevertheless, acknowledging the importance of a language does not prevent students from finding the language challenging to use in the context of their studies. A general sentiment reflected in many of the students' comments is that language use and mediums of instruction should not be a matter of coincidence, or mere convenience. Policy makers and lecturers should be made aware of students' perspective on language when discussing the importance of bilingual education.

Further, both lecturers and students must be provided with support to be able to both teach and being taught in the target language. I would suggest that for students to become competent language users within their field, policy makers and lecturers need to acknowledge that more focus on language learning itself is key, meaning that language learning should become an integral part of learning a subject. Merely acknowledging the importance of bi- or multilingual competence is not enough, policies need to be actively implemented and operationalised when developing courses. This is supported by Røyneland et al. (2018, p. 53), who in their report advice institutions to define what language competence that is needed in Norwegian and English, in order to meet the needs in HE and society at large.

One important question emerging from these discussions is whether the institutional language policy really is the best place to manage language(s) at micro-level, or whether the different disciplines should be responsible for language management within their field. After all, the three studies comprising this thesis suggest that students to some extent are socialised into the language attitudes that are most prominent within the discipline.

Through my work with this thesis, I have become convinced that the best way to deal with language in HE, would be for HEI's to develop thorough language policies with

clear assigned responsibilities within the organisation. Granted, a general policy at the institutional level would not capture all the nuances that are at work when focusing on language within the disciplines. Nevertheless, it is the institutions that have the necessary influence and visibility to put these themes on the agenda. For the faculties, institutes, and lecturers to work conscientiously with improving the language learning aspects of the education they provide, it is important that these actors find support from the top-level of the institutions. If not, it is difficult to see how one can allocate time and resources to this work. In conclusion, we need to hold the system, not the individuals, responsible.

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The studies

Students' Perspectives on English Medium Instruction: A Survey-based Study at a Norwegian University

Students' perspectives on English medium instruction: A survey-based study at a Norwegian university

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Abstract

Internationalisation of higher education (HE) has led to an extensive implementation of English medium instruction (EMI) in Nordic higher education. This study explores students' attitudes towards EMI in the Norwegian study context. A total of 346 students within the fields of law, philosophy, and natural science responded to a questionnaire and evaluated statements concerning the language use in the educational context. Indexes measuring confidence in English skills and attitudes towards EMI were constructed and analysed using multiple regression. Natural science students and students with high confidence had significantly more positive attitudes towards EMI than students who were less confident in their English skills. Furthermore, confidence correlated positively with students' plans to study abroad, which could suggest that confidence in English is a predominant factor influencing students' choices of whether or not to go abroad as part of their education.

Keywords: EMI; disciplinary fields; confidence; language attitudes; higher education; study abroad

1. Introduction

Higher education (HE) institutions have sought to adapt the educational systems to the demands of internationalisation. One of the predominant strategies behind these internationalisation efforts has been to implement EMI, which refers to English-taught programmes where language learning in itself is not an aim (Ljosland 2010). It covers the implementation of English in lectures and syllabi, to adjust to, and prepare students for, an increasingly globalised society in general, as well as the educational system and work life, specifically. Language, and more specifically the introduction of EMI, is in this respect viewed as a tool for increased internationalisation.

Whereas the EMI practice has been extensive in many countries, Wächter and Maiworm (2014) show that the implementation of EMI has been particularly prominent in the Nordic countries, and the Netherlands. The increase in EMI programmes in the Nordic region can be explained as a result of disciplinary, institutional and politically motivated changes

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(Airey et al. 2017). Such changes partly stem from the Bologna process, which aimed at standardising university degrees across EU countries (Bolton and Kuteeva 2012). Airey et al. (2017: 563) argue that one reason for the particularly rapid increase of EMI programmes in the Nordic region is the relative small number of L1 speakers of the Nordic languages, which makes it too costly to develop the national language(s) as a general consensus within all areas of HE.

While the impact of introducing EMI on the national languages has been much debated (see Hultgren et al. 2014, Dimova, Hultgren, and Jensen 2015), less attention has been given to the experiences of students enrolled in programs where English is used to a greater or lesser extent as a medium of instruction (with the exception of studies such as Bolton and Kuteeva 2012, Doiz, Lasagabaster and Sierra 2012, Jensen et. al 2013). One needs to consider the target population when instigating such policy changes, and it is therefore important to gain insight into the attitudes held by the students. Such insights can provide a basis for developing more viable language policies in educational settings, so that language becomes an asset, not a burden, for the students.

In this context, with the goal of contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of students' experiences, this article reports the results of a survey of students' attitudes towards the use of English and Norwegian at a major Norwegian university.

To explore students' perspectives on language use in their studies, I have developed two main research questions, both followed by more specific sub-questions.

- 1) How confident are students in their own English skills?
 - a. Is it possible to find systematic differences in confidence between disciplinary fields?
 - b. Do students' confidence in their English skills correlate with their plans to study abroad?
- 2) How do students view EMI?
 - a. Do the attitudes towards EMI vary systematically between disciplinary fields, and are any such differences reflecting differences in syllabus load?
 - b. To what extent is it possible to detect patterns of differences in attitudes towards EMI associated with individual self-confidence?

The present study uses survey-based methods, which give the opportunity of examining whether results from small-scale studies can be generalised to larger student populations. Comparing the attitudes of students from three different academic fields—natural sciences, law, and philosophy—makes it possible to investigate how HE language policies resonate with students' experiences and their perspectives on language and its role in teaching. In addition to the variables mentioned in the research questions, I have also included information about students' length of education, gender, and previous education as control variables in the analyses.

Before describing the methods used when developing the survey and analysing the responses, I want to briefly describe previous research on language attitudes in higher education and give an overview of the Norwegian HE context.

2. Previous research on language attitudes in higher education

Some themes from previous Nordic and international research on language use in HE are especially pertinent to this study. First, in the Nordic countries, the role of disciplinary knowledge has been a major focus in research on EMI and bilingual education (Airey 2011, Airey et al. 2017, Kuteeva and Airey 2014). In their overview of the present research on EMI in the Nordic countries, Airey et al. (2017) note that research on students' experiences with EMI reveals systematic disciplinary patterns in attitudes. Bolton and Kuteeva's (2012) examination of the disciplinary use of English in a study including both staff and students at a Swedish university also shows that attitudes towards EMI vary between disciplines, and Kuteeva and Airey (2014) argue that such differences in attitudes towards EMI are systematically related to the type of knowledge structures that are favoured by the disciplines.

Secondly, Nordic EMI-research has pointed out how perceived language competence can influence student attitudes, both when it comes to students' opinions of their teachers' English proficiency (Jensen et al. 2013), and students' opinions of their own proficiency (Lueg and Lueg 2015). In studies from outside the Nordic region, self-confidence has been identified as an important factor influencing students' academic performance and learning motivation (see Robson, Francis, and Read

2004, Clément, Dörnyei, and Noels 1994, Stankov, Morony, and Lee 2014).

Thirdly, student mobility has been a highly debated topic. The present literature offers a range of factors that are associated with students' choice of whether or not to study abroad: socioeconomic background and parents' educational level (Lörz, Netz, and Quast 2016, Wiers-Jenssen 2011, Di Pietro and Page 2008), gender and various forms of cultural capital (Salisbury, Paulsen, and Pascarella 2010), students' expected benefits from studying abroad (Petzold and Moog 2017), and high school performance in foreign language skills (Di Pietro and Page 2008).

Looking beyond the Nordic region, there has been some research on student attitudes towards EMI in other countries. In their study, Doiz, Lasagabaster, and Sierra (2012) investigated the introduction of English at a bilingual university in the Basque county in Spain. They found that local students showed a certain resistance towards EMI and English as a lingua franca. International students, on the other hand, were clearly in favour of these English practices. This dichotomy is a clear example of the challenging role that universities could face when facilitating internationalisation, while at the same time following up on national responsibilities.

Even though there has been an increasing interest in attitudes towards EMI, Macaro et al. (2018) argue, in their systematic review of EMI research, that before attempting to draw any conclusions of where the EMI phenomenon is going, more research needs to be devoted to beliefs held by students and how these beliefs manifest themselves in different academic disciplines.

No studies have combined the perspectives on disciplinary differences, self-confidence, and student mobility when examining students' attitudes towards EMI. If we narrow down our focus to research within the Norwegian context, the practical use of EMI has been examined through an observational study by Hellekjær (2010), who found that students in Norwegian HE experienced difficulties practicing EMI in the classroom. There is however altogether a paucity of recent research on attitudes towards EMI among students in Norwegian HE institutions. The present study aims to fill these gaps in the research literature.

3. The Norwegian context

When it comes to the Norwegian HE institutions' rationales for choosing between mediums of instruction, Ljosland (2008: 321) suggests that various factors affect the choice between English and Norwegian in the academic context. These include globalisation, internationalisation efforts, national and university policies, as well as ambitions to become "excellent", in addition to factors such as attitudes and perceived prestige of the languages in question. The white paper titled "Internationalisation of Education in Norway", outlines a policy of increasing the number of English language study programmes as a means of improving educational quality and making Norwegian HE more attractive and competitive both nationally and internationally (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research 2008-2009).

EMI is introduced through both spoken language and the syllabus. In their study on syllabus language, Schwach and Mæsel (2013) conducted a review of languages used within different disciplines at Norwegian universities. They found that physics students at bachelor level receive approximately just over 50% of their required readings in English. The only other language reported in their study is Norwegian. Within the field of law, no English syllabus was used. When it comes to syllabus language in philosophy, a 2001 report (Hatlevik and Norgård 2001) showed some variety in the language distribution between the different Norwegian educational institutions. While the University of Oslo offered 99% of their required readings in English, the University of Bergen offered a broader variety of languages, 38% English, 33% in Norwegian and 29% in Danish.

4. Theory and hypothesis development

Languages shape and are being shaped by disciplinary practices and epistemologies (Kuteeva and Airey 2014). Leman (1999: 250) argues, "subject areas carry with them specific and sometimes very powerful social stereotypes, which entail attitudes regarding the 'sort of person' an individual is expected to be". Socialisation into becoming part of an academic community can be considered one of the learning objectives for students (Nissen and Ulriksen 2016, 14).

4.1 *Social identity theory*

I use Tajfel and Turner's (1986) *social identity theory* as an interpretational framework to explain possible disciplinary differences in attitudes towards EMI. Social identity theory suggests that "social categories [...] provide members with a social identity [...] [which] not only describe members but prescribe appropriate behaviour and specific tactics for members" (Hogg and Vaughan 2005: 408). Hogg and Vaughan argue that by using the distinction between the types of identities as a starting point, attitudes may be explained through an extension of social identity theory and its focus on intergroup perspectives in the social psychology of language. They define *intergroup behaviour* as "[b]ehaviour among individuals that is regulated by those individuals' awareness of and identification with different social groups" (Ibid: 392).

Disciplinary fields display certain traits or characteristics that make them distinguishable from other disciplines (Trowler 2014). Language use can be one such feature of a field. Therefore, identifying with, and conforming to the language norms can be a way for students to affiliate with the academic milieu that they are a part of. Students who are not able to master the language norms or unspoken policies within the academic discipline could then withdraw and not identify with the given discipline. This is closely related to research question 2, concerning the extent to which it is possible to predict attitudes towards EMI and first languages based on academic disciplines, confidence and syllabus load. Drawing on social identity theory and the notion that disciplinary fields display certain traits that make it possible to distinguish disciplines from one another, one can expect to predict attitudes towards EMI on the basis of the characterising features of the field.

When investigating the relationship between disciplinary fields and perspectives on language use in the educational context, one should take the range of academic traditions into account. By including study fields with various scholastic emphases and backgrounds, rather than focusing on a single academic field, we will get a more complete picture of student perspectives on language, and its role as part of an internationalisation process. It would also be of great interest to find out whether students, from different disciplinary backgrounds, vary in their attitudes towards English at the normative level, or at the level of their perceived practices.

4.2 Confidence as a predictor of language attitudes

Research question 1, concerning the role confidence plays, both within and between disciplines in the shaping of attitudes towards EMI and students' plans to study abroad, can be linked to the social-cognitive concept *self-esteem*, which relates to a person's feelings and evaluations of oneself. Confidence, a factor that has proved important in predicting student achievement (Stankov, Morony, and Lee 2014), can influence how students perceive language use. In this respect, confidence could be seen as closely connected to the research of Herrmann, Bager-Elsborg, and McCune (2017: 388) who found that learners often define themselves in terms of the contexts where they feel competent. Vice versa, they disidentify themselves with communities, and their ideologies and practices, where they perceive a lack of competence.

5. Methods

A survey was distributed by email to students at one of the largest universities in Norway, with a student population of approximately 30 000 students, during the 2015 spring term. The study population is comprised of students enrolled in one of the three academic disciplines, (1) Law, (2) Philosophy, (3) Natural Sciences.

5.1 The respondents

All registered students were invited to participate, and no prerequisites were formulated. Respondents were informed that by participating, they consented that data would be used for research, but that all information was to be treated confidentially.

Approximately 2250 students were enrolled in one of the three academic disciplines, according to the email-addresses provided by the university. Of these, approximately 2060 studied law, approximately 130 were enrolled within the natural sciences, while approximately 65 were philosophy students.

There were 542 (24%) students who completed the survey. The target population was bachelor students, but since law in Norway is a five-year integrated master programme, all law students received an invitation to participate. To make the three study fields as similar as possible, students who exceeded the nominal length of three years were

excluded from the analyses, leaving 346 respondents to be extracted for further analyses. Accounting for the total enrolment within the fields, both students within the natural sciences and philosophy students had a participation of approximately 60%. Law, however, had a total participation of 20%.

Out of the total sample, 65% (225) were law students, 11.3% (39) were enrolled in philosophy, and 23.1% (80) studied either chemistry or physics. The latter two programmes were later combined into one group under the broad heading *natural sciences*.

Apportioned by gender, 147 (42.5%) men and 193 (55.8%) women participated. The median age of the sample was 22. These numbers fit well with statistics on students in Norway, which shows that more women than men enrol in higher education, and that the majority of students are between 19-24 years old (Statistics Norway 2018). Respondents were evenly distributed by length of study as bachelor students: 119 (34.4%) were first year students, 124 (35.8%) were in their second year of study and 103 (29.8%) were in their third and final year. As to previous education, 158 students (45.7%) reported that they had been students ahead of their current studies, whereas for the remaining 188 (54.3%) students, this was their first encounter with higher education. A total of 307 (88.7%) students reported Norwegian to be their first language, whereas 39 (11.4%) were non-native speakers of Norwegian. 172 (49.7%) students planned to study abroad as part of their degree.

5.2 The survey

A number of fixed questions and statements were presented for students to evaluate on a Likert-scale ranging from 1-5. The items covered the following topics; self-reported English skills, usefulness of English and Norwegian in areas related to further studies, research and dissemination, self-confidence using English in the educational context, languages and learning effect.

5.3 Developing composite measures of language attitudes

In order to interpret attitudes towards EMI, an index was developed on the basis of statements from the survey. Three statements were chosen

encompassing perspectives on English as an important language for future studies and career prospects. The statements describe similar, yet not identical aspects of EMI:

- 1) I feel better prepared for future work when I use English actively in my education.
- 2) It is important to learn how to use English properly for further studies and future work.
- 3) Accustoming oneself to using English is a competitive advantage when applying for jobs.

All three statements used for the index are worded so that a higher score denotes more positive attitudes towards using English and its potentially favourable outcomes.

A composite measure gives a more complete representation of the theoretical concept we want to investigate. It improves the quality of measurement by increasing the measure's content validity. While the index does not cover all possible aspects relevant for internationalisation in higher education, it encompasses important dimensions of attitudes towards EMI. As a tool for the analysis, this makes the index superior to reporting responses to single questions. We are not only interested in what students think of selected, isolated questions, but an understanding of the broader tendencies and systems of attitudes towards EMI. By combining similar variables, one can move towards a more complete representation of students' attitudes. In addition, using the index allows for analysing responses as interval scale data (Neuman 2014: 226).

After selecting variables, statistical correlation was checked between the selected variables making sure that the theoretical association between the statements was matched by a statistical association, i.e. that agreeing to one statement increased the likelihood that students agreed with related variables. The correlational analysis shows strong, yet not perfect correlations between the different statements (.56 - .66) included in the index. This is ideal, since a perfect correlation would indicate that we were merely measuring a single aspect of the EMI attitude, and the construct validity of the measurement tool would be questionable. Lastly, the index was tested using a reliability measure, Cronbach's alpha,

giving an alpha of 0.818. This confirms that, in addition to resting on a sound theoretical rationale, the index has a good internal consistency.

To measure students' confidence, respondents were asked to evaluate their own productive and receptive English skills. This included a separate five-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (very poor) and 5 (very good) for the following skills: (1) speaking, (2) reading, (3) writing and (4) listening to and understanding English. These variables were combined into one index, as a measurement of students' confidence. The index was constructed and tested in the same way as the index of EMI. The correlation between variables in the index range from .65 to .79, and a Cronbach's alpha on 0.91 confirms that the measure is reliable.

5.4 Statistical analyses

Survey data were analysed by reporting mean scores of subgroups with 95% confidence intervals and by using multiple linear regression in SPSS version 23, with the indexes of EMI and self-reported skills as dependent variables in two separate analyses. Independent variables were added into the analyses according to the specified theoretical model. The assumptions of the regression models were tested by inspecting graphs of residuals and performing separate regressions of subsets of dichotomous variables to identify possible interactions between variables. The tests showed that the models met the assumptions.

6. Results

6.1 Syllabus

Students reported on their syllabus language on a scale ranging from 1 (nothing) to 5 (everything), results are presented in figure 1.

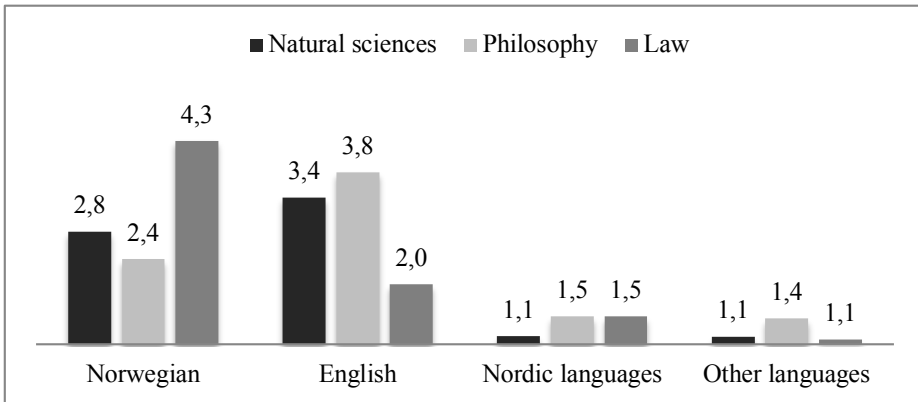


Figure 1. Students' reports on languages used in their syllabus on a Likert scale ranging from 1-5.

These results show that natural science students and philosophy students report the majority of their syllabus to be in English, whereas law students report Norwegian to be the predominant language.

In addition to collecting data on syllabus load through the survey, I reviewed published reading lists from the courses within the three disciplinary fields. Though it is not possible to directly compare data from these lists with the survey, they confirm that English material is more common within philosophy and natural sciences, than in law. See supplementary table.

6.2 Students' self-reported skills

Figure 2 shows that a large proportion of the student group consider themselves as quite skilled in English, with a mean score ranging from 3.9 to 4.7 on the 5-point Likert-scale.

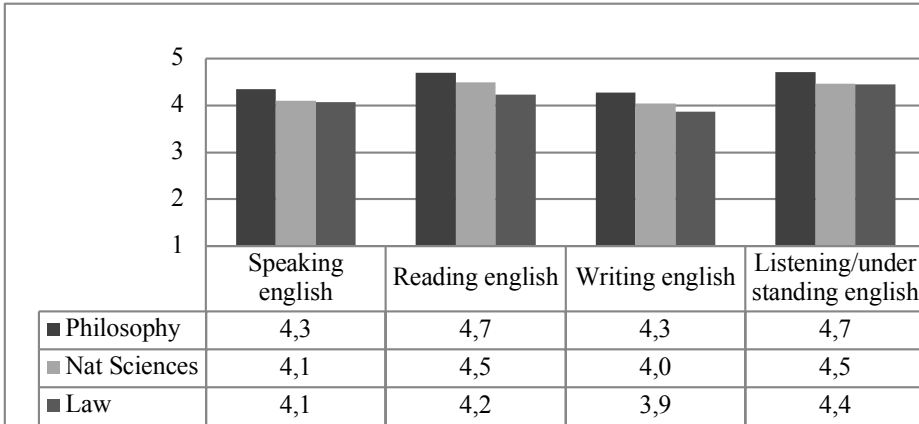


Figure 2. Mean score of self-reported skills in productive and receptive competence in English, measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1-5.

Despite minor differences between the fields, philosophy students rate themselves highest on the scale. Further, all three fields follow a pattern where students are more confident in their receptive skills (reading and listening to and understanding), than the productive ones (speaking and writing). These results have formed the basis of the skills index, in which all four skills are combined into one single measure.

A multiple linear regression was carried out and calculated to predict responses to the skills index based on the following variables (1) plan to study abroad (2) disciplinary field, (3) length of education and (5) gender. Table 1 gives an overview of the results from the regression analysis concerning the skills index as a dependent variable. Theoretically important, non-significant, variables were included to present a more complete picture of the defining variables affecting attitudes towards the index.

Table 1. Students’ self-reported skills in English, dependent variable ranging from 1-5 on a Likert-scale.

ANOVA					
	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	F	<i>p</i>
Regression	6	8.871	1.479	2.692	.014
Residual	330	181.236	.549		
Total	336	190.107			

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	St. Error	Beta		
Constant	4.147	.099		41.922	<.001
Plan to study abroad (1 if yes)	.226	.082	.150	2.746	.006
Natural science students (0 other)	.156	.101	.088	1.546	.123
Philosophy students (0 other)	.288	.133	.121	2.156	.032
First years students (0 other)	-.130	.097	-.082	-1.332	.184
Third year students (0 other)	-.133	.100	-.081	-1.329	.185
Gender (1 if women)	-.038	.084	-.025	-.448	.655

Dependent variable: Skills index. R Square = 0.047

Table 1 shows that, accounting for the variables listed in the table, philosophy students' evaluation of their English skills is significantly higher than those of natural science and law students. The results also suggest that students who plan to study abroad are more confident than those who do not plan to do so. The first regression analysis predicts that students who plan to study abroad will receive a score of 0.226 above those who do not plan to study abroad (p=.006) on the skills index.

6.3 Attitudes towards language use in the academic context

Comparing means between groups shows that whereas students within all academic fields display positive attitudes towards English, natural science students, in contrast to law and philosophy students, tend to exhibit less positive attitudes towards the statement; "it is a democratic problem if not all subject fields can be explained in Norwegian" (mean = 2.63), on a scale ranging from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). Law and philosophy students however, are more positive towards this statement both with a mean score of 3.2. A score in close proximity of 3

on this scale shows that whereas students do not positively agree with this statement, they do not actively disagree with it.

Answers to another statement, “it is important being able to communicate research in Norwegian”, indicate that philosophy students are slightly more positive (mean = 4.36) towards the role of Norwegian in science and dissemination than law students (mean = 4.29), and significantly more positive than natural science students (mean = 3.79). This inference is further supported by results showing that law and natural science students are less positive towards the statement “teaching material in other languages than Norwegian and English should be made available (average 1.91 and 1.94), compared to philosophy students’ average of 2.93. Whereas none of the student groups are entirely positive towards this statement, philosophy students are significantly higher on the Likert-scale than both law and natural science students.

Finally, out of the three groups, law students agree most with the following statement: “I participate less when discussions are held in English” (3.22), compared to 2.30 (philosophy students) and 2.74 (natural science students). Results are summarised in table 2.

Table 2. Summary of mean scores and confidence intervals.

Question/measure	Discipline	N	Mean	95 % Confidence Interval	
				Lower limit	Upper limit
<i>It is a democratic problem if not all subject fields can be explained in Norwegian.</i>	Natural sciences	62	2.63	2.29	2.97
	Philosophy	35	3.23	2.71	3.75
	Law	194	3.26	3.07	3.46
<i>It is important being able to communicate in Norwegian.</i>	Natural sciences	77	3.79	3.52	4.07
	Philosophy	39	4.36	4.06	4.66
	Law	206	4.29	4.16	4.41

<i>Teaching material in other languages, than Norwegian and English, should also be made available</i>	Natural sciences	69	1.91	1.64	2.19
	Philosophy	33	2.93	2.48	3.40
	Law	197	1.94	1.78	2.11
<i>I participate less when discussions are held in English.</i>	Natural sciences	69	2.74	2.38	3.10
	Philosophy	33	2.30	1.81	2.79
	Law	189	3.22	2.99	3.44

6.4 Students' attitudes to the EMI index

Independent of disciplinary fields, students display positive attitudes towards EMI, averaging a score of 4.05 measured on the EMI index. Figure 3 shows a comparison of means of the EMI index between the three study fields. Natural science students report slightly more positive attitudes towards the index (mean score 4.21), than philosophy and law students (mean score 4).

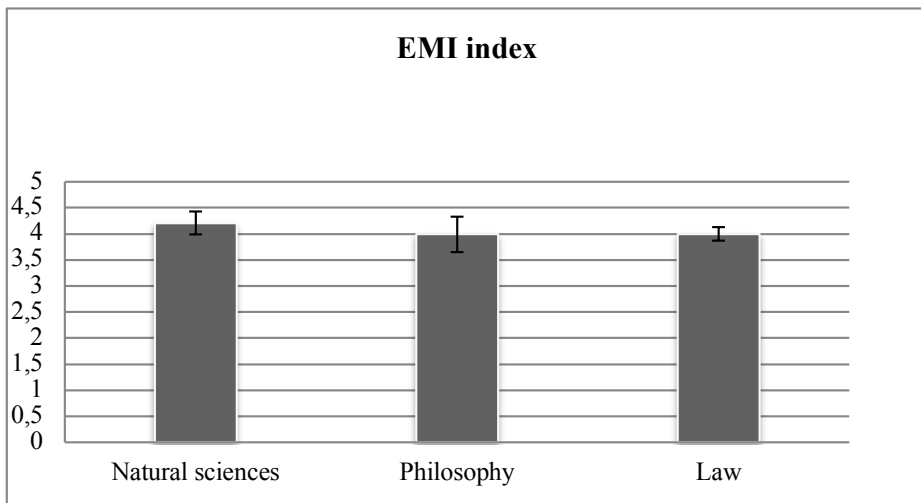


Figure 3. Mean score and confidence intervals on the EMI index on the five-point Likert-scale.

A multiple linear regression was carried out and calculated to predict attitudes towards the index of EMI based on the following variables (1) plan to study abroad (2) disciplinary field, (3) self-reported skills, (4)

years into their education and (5) gender. Results are summarised in table 3.

Table 3. Attitudes towards the five-point EMI index

ANOVA

	<i>df</i>	SS	MS	F	<i>p</i>
Regression	7	53.546	7.649	12.444	<.001
Residual	282	173.349	.615		
Total	289	226.895			

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	St. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.899	.284		6.675	<.001
Plan to study abroad (1 if yes)	.417	.095	.236	4.372	<.001
Natural science students (0 other)	.343	.116	.162	2.947	.003
Philosophy students (0 other)	-.108	.158	-.037	-.680	.497
Skills index	.422	.064	.353	6.614	<.001
First years students (0 other)	-.108	.112	-.057	-.959	.338
Third year students (0 other)	.099	.113	.052	.881	.379
Gender (1 if women)	.179	.096	.100	1.857	.064

Dependent variable: EMI index. R Square = 0.236

The multiple regression analysis indicates that the differences between natural sciences and the two other student groups, noted above, are indeed significant when controlling for the other variables included in the regression model. Natural science students had a predicted EMI score of .343 above that of law students (p=.003).

Furthermore, the results indicate that students' confidence to a certain extent can predict attitudes towards EMI. Each added point on the skills index increased the EMI-index score by 0.422 ($p < .001$). Higher levels of confidence equal more positive attitudes towards EMI.

7. Discussion

A majority of students who participated in this study reported to be confident in their English skills, and slightly more so in their receptive than in their productive skills. However, some systematic patterns of association between disciplinary fields and confidence emerge. Philosophy students rated themselves as slightly more skilled in English than students within the natural sciences and law. There is also a correlation between confidence in English and plans to study abroad, independent of their field of study. Students who displayed high confidence in their English skills did, to a greater extent than students with lower confidence, report that they plan to study abroad.

Overall, the students who participated in this study were positive towards EMI. Students within the natural sciences displayed more positive attitudes towards EMI than either philosophy or law students. The syllabus load in English relative to other languages did not seem to have a direct impact on attitudes towards EMI. Even though philosophy students and students within the field of law find themselves at more or less opposite ends of the scale regarding the use of English and Norwegian in their syllabus, they were equally positive towards EMI. Confidence, on the other hand, seemed to have a strong, positive association with attitudes towards EMI.

The syllabus load, which is one of the most visible manifestations of EMI, differs noticeably between the fields. Judging from student responses on syllabus load, English language syllabus makes up over 50% of the reading material for philosophy and natural science students, compared to only a small amount of the required readings for law students. Concerning natural science, the numbers reported from students in the present study fit quite well with Schwach and Mæsel's (2013) study of syllabus language in Norwegian HE, which found that physics students at bachelor level receive approximately just over 50% of their required readings in English. There is a discrepancy between law students' reported English language syllabus and Schwach and Mæsel's

report, which states that no English syllabus is used within the field. However, law students report only minor usage of English, which is consistent with the amount of English syllabus and recommended readings that I found in official syllabus documents at the university's homepage. When it comes to syllabus language in philosophy, it is difficult to compare the present numbers with Hatlevik and Norgård's (2001) report. The substantially varying language distribution between the different Norwegian educational institutions and the time that has passed since the study was conducted begs caution when using this report for comparison. Even so, the numbers reported by Hatlevik and Nordgård are quite similar to those I found reviewing reading lists in 2015.

To some extent, the reported attitudes seem to be more in line with the language tradition in research journals, than with the actual amount of English and Norwegian syllabus. A study of languages used in scientific research reported from Norwegian research institutions (Kristoffersen, Kristiansen, and Røyneland 2014) found that over 70% of research within the field of law is written in Norwegian. Within philosophy, both Norwegian and English are important languages, and approximately 60% of research is written in Norwegian. Natural sciences, however, publish almost 95% of research in English.

In the present survey, natural science students exhibit more English-only attitudes, while philosophy students, together with law students, are more inclined to value more than one language in their education. That is, even though philosophy students report more English language syllabus than natural science students do, and rate themselves as more skilled in English than the other two student groups, as a group, philosophy students do not display more positive attitudes towards EMI. They are, however, in line with law students' attitudes, and slightly less positive than those of natural science students. This suggests that there is no clear-cut tendency for students with a higher English load to become more positive towards the language. One possible explanation for why philosophy students do not display more positive attitudes towards EMI than the other two groups could be the role and importance of other languages within the field. Philosophy students are enrolled in a field where other languages have played an important role in shaping the field. Reading philosophical works in their original language can be an

important identity marker even though the majority of material seems to be English and Norwegian.

Likewise, one can point to specific disciplinary traits to explain that students from the natural sciences are the most positive towards EMI. Kuteeva and Airey (2014: 546) suggest that knowledge within the natural sciences “build on an agreed language and specialist terminology”. This agreed language between academics within the natural sciences is English.

The student responses to the statement “In my field of study, English terms are better developed than Norwegian ones” serve to demonstrate the possible effect of socialisation on attitudes towards EMI. Whereas natural science students agreed to this statement (mean 4.16), law students placed themselves on the other end of the scale (2.34), with philosophy students at an intermediate level (mean 3.6). While this difference in attitudes between students from the three disciplines does not seem to be associated with the amount of syllabus reported in the two languages, it fits well with a theory that disciplinary traditions socialise students into a common belief set, i.e. social identity.

Whereas disciplinary fields can account for some of the systematic differences towards EMI, they do not explain all variation. One important factor seems to be confidence in receptive and productive English skills. The regression analysis shows that students who rate themselves high on the skills index are also more inclined to report positive attitudes towards the EMI index. That is, students who are confident in their English skills do not necessarily problematise EMI, and they value its positive effects. In this respect, the hypothesis that attitudes and confidence go together is supported by these findings. Whereas the relationship between high confidence in English and positive attitudes towards EMI is not surprising in itself, this association highlights the important role language(s) play in higher education. Brown (2000) points out that when students with positive attitudes succeed, their positive attitudes are reinforced. Students with negative attitudes, however, could be in danger of failing to progress and thereby uphold, or even increase, their negative attitudes towards language and learning. In contexts where language learning is not stated as part of the learning objectives, language could easily be overlooked as a factor influencing academic success or student satisfaction. However, as my analysis show, lack of confidence can have a negative impact on the

students' attitudes towards the use of language in their courses. This, in turn, might lead to poorer academic results and an overall negative view of how the courses are taught.

In their study, Lueg and Lueg (2015) show that when given the choice to study in EMI or Danish, in an otherwise identical programme, confidence could affect students' choices. Students lacking confidence in their skills did not choose the EMI programme. The responses in the present study seem to show a similar dynamic. Lack of confidence in own skills is correlated with less positive views on EMI, and students lacking confidence reported participating less in classroom discussions held in English.

Moreover, only looking at differences between academic fields would mask the heterogeneity within a field. Whereas natural science students as a group exhibit more positive attitudes towards EMI, some natural science students do not follow this pattern. This association would not be revealed if confidence had not been accounted for in the multivariate analysis.

In addition to demonstrating the impact of confidence on attitudes towards EMI, the present study shows a clear correlation where students who do not plan for a study abroad score lower on the skills scale. Independent of their educational field, students who display high confidence in their own English skills will be inclined to report more positive attitudes towards the index, than students who report lower confidence using English. Several Norwegian universities encourage studies abroad as part of the education (UiB 2012, UiO 2016). Whereas university policies in the Norwegian context eagerly propose to implement "opt-out"-exchange demands for students at lower level studies, few seem to reflect on the reasons underlying the relatively low rate of students who choose to study abroad. The large research body suggesting several explanations for the mechanisms behind students' choices to go abroad has yet not looked into the role confidence in English skills could play in this context (see for instance Di Pietro and Page 2008, Hadis 2005, Lörz et.al 2016, Salisbury et.al 2010). My data suggest that a positive self-perception of students' own English skills could increase their likelihood to consider going abroad.

Acknowledging students' perspective on language use in the educational context could help HE institutions implementing EMI in a more thoughtful manner. In turn, this could improve educational quality

and inspire students to study abroad. Conversely, failing to consider language as a factor in the teaching context could lead to students' withdrawing from classroom activities, developing negative attitudes towards the implementation of EMI and to disavow studies abroad.

7.1 Limitations

Some limitations of the present study and directions for future research should be presented.

First, one should take into account the somewhat low response rate when drawing generalisations to a wider population. For the two smaller disciplines, the response rates were around 60%, while law had a response rate of about 20%. Both the distribution of male and female students and the median age in the sample seem to match that of the student population. While this establishes that the demographic makeup of the sample is similar to that of the student population, one cannot rule out the chance that the respondents who chose to answer could harbour stronger opinions towards language use, compared to the student population as a whole. In other words, I cannot exclude the possibility for a self-selection bias (Lavrakas 2008), which could be a result of students' choosing to do a survey for reasons that are systematically related to the attributes under study. Even so, it is unlikely that correlations present within the sample should differ substantially from what we can expect to find in the population (e.g., we expect to find differences in attitudes towards internationalisation between academic fields in the population as well as in the sample).

A second objection is that one could question the value of implementing self-reported skills in the EMI studies, since self-reports on language skills are not objective measures. The reliance on self-report data could be a limitation and elicit responses that are not accurate of the actual skill (Holtz and Gnambs 2017). Answers could reflect respondents' projected beliefs rather than an objective measure of one's capacities (Hadis 2005), and people tend to overestimate their own performances and could be motivated to construct favourable images of themselves (Petzold and Moog 2017). However, in this study it is the perceived, not the factual, skills that matter. Self-confidence in itself is an important predictor for attitudes, i.e. positive self-reports in English

skills predicts more positive attitudes towards EMI. Furthermore, confidence seems to correlate positively with planning to study abroad.

8. Conclusion

The present study contributes to research concerning students' perspectives on the role of language in higher education by offering comprehensive index measurements of confidence in English skills and attitudes towards EMI, and by analysing these attitudes using a large set of survey data from students within three different fields of study. It is the first study addressing the correlations between disciplinary fields, language confidence, and students' plans to study abroad. Up until now, this has not been done in the Norwegian context. Neither has it been done in other Nordic countries.

The present study has sought to identify attitudinal differences towards EMI between academic fields, and at the same time to evaluate the impact of self-confidence on such attitudes. Independent of academic affiliation, students were positive towards EMI. However, students from different academic disciplines differ significantly in their perspectives on the practical use of EMI and their first language. Even more striking is the importance of confidence in predicting attitudes towards EMI. These patterns are strong arguments for pursuing this line of research.

These findings are not only relevant for the Nordic countries. Since EMI is a tool implemented within HE institutions universally, it would be natural to assume that both differences connected to disciplinary fields and those connected to confidence are relevant in other parts of the world.

The correlation between confidence and students' plans to study abroad is also an important finding, since it shows that already at the planning stage, language confidence could play a part in the process of deciding whether to pursue a study abroad or not. While it does not come as a great surprise that there exists an association between the two, these findings are important, as this is the first study in which such an association has been documented and its magnitude has been measured. Identifying some of the factors where language use at HE level could influence students' study quality also makes it possible to inform teachers and policy makers on how language affects students.

While language attitudes are interesting in themselves, they also have a crucial bearing on the viability of the chosen language policy. I believe that the findings from the present study should encourage a debate concerning how language policies should be developed within higher education. Students differ in the way they respond to the use of EMI, and it is therefore important to question one-size-fits-all approaches to language policy planning. Ultimately, a more thoughtful and tailored approach would give the best conditions for transforming policy into successful practice.

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Supplementary table: Syllabi languages. Each disciplinary field consists of different courses and/or programmes. The numbers show the total number of reading materials included within each field. Sources: reading lists from the online course pages at www.uio.no, retrieved February 2015.

	Natural Sciences			Law			Philosophy		
	Norwegian	English	Other	Norwegian	English	Other	Norwegian	English	Other
Required readings									
Books	14	31		19	3			8	4 (German)
Chapters	40	72						11	
Extracts from books (sub-chapters)	51	127		34	2		12	11	2 (German)
Articles				9				6	
Recommended readings									
Books	2	5				2 (Danish)		4	
Chapters								20	
Extracts from books (sub-chapters)								3	
Articles		1					1	1	1 (German)
Other resources									
Wordlists									
Exercise sets	3	18		5					
Corpora					9				
Encyclopaedias								8	
Mathematical formulary	20	1							
Notes	1	2							

Appendices

Approval from the Norwegian Data Protection Services
(NSD)

Trude Bukve

Institutt for lingvistiske, litterære og estetiske studier Universitetet i Bergen

Sydnesplassen 7

5007 BERGEN

Vår dato: 14.04.2015

Vår ref: 42626 / 3 / HIT

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 05.03.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

42626 *Nordic students' attitudes towards English medium instruction*
Behandlingsansvarlig *Universitetet i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig *Trude Bukve*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstillende kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.12.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Hildur Thorarensen

Kontaktperson: Hildur Thorarensen tlf: 55 58 26 54

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Avdelingskontorer / District Offices:

OSLO: NSD, Universitetet i Oslo, Postboks 1055 Blindern, 0316 Oslo. Tel: +47-22 85 52 11. nsd@uio.no

TRONDHEIM: NSD, Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet, 7491 Trondheim. Tel: +47-73 59 19 07. kyrre.svarva@svt.ntnu.no

TROMSØ: NSD, SVF, Universitetet i Tromsø, 9037 Tromsø. Tel: +47-77 64 43 36. nsdmaa@sv.uit.no



Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 42626

Forskningsprosjektet omhandler nordiske studenter sine holdninger knyttet til bruken av engelsk som undervisningsspråk på bachelornivå.

Utvalget informeres skriftlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er noe mangelfullt utformet. Vi ber derfor om at følgende endres/tilføyes:

- prosjektleders navn og kontaktinformasjon
- navn på behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Universitetet i Bergen sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet. Dersom personopplysninger skal sendes elektronisk eller lagres på privat pc/mobile enheter, bør opplysningene krypteres tilstrekkelig.

SurveyXact er databehandler for prosjektet. Universitetet i Bergen skal inngå skriftlig avtale med SurveyXact om hvordan personopplysninger skal behandles, jf. personopplysningsloven § 15. For råd om hva databehandleravtalen bør inneholde, se Datatilsynets veileder: <http://www.datatilsynet.no/Sikkerhet-internkontroll/Databehandleravtale/>. Personvernombudet ber om kopi av avtalen for arkivering (sendes: personvernombudet@nsd.uib.no).

Forventet prosjektslutt er 31.12.2017. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:

- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)

Vi gjør oppmerksom på at også databehandler (SurveyXact) må slette personopplysninger tilknyttet prosjektet i sine systemer. Dette inkluderer eventuelle logger og koblinger mellom IP-/epostadresser og besvarelser.

Surveys

The surveys were tailored to the different universities and disciplinary fields. For purposes of illustration, I have included two printouts of the online surveys: one in Norwegian and one in English.

For English, or norsk (bokmål) version, please select the preferred language displayed at the bottom of this page.

Kjære student

Føremålet med denne undersøkinga er å få eit innblikk i studentars haldningar til bruken av engelsk og morsmål innan høgare utdanning. Målet er å finne ut om haldningane til studentar ved fem av dei største universiteta i Norden fell saman med språkpolitikken som blir ført på universiteta, samt på det nasjonale nivået, i dei fem landa.

Du mottok denne undersøkinga då du er registrert som student ved eitt av dei aktuelle faga ved UiB. All informasjon du gir vidare i denne sammenhengen vert behandla anonymt, og ved å fylle ut undersøkinga samtykkjer du i at data frå spørjeskjemaet kan brukast i forskningssamanheng.

Undersøkinga tek om lag 5-10 minutt å svare på.

Spørsmål kan rettast til prosjektleiar Trude Bukve på epost:

trude.bukve@uib.no

Undersøkinga er utarbeida i samarbeid med SurveyXact og behandlingsansvarleg institusjon er Universitetet i Bergen.

Kjønn

Kvinne

Mann

Alder

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- 99
- 100

Morsmål (du kan velje fleire enn eitt)

- Engelsk
- Norsk
- Dansk
- Svensk
- Finsk
- Islandsk
- Tysk
- Spansk
- Fransk
- Russisk
- Japansk
- Kinesisk
- Anna, spesifiser gjerne _____

Kva studieprogram er du i gang med ved UiB?

Årssudium i filosofi

Bachelor i filosofi

Kor langt er du komen studiet i ditt?

1. år

2. år

3. år

Eg har studert meir enn tre år

Har du studert før du starta med bachelorstudiet?

Ja, utdyp gjerne kva du studerte: _____

Nei

Er du utvekslingsstudent ved UiB?

Ja

Nei

Kva land studerer du vanlegvis i?

Har du planar om å studere i utlandet?

Ja

Nei

Har allereie vore på utveksling

Kva språk tykkjer du at du lærer best på? Du kan velje fleire enn eitt.

Engelsk

Norsk

Dansk

Svensk

Finsk

Islandsk

Tysk

Spansk

Fransk

Russisk

Japansk

Kinesisk

Anna, spesifiser gjerne _____

På ein skala frå 1(ingenting) til 5(alt), kor stor del av pensumet ditt vil du anslå er på...

Det er eit demokratisk problem dersom ikkje alle fagområde kan forklarast på norsk.



Engelsk utgjer ein svært viktig del av utdanninga mi.



Det er viktig å kunne formidle forskning på norsk.



Det er eit konkurransefortrinn for vidare jobbsøking å venje seg til å bruke engelsk.



Har du kommentarar til tema er du velkomen til å skrive her:

For å velge norsk versjon (nynorsk, bokmål) velg ønsket språk nederst på denne siden.

Dear students

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of Nordic students' attitudes regarding the use of English and native languages within higher education. The aim is to find out whether the attitudes of students, at five of the largest universities in the Nordic countries, align with the university and national language policies in these five countries.

You receive this survey because you are registered as a student at the University of Bergen, at one of the educational programmes selected for this study. By filling out this survey you consent to data being used in connection to research, but all the information you provide will be treated anonymously.

The survey takes about 5-10 minutes to fill out.

Questions may be directed to the project manager Trude Bukve:
trude.bukve@uib.no

The survey is developed in collaboration with SurveyXact and the University of Bergen acts as controller.

Gender

Female

Male

Age

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- 100

Native language (you can choose more than one)

- English
- Norwegian
- Danish
- Swedish
- Finnish
- Icelandic
- German
- Spanish
- French
- Russian
- Japanese
- Chinese
- Other, please specify _____

What study programme are you enrolled in?

- One-year programme in philosophy
- Bachelor programme in philosophy

How far into your study programme are you?

- First year
- Second year
- Third year
- I have studied for more than three years

Had you ever studied at a higher education institution before you started on your bachelor's degree?

- Yes, please specify which subject(s) you studied: _____
- No

Are you an exchange student at UiB?

- Yes
- No

In which country do you usually study?

Do you plan to study abroad?

- Yes
- No
- Have already studied abroad

What language(s) gives you the best learning outcome? You can choose more than one.

- English
- Norwegian
- Danish
- Swedish
- Finnish
- Icelandic
- German
- Spanish
- French
- Russian
- Japanese
- Chinese
- Other, please specify _____

On a scale from 1 (nothing) to 5 (everything), how much of your syllabi would you estimate are in...

	1 (nothing)	2	3	4	5 (everything)
Norwegian?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other languages?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On a scale from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive), what is your attitude to some subjects often using English...

	1 (very negative)	2	3	4	5 (very positive)	Don't know
... in the syllabus?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... in lectures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On a scale from 1 (very poor) to 5 (very good), how would you describe your skills when it comes to...

	1 (very poor)	2	3	4	5 (very good)
... speaking English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... reading in English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... writing in English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... listening to (and understanding) English?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree), how would you rate the following statements? Compared to my native language...

	1 (completely disagree)	2	3	4	5 (completely agree)	Don't know
... I spend more time understanding the content in English academic texts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... I spend more time remembering the content when reading English academic texts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... I feel better prepared for future work when I use English actively in my education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... it is important to use English to adapt to an internationalised education and work force	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree), how would you rate the following statements? At lectures...

	1 (completely disagree)	2	3	4	5 (completely agree)	Don't know
... I participate less when discussions are held in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... lectures should be in English, if the syllabus is in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... lecturers should speak English fluently if teaching in English.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

On a scale from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree), how would you rate the following statements?

1 (completely disagree)	2	3	4	5 (completely agree)	Don't know
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It is important to learn how to use English properly for further studies and future work.



Within my field of study, English scientific expressions are better developed than the Norwegian ones.



Teaching material in other languages, than Norwegian and English, should also be made available.



It is a democratic problem if not all subject fields can be explained in Norwegian.



English constitutes an important part of my education.



It is important being able to communicate research in Norwegian.



Accustoming oneself to using English is a competitive advantage when applying for jobs.



If you have further comments about the subject please feel free to comment here:



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