

**Teachers' and students' experience of multilingualism: The role of the
mother tongue in the acquisition of English as a third language**



OsloMet - storbyuniversitet

Masteroppgave i skolerettet utdanningsvitenskap med
fordypning i engelskfaget

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15. mai 2018



Multilingualism

Diversity

Equality

Teachers' Attitudes

Teachers' Education

Teachers' Multilingual Awareness

Mother Tongue Status

The Role of the Mother Tongue in Third Language Acquisition

Multilingual Competence

Language and Culture

Students' Multilingual Awareness



Abstract

This thesis investigates teachers' and students' experience of multilingualism, taking into account the role of the mother tongue in learning English as a third language. A further aspiration of this research is an investigation of how linguistic diversity in the EFL classroom influences teaching practices. The study discusses the extent to which and how language educators adjust their teaching strategies and draw on the linguistic backgrounds of multilingual learners when teaching English as a third language. This thesis is centered both on the perspectives of the teachers and the newly arrived multilingual students who receive adapted language education in an introductory school for intensive Norwegian language learning. The theoretical framework in this research draws on multilingualism, cross-linguistic influence in multilingual settings and metalinguistic awareness in third language acquisition. It also takes into consideration teachers' language awareness.

In the Norwegian context, concepts such as 'linguistic and cultural diversity' have become one of the current issues in Norwegian educational discourse. Nowadays, multilingual students make up an increasing number of learners in primary and secondary education. The educational authorities in Norway promote multilingualism and provide all students with an English curriculum which aims to foster further language learning by making use of learners' mother tongues in language learning.

Qualitative research design was applied in this thesis. Based on the interviews conducted with both teachers from the introductory and two mainstream schools and with the newly arrived students, the outcomes of the study show that there is a need for a "multilingual turn" to language pedagogy and teachers' practices. The results from the interviews show that the language educators did not receive knowledge about multilingual pedagogy in the course of their education and some of the teachers did not feel competent enough to provide English instruction in a highly diverse classroom. The language educators from the introductory school provided differentiated instruction that could exploit the students' linguistic backgrounds. The learners' mother tongues were seen as a resource in acquiring English as a third language. When it comes to the mainstream schools, attention was not paid to the multilingual students' backgrounds. The results from my study indicate that the mother tongue was of the essence for the newly arrived multilingual students and served as a reference point in their learning English and Norwegian. Despite the fact that the language educators acknowledged the benefits of multilingualism, not all of them made use of the multilingual students' mother tongues, and the Norwegian language had a dominating role in their English classes. Some of the language educators claimed that the teacher training program should include multilingual pedagogy as a part of teacher

education. Thus, this research study argues for the development of English language teacher education, where multilingual pedagogy should be included as a vital component in the theoretical and practical analysis and discussion of teaching practices. Furthermore, it shows the need for improved and effective of language teaching in future multilingual classrooms with the aim of producing deeper and equitable learning for all students.

Acknowledgments

This master thesis is dedicated to those learners whose individual histories involve ‘cultural and linguistic diversity.’

This research study is a reflection of seven years of higher education from three universities in two countries. During my period of study, notions such as ‘diversity’, ‘multicultural’ and ‘multilingual’ became part of my everyday life. Having four languages in my repertoire, Norwegian became my fifth when I entered the Master’s Program in Educational Sciences at Oslo Metropolitan University. Being both a multilingual teacher and student, I considered it as my duty to contribute to this important field of research.

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, associate professor Mona Evelyn Flognfeldt, who guided me throughout this project. Her constant support, academic knowledge, and experience in the field of my research interests contributed both to my professional development as a language educator and in writing this thesis.

I would also like to thank Hilde Handeland, who participated with me in the OXLO mentor program and provided me with practical knowledge about adapted language education for language minorities. Her advice and guidance were crucial in conducting this research study and in selecting the research participants. Another important person who should be mentioned is an English language educator and researcher whose name cannot be provided here.

Finally, I want to thank my parents for their love and contribution to my education, and my best friend, Oksana Pidoborizhna, who was my greatest supporter during this research project.

Oslo, May 2018

Olena Iamroz

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1.Introduction

1.1 Background

Due to globalization and the increase of immigration from other countries, schools have grown significantly in their linguistic and multicultural diversity. In today's society multilingualism is a widespread phenomenon that is represented at social, individual and educational levels around the world. In recent years, linguistic diversity has become one of the current issues in the Norwegian educational system. Only in 2016, 228 different languages were registered in Oslo schools. As a result, today's classrooms are full of multilingual and multicultural learners and that fact calls for a "multilingual turn" to language pedagogy and teachers' practices.

Previous studies have reported that multilinguals have advantages when learning a new language. A number of scholars hold the view that learners who are multilingual have cognitive benefits, metalinguistic and metacognitive abilities (Cenoz & Jessner, 2000; Jessner, 2008; Hammarberg, 2001; Hufeisen & Marx, 2007; Hufeisen & Marx, 2004). Moreover, the researchers argue that third language acquisition includes the added variable of previous language learning experience and learners' proficiency in L1 and L2 can affect the acquisition of L3. The issue concerning multilingual matters has also grown in light of the importance of teachers' multilingual competence. The research study done by Dahl and Krulatz (2016) and Šurkalović (2014) showed that English teachers in Norway do not seem to be prepared to give differentiated instruction in a highly diverse classroom.

According to the Regional Educational Directorate, the concentration of children who have an immigrant background in Norway corresponds to 15% of the total number of elementary school children and 17 % of the total number of high school children (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017). Generally, those students who have recently arrived in the country do not have any education in Norwegian as a second language. In order to facilitate the way of integrating these newly arrived multilingual students into regular schools, students are offered an adapted language program, which provides Norwegian language instruction. The newly arrived multilingual students can get adapted language education at the local school, in a first-literacy group, in a reception group, or in the introductory school for intensive Norwegian language learning. This thesis investigates the newly arrived students who receive Norwegian and English instruction in one introductory school for intensive Norwegian language learning.

The educational authorities in Norway promote multilingualism, and according to the Norwegian language curriculum, “linguistic diversity is an asset in the development of linguistic competence in children and young people” (Directorate for Education and Training, 2006). The Norwegian national subject curriculum for English states that students are encouraged to use their prior linguistic knowledge in further language learning, by finding linguistic similarities and differences between their mother tongues and English. Thus, one can state that the competence aims in the curriculum have the potential to enhance learners’ multilingualism and foster language learning. From this perspective, the aim of this thesis is to determine how these competence aims are implemented in English instruction both in the introductory and mainstream schools under study, and to explore what role the mother tongue plays in the acquisition of English as a third language for the newly arrived students.

1.2 Motivation

Being both a multilingual teacher and student, such notions as ‘linguistic and cultural diversity’ became a part of my everyday life. Having five languages in my repertoire from three different language families, I can argue that multilingual competence is a resource in the further language learning, where knowledge of the mother tongue stands as the first stepping stone to this competence. Today’s classroom characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity demands that teachers’ awareness of multilingual pedagogy. Learners’ multilingual backgrounds should be seen as a resource in English and Norwegian language learning.

The newly arrived students who have linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds need English instruction that takes into consideration the students’ linguistic knowledge where the mother tongue is a basis of further language learning. If the learners’ first language is not maintained in the classroom, we not only take their culture and identity from them, but their potential resource for language learning. Thus, I would like to contribute to this important field of research and practice by taking a further step and investigating teachers’ and students’ experience of multilingualism, taking into account the role of the mother tongue in the process of learning English as a third language.

My aspiration is to contribute to the development of teachers’ knowledge base as regards multilingual pedagogy. I find support for my words in Moje’s (2000) article and her view that “...researchers should engage in research not only to produce knowledge but also to make positive change in the lives of those who participate in research, change that the participants desire and articulate for themselves” (Moje, 2000, p.25).

1.3 Objectives and research questions

In this thesis the interest was both in the perspective of the newly arrived multilingual students, their experience in using mother tongues in third language learning and teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism, their beliefs and practices concerning multilingual education.

The aim of the study is to get insights into students' thoughts and experiences about the role of the mother tongue in learning English as a third language in the introductory school. The second aspect of the study is to investigate how linguistic diversity in the EFL classroom influences teaching practices. Thus, the research study seeks to address the following questions:

1. Teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism:

- a. How do language educators adjust their teaching strategies to the multilingual learners?
- b. To what extent do teachers draw on the linguistic backgrounds of multilingual learners when teaching English as a third language?

2. Students' experiences:

What role does the mother tongue play for the newly arrived multilingual students in the process of learning English?

1.4 Limitations

The reader should bear in mind that this study is only based on the newly arrived multilingual students who lived in Norway not more than 6 months and only one learner - nine months. All participants attended the introductory school for the intensive Norwegian language learning and represented a linguistic and cultural diversity. It is necessary to clarify that these learners had an age-appropriate educational background from their home country and could have more than one language in their repertoire. Thus, the results from the research do not apply to all multilingual students in Norway but only to a specific group of multilingual learners.

The purpose of including both teachers and students in this research work has been to compare language teaching and learning in different settings and get the different points of view. It is important to point out that this thesis does not appeal to all English teachers in the country in order to make general claims about teaching practices. Rather, the results in this research study just aim to present some aspects that are relevant in learning English as a third language and teaching pedagogy.

Another potential aspect in this study that I need to address is that the scope of my thesis may be too broad. However, in order to understand the educational context for the newly arrived multilingual students and the conditions under which they acquire English as a third language, it was necessary to provide the background information concerning the introductory classes, the curriculum for mother tongue instruction and adapted language education.

1.5 Structure of the thesis

The overall structure of the thesis takes the form of eight chapters, including this introductory chapter that makes an account for background, motivation and limitations of the study, as well as presenting the research questions.

Chapter two gives an overview of previous research conducted in the field of third language acquisition in Norwegian context.

The third chapter provides information about the educational context for the multilingual background students. Then this section gives a brief overview of the curriculum for mother tongue teaching for language minorities, English language curriculum and adapted language curriculum for minority learners.

Fourth chapter begins by laying out the theoretical dimensions of the research. First it presents an introduction to the field of multilingualism and theory about third language acquisition in multilingual settings. Further on it focuses on teachers' language awareness and its components.

The fifth chapter is concerned with methodology and presents the research design and research approach that were applied in this thesis.

The sixth chapter of this thesis presents the findings of the research, focusing on the interviews conducted with the teachers and students.

Chapter seven analyses the results of the interviews, tying up the various theoretical strands represented in chapter three in order to answer the research questions.

The final chapter draws upon the entire thesis and provides the conclusion that gives a brief summary of the findings. The implication of the future research into this area is presented also in this chapter.

2. Review of previous research – The Norwegian context

The phenomenon of multilingualism and third language acquisition have received considerable attention in the past decades. Globalization, mobility and increasing immigration had led to the interaction between languages and cultures. Multilingual matters have become an interesting topic of research which has drawn the attention of many scholars (Bardel & Falk, 2010; Cenoz, 2001; De Angelis, 2007; Hammarberg, 1998; Jessner 2008, among others). One of the reasons for the interest in this field is the fact that third language learning has become the common phenomenon in many parts of the world.

In the Norwegian context, concepts such as ‘linguistic and cultural diversity’ have become one of the current issues in Norwegian educational discourse. In this section, five various research studies conducted in the field of third language acquisition are presented. The studies take into account both teachers’ and students’ perspectives in learning and teaching English as a third language. The studies are chosen because of their relevance to this master thesis.

The recent study done by Flognfeldt (in print): ‘Teaching and Learning English in Multilingual Early Primary Classroom’ investigated how English was taught in Year 4 classrooms with students who had another mother tongue than Norwegian. The objectives of Flognfeldt’s research was to determine whether English teachers made strategic use of translanguaging and to what extent students’ home languages were used as a resource in English teaching and learning. Moreover, the aim was to determine what was the teacher’s preferred language of instruction in English classes.

According to García & Wei (2014), translanguaging makes up the speakers’ complete language repertoire when they communicate. Moreover, García (2009), points out that translanguaging differs from the notion of code-switching, since code-switching refers to “a shift or shuttle between two languages” but translanguaging denotes that “bilinguals have one linguistic repertoire from which they select features strategically to communicate effectively” (García & Wei, 2014, p. 22). It means that the multilingual students may activate, for example, Norwegian, English and other languages they have in their repertoire in order to communicate.

The results from the research showed that teachers used mostly Norwegian to explain grammatical phenomena and to provide instructions in the English classrooms. Regarding the competence aims in the English language curriculum, students are supposed to find similarities and differences between

English and their mother tongues. This study showed that it was neither implicitly nor explicitly topicalized by the teachers. They did not make use of the students' mother tongues in a systematic way, and English was compared only to Norwegian. The use of the learners' mother tongues was not encouraged in the classrooms, and when it came to the comparison between English and the students' L1 vocabulary, it was just learners who would occasionally find words that were similar to their home languages. The findings from the research study suggest that 'some educators interpret *integration* as implying "Norwegian only" at school' (Flognfeldt, p.13).

The primary reasons for not including learners' mother tongues in teaching English provided by the teachers were: avoidance of confusion in learning, the teachers' own lack of knowledge of languages that students knew, and the notion that the students' proficiency level in their mother tongues was poor. The study indicates that the teachers needed strategies, ideas and materials to accommodate their teaching to the multilingual reality in their classrooms. The results from the study suggest that there is a need for more research on third language pedagogy and teaching practices in order that language educators "could welcome multilingualism and translanguaging in the classroom" (Flognfeldt, in print)

The second study is Iversen's (2016) master thesis which investigated to what extent minority students experienced equality of opportunity in the English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom. Findings from this research study indicated that the students' linguistic background had not received attention in the EFL classroom and seemed to be invisible to the teachers. As a result, no differentiation in instruction was made to exploit the linguistic backgrounds of the students in the EFL classrooms.

The results from the research indicated that students had varied greatly in their degree of metalinguistic awareness. Nevertheless, students were not aware of the opportunities that bilingualism may bring in their further language learning. The study showed that the curriculum's aim for involving students' native language in the English language teaching and learning did not align with the situation represented in the research. In his thesis, Iversen claimed that today's multilingual classroom demanded differentiated instruction and a new approach to teaching multilingual students. His findings indicated that "current policies, practices and attitudes" in the EFL classroom did not support minority students' English learning. Iversen (2016) suggested that there is a need for a revised curriculum, where diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds are valued and exploited.

The third study, Dahl & Krulatz (2016), investigated to what extent English language teachers were prepared to provide instruction in a multicultural and multilingual classroom where students have different mother tongues. The research included a national survey completed by 176 teachers and

interviews conducted with the four English teachers. The results from the study indicated that very few teachers had an education with a focus on multilingualism. Moreover, the language educators felt that they needed teaching strategies and methods in order to work with the multilingual students. Dahl & Krulatz (2016) concluded that future English teachers need to be ready to implement teaching methods and adjust their instruction in a way that multilingual students can exploit their linguistic abilities. Thus, they stressed the importance of providing English teachers in Norway with multilingual education and professional development.

Šurkalović's research article (2014) was also concerned with teachers' competence with regard to providing instruction to the multilingual students who had English as their third language. In contrast to Dahl and Krulatz (2016), her point of interest was English teachers in training and their knowledge about the linguistic diversity in Norwegian classrooms. The findings provided by Šurkalović showed that there was a lack of knowledge about linguistic diversity in Norway and its minority languages. The researcher concluded that there was a need for general linguistic knowledge about the language as a system in teachers' education programme.

The fifth study, Burner and Carlsen (2017), investigated the teaching and learning of English in introductory classes. The research took both the teachers' and the students' perspectives regarding teaching and learning English in multilingual settings. Findings from the study showed that the students' linguistic resources were not exploited when learning English in introductory classes. The research showed that the migrant students were allocated to the introductory classes with no regard for their linguistic and educational backgrounds, nor to their proficiency in English. The interviews and observations that were conducted in two mainstream schools indicated that some of the students did not have any formal educational background, and some studied English from the first grade or had it as an official second language. As a result, this made it almost impossible to implement differentiation in English instruction in the introductory classes. Burner and Carlsen (2017) described such allocation of the migrant students as "political rather than primarily pedagogical".

The results from the interviews with the teachers showed that there was a lack of suitable resources in teaching English regarding the students' linguistically and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, students' difficulties in acquiring English were seen as the result of their low knowledge of Norwegian language skills. The teachers expressed the belief that knowing Norwegian would benefit the students' acquisition of English. However, the teachers who had an immigrant background and spoke other mother tongues than Norwegian showed an interest in students' mother tongues. When it comes to students' L1, it was never involved in a systematic way and the use of students' mother tongues when

learning English was left to students' own initiative. Similar findings regarding the inclusion of students' L1 in English classrooms were presented by Flognfeldt (in print) in her research study.

Another aspect described by Burner and Carlsen (2017) was that the policy at school was to speak Norwegian only. Furthermore, there was a limited amount of communication between introductory and mainstream classes. The scholars claimed that such allocation of students to introductory classes seemed to involve an element of "cultural segregation" which could be an obstacle in students' cultural and linguistic integration into the mainstream schools. Burner and Carlsen (2017) concluded that there was a need for more research and attention to students' competence and teaching practices regarding teaching English in introductory classes.

The five studies described above showed that there is indeed a need for more research on students' and teachers' practices regarding learning and teaching English in multilingual settings. Thus, I would like to contribute to this important field of research and practice by taking a further step and investigating teachers' and students' experience of multilingualism in the introductory school and the teachers' practice in the mainstream schools.

The research project conducted for this thesis takes into account primarily the perspectives of the newly arrived students who have an age-appropriate educational background and are screened according to their linguistic knowledge before they start the introductory school. The participation in the course of teaching lasts no more than five months, before the students start attending their mainstream school. Secondly, it investigates teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism both in the introductory school and in two mainstream schools.

3. The educational context for speakers of minority languages in Norway

This chapter provides a brief description of the educational context for multilingual students in Norway. It includes information about the language situation in Norway, adapted language education for linguistic minorities, Norwegian introductory courses, and the curriculum for basic Norwegian and mother tongue teaching. Further on the chapter provides an overview of the curriculum for English and points out competence aims which have the potential to enhance learners' multilingualism.

3.1 Background

In recent years, linguistic diversity has become one of the current issues in the Norwegian educational system. The increased immigration to Norway has led to a growth in the number of students belonging to linguistic minorities. According to the Regional Educational Directorate, the concentration of children who have an immigrant background in Norway corresponds to 15% of the total amount of elementary school children and 17 % of the total amount of high school children (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2017).

Generally, those students who have recently arrived into the country do not have any education in Norwegian as a second language. Since English is a compulsory school subject from the first grade, the multilingual students need to deal with two different languages almost simultaneously. As a result, they face educational challenges where the foreign language and culture may become an obstacle in the educational process. Depending on the educational system in the home country, the multilingual students may already have a certain level of English before they come to Norway. Moreover, some of the students can be bilingual or have more than two languages in their repertoire.

In order to facilitate the way of integrating the newly arrived multilingual students into regular schools there is an adapted language program, which aims to give insights into Norwegian language and culture. In some cases, children may start in regular Norwegian primary schools without previous knowledge of the language.

3.2 The language situation in Norway

Norway is a multilingual country in itself and it has two official languages: Norwegian and the Sami language. The Sami language is a regional language of indigenous Sami population who belong to a North European ethnic group. Mainly, this indigenous population comes from the vast open areas of the north of Norway, Sweden, Finland and some of the northwestern districts of Russia. The Sami

language contains four major languages: Northern Sami, Southern Sami, Lule Sami and Eastern Sami, which have varying degrees of similarities.

In addition, there are two official Norwegian languages: 'bokmål' and 'nynorsk'. This fact makes the language situation in Norway even more diverse. The two variants of the Norwegian language are related but differ more than just dialects and are compulsory school subjects. Children start to learn one variant as their main language and then at the age of twelve the other variant of the Norwegian language is taught. The use of language variant can differ between regions and between municipalities within one region.

Furthermore, the state recognizes Norwegian sign language and three official minority languages: Kven, Romanes and Romani. Kven or Finnish language is a minority language which is used in Troms and Finnmark. Romanes is the language of the Roma minority and is a non-territorial minority language in Norway. Romani is the language of the Romani people who have lived in Norway for several centuries. Romani is also considered a non-territorial minority language in Norway.

Today, according to statistics done by SSB from 2018, there are 746 661 immigrants and 169 964 Norwegian-born to immigrants in Norway. It makes up 14,1 % of the country's total population. These two groups have a background from 222 different countries and independent regions. Persons with an immigrant background from Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, Somalia, Germany, Iraq, Syria, Philippines, Pakistan and Eritrea - are the most common immigrants residing in Norway (SSB, 2018)

Such increased multilingual and cultural diversity in Norway has influenced the educational sector in the country and has led to the introduction of adapted language education for language minorities, bilingual and mother tongue instruction in schools. When it comes to the language learning and teaching, the cultural and linguistic challenges may influence the educational process greatly. The linguistic diversity that exist in today's classroom demands a multilingual approach to language teaching and learning. From this perspective the role of the English language teacher in the multilingual classroom is quite important and challenging.

3.3 Adapted language education for students from language minorities

According to the Education Act (1998), section §2-8 (for the 10-year compulsory school) and section§3-12 (upper secondary education and training), adapted language education is offered to students from language minorities who do not have sufficient proficiency in Norwegian language to follow the grade-level instruction.

“Students attending the primary and lower secondary school / upper secondary education who have a mother tongue other than Norwegian or Sami have the right to adapted education in Norwegian until they are sufficiently proficient in Norwegian to follow the normal instruction of the school. If necessary, such students are also entitled to mother tongue instruction, bilingual subject teaching, or both “(Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, p.1).

Adapted language education consists of three parts and include:

- *Adapted education in Norwegian.* In this case, Norwegian education is adapted for non- native speakers.
- *Bilingual subject teaching.* This type of adapted language education encompasses teaching of the school subjects in Norwegian and in the student’s mother tongue. Thus, subject teaching is provided by bilingual teachers.
- *Mother tongue instructions.* It includes the teaching of the students’ native language at school by bilingual teachers.

The main aim of adapted language education is to give the students basic knowledge in Norwegian language and develop their linguistic confidence and self-confidence. Students have to become sufficiently proficient in Norwegian as soon as possible, so that they can follow regular instructions in Norwegian and other subjects taught in Norwegian. When their level of Norwegian language is sufficient to follow the mainstream teaching, adapted language education is no longer provided to the students. Linguistic minorities are usually being introduced to “bokmål”, which is more widely used in national newspapers, news and national media in general.

3.4 Curriculum for basic Norwegian and mother tongue teaching for language minorities.

The curriculums for basic Norwegian and mother tongue teaching for language minorities were established by the Ministry of Education and Research on the 2nd of July 2007. They may be applied in the primary school, lower secondary school and in upper secondary education and training. The two curriculums have a similar structure and the main aim of both of them is to promote adapted education in accordance with current regulations in the Education Act.

According to the curriculum, “the teaching in basic Norwegian shall cover the instructions in reading and writing and help to develop students’ vocabulary. The bilingual technical training and instruction in reading and writing in students’ mother tongue may strengthen the teaching in basic

Norwegian, but it is up to the school owner whether mother tongue teaching is included in accordance with the curriculum for basic Norwegian. In some cases, the teaching can be provided in the form of special adaptation within the regular curriculum in Norwegian” (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, p.1-3).

The curriculum for basic Norwegian for language minorities applies to students of different age and with different experience background. The aim of it is to give newly arrived students the Norwegian language skills they will need to participate in classes and successfully follow ordinary lessons. The main subject areas within the curriculum are: *language and culture, listening and speaking, reading and writing and language learning*. The competence aims are divided into three levels and are based on Common European Framework of Reference for languages from beginner level A1 to advanced level C2. The curriculum is transitional and when the students have achieved the aims under the level 3 they have to follow regular Norwegian instructions. Since the curriculum is not designed for a specific age group, students may be at various levels and have different experience background when they start. Moreover, each student may spend different amount of time to finish the introductory course.

According to the curriculum for mother tongue teaching for language minorities, the learning process is intended to promote insight into the students’ own language learning, intercultural understanding and the development of linguistic self-confidence. These aspects are considered to contribute to the development of a bilingual identity and the comparative perspective in Norwegian and students’ mother tongues (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, p.1).

Different municipalities in Norway have various offers when it comes to adapted language education. There are considerable local variations regarding the implementation of the curriculum for language minorities. After the introduction of the Knowledge Promotion reform, mother tongue teaching as a part of adapted language education is decreasing in the Norwegian school system. Statistics from 2017 show that there are only 2245 students who receive mother tongue education in Norway (SSB, 2017).

In order to give adapted language education, the newly arrived multilingual students need to be assessed before starting an introductory Norwegian course. The assessment includes an evaluation of the learner’s previous education and it determines whether the child gets adapted language education at the local school, in a first- literacy group, in reception group, or in the introductory school for the intensive Norwegian language learning. Since newly arrived students have different educational backgrounds from their home countries, their needs for adapted language education may vary greatly.

In order to provide effective language learning for multilingual students it is important to differentiate learners according to their language learning needs. In Oslo, multilingual students are divided into four groups: Group A, B, C, D.

- **Group A**

This group includes newly arrived students/students who have been living in Norway for a while. Children who belong to this group have an age-appropriate educational background from the home country and their school system is similar to Norwegian one. Thus, these learners already have a level of attainment that enables them to transfer structures from their first language to a second language. This in turn allows them to make faster progress in their language learning. The challenge is just to acquire Norwegian language skills in order to participate in classes and follow ordinary lessons.

- **Group B.**

Children who belong to this group include newly arrived students/ students who have been living in Norway for a while, with an age-appropriate educational background from the home country but with school system that is different from the Norwegian one. This can be both an asset and an obstacle in the learning process. Different school systems and traditions may affect children's educational knowledge in various school subjects. For instance, some students were exposed to English at school and some of them have not learned it before. Some learners, for example, could attend international school and had English as a medium of instruction or they could receive teaching instruction in another European language, for example in French. Such factors influence the language learning process in both the negative and positive way. In order to make use of learners' previous language learning knowledge it demands explicit teaching that makes use of learners' previous educational knowledge and language skills. It requires teaching methods that are differentiated according to the students' age, proficiency and educational background.

Such teaching will faster integration with Norwegian- speaking students- linguistically and socially.

- **Group C**

Children who belong to this group include newly arrived students who have been living in Norway for a while but who do not have an age-appropriate educational background. Moreover, their school system from the home country is quite different from the Norwegian one. Some of these learners are refugees who have been living in different countries and have

been exposed to different educational systems. Another example of learners who belong to this group are children who have never been to school before, who are not literate or who have never read a book.

Students who belong to this group and do not have any educational background have a right to receive adapted language education in a first- literacy group or in the reception group. Normally participation in the course of teaching lasts from one year to two years before students can be integrated in mainstream classes at school.

- **Group D**

Children who belong to this group include students who were born or grew up in Norway but who still need additional Norwegian language learning. Some of these learners did not attend kindergarten where they have a possibility to learn a language. In this case, they are not exposed to Norwegian before they begin to go to school. Students who belong to this group do not use Norwegian at home or outside school. Some of them may still need extra Norwegian language learning after being to school for a couple of years.

In this thesis I focus the research question on multilingual students who belong to groups A and B and attend the introductory school for the intensive Norwegian language learning. By this I want to get insights both into students' thoughts and experiences about the role of the mother tongue in learning English as a third language.

3.5 English as a subject in Norwegian schools: The English language curriculum

The importance of English language learning cannot be overstated in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world. Nowadays English is the most widespread language, which is used in international affairs, global trade, commerce and a digital world. English language learning serves an important role in the Norwegian school system and according to the National Curriculum, English has a status of the first and the main foreign language in Norway. It has been a compulsory school subject since 1959 and was introduced from the 1st grade in 1997 (Ministry of Education and Research 2004, subsection 4.6.6). Now it is a compulsory subject throughout primary and lower secondary education and it continues into upper secondary school including vocational classes. The main objectives of the English subject are described in LK06 as follow:

English as a school subject is both a tool and a way of gaining knowledge and personal insight. It will enable the students to communicate with others on personal, social, literary and interdisciplinary topics. It will give insight into how individuals think and live in the English-speaking world. Communicative skills can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds. In this way linguistic and cultural competence contributes to the all-round personal development and fosters democratic commitment and a better understanding of responsible citizenship (LK06, p.3).

The competence aims in the National Curriculum include five basic skills: oral skills, being able to express oneself in writing in English, being able to read in English, numeracy in English and digital skills in English. According to LK06, the main subject area of language learning focuses on knowledge about the language, language usage and insight into one's own language learning. Besides students are supposed to see relationships between English, their native language and other languages. For example, in lower secondary school, learners should be able to note the significant linguistic similarities and differences between English and their native language and to use this knowledge in their own language learning. The competence aims within language learning after Year 2 states that students should be able to find words and phrases that are common to their native language. After Year 4 students should be able to find similarities between words and expression in English and his/her own native language. After Year 7 students should be able to identify some linguistic similarities and differences between English and their native language (The curriculum for the 10- year compulsory school in Norway, 2006, p 4-6).

3.6 Summary

In this thesis, English is viewed as an L3 for the multilingual students. According to the English language curriculum, students should be able to note the linguistic similarities and differences between English and their native language'. The question under discussion is: What language do the multilingual learners actually rely on in the process of acquiring English as an L3? Do they find 'these linguistic similarities' in their native language or does it serve as an asset in their language learning? If 'learning a new foreign language builds on experience from previous language learning' what role does the L2 or background languages play for the multilingual students in the process of acquiring English as an L3 in mainstream schools and introductory schools for intensive Norwegian language learning?

In summary, the Norwegian language curriculum includes competence aims with the potential to enhance learners' multilingualism and foster language learning. Learners are encouraged to become aware of and use of their pre-existing language knowledge in further language learning. When it comes to the multilingual development of the students in Norwegian schools, the English language plays an important role and teachers have to be aware of the multilingual students' cultural and linguistic needs in order to get them fully involved in the learning process. From this perspective, the role of the English language teacher in the multilingual classroom, where students have different mother tongues and English as their third language, is quite important and challenging.

4. Theoretical Framework

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents relevant theory and draws attention to some of the research conducted within the field of multilingualism and third language acquisition. The first section centers on multilingualism, it describes multilingual learners and different kinds of multilingualism that exist in society. The second part of the chapter will discuss language mode and factors that can influence third language acquisition. Further on, it focuses on the acquisition of a third language through analyses of cross-linguistic influence and metalinguistic awareness. Finally, it takes into consideration the role of teachers' language awareness in the multilingual classroom.

4.1.1. Multilingualism

“Multilingualism is a powerful fact of life around the world, a circumstance arising at the simplest level, from the need to communicate across speech communities” (Edwards 1994, p.1).

According to Edwards (1994) and Aronin (2015), multilingualism is the phenomena of the present age, however it has existed throughout the whole of human history. As society moves ahead, the expansion of multilingualism is attributed to the social, linguistic and cultural changes derived from globalization, geographical and social mobility, economic and political transformations and the development of technology. (Aronin, 2015).

The term ‘multilingualism’ covers a range of meanings. Hammarberg (2009) states “that humans are potentially multilingual by nature and that multilingualism is the normal state of linguistic competence” (Hammarberg, 2009, p. 2). Vidomec (1963) describes bilingualism as the mastery of two languages and multilingualism denotes the familiarity with more than two languages (cited in Jessner 2008, p.16). In other words, bilingualism is viewed as the variant of multilingualism and it only focuses on the study of two languages.

In the book *Introducing Multilingualism*, Weber and Horner (2012) refer to Blommaert’s definition of ‘multilingualism’ and they state that we all have a variety of linguistic resources at our disposal and it can refer not just to one or two languages one may possess. Thus, Weber and Horner (2012) do not distinguish between such terms as bilingualism and trilingualism but subsume them under one concept - ‘multilingualism’.

Multilingualism ... should not be seen as a collection of ‘languages’ that a speaker controls, but rather as a complex of specific semiotic resources, some of which belong to a conventionally defined ‘language, while others belong to another ‘language’. The resources are concrete accents, language varieties, registers, genres, modalities such as writing- ways of using language in particular communicative settings and spheres of life, including the ideas people have about such ways of using their language ideologies. Blommaert, 2010, p.102, (cited from Weber & Horner 2012, p.3).

According to Blommaert, we are all multilingual to a certain degree since we use different ‘linguistic varieties, genres, registers, accents’, and it does not matter if our linguistic recourses belong only to one ‘conventionally defined ‘language’ or several of them. Moreover, Bloommaert points out language ideologies in his conception about multilingualism. He connects these ideologies with the ideas people have about the way of using languages they possess, the way they define a language and multilingualism, their beliefs about how language is used and how it works.

Aronin and Singleton (2012) share with Bloommaert similar ideas about multilingualism. They describe it as a new social phenomenon in itself, not just adding numbers of languages to individuals and societies. They view multilingualism as a ‘new linguistic dispensation’ which means ‘language ideologies and policies, language education in all its dimensions, and the patterns of language use of communities and individuals. It also encompasses the systemic development and evolving status of the full spectrum of extant and emergent language varieties’ (Aronin & Singleton, 2012, p.43).

Jessner(2008), in her article *A DST Model of Multilingualism and the Role of Metalinguistic Awareness* describes a dynamic systems approach to multilingualism, where research on multilingualism refers to any kind of language acquisition and involves qualitative changes in language learning related to an increase in the number of languages involved in multilingual development and use.

According Franceschini (2009), today the term multilingualism “denotes various forms of social, institutional and individual usage as well as individual and group competence, plus various contexts of contact and involvement with more than one language “. Franceschini states that the study of multilingual phenomena takes into account the practice of using more than one language, including

regional languages, minority languages, migration languages and language varieties such as dialects, to varying degrees of proficiency among individuals and societies (Franceschini 2009, p.29).

Thus, the term ‘multilingualism’ is being used increasingly and it refers to societies, nations, individuals, who use more than one language in everyday life, in variety of situations to varying degrees. Multilinguals then are one who have two or three languages in their repertoire.

4.1.2. Different kinds of multilingualism

The European Commission defines multilingualism as “the ability of societies, institutions, groups and individuals to engage, on a regular basis, with more than one language in their day-to-day lives” (EC, 2007, p.6). Moreover, multilingualism is seen as the presence of several languages in a given space, independently of those who use them. For example, if two languages are present in the same geographical area, it does not mean whether inhabitants have knowledge of both languages, or only one (Council of Europe, 2007, p.17). Thus, multilingualism refers more to social organization. When it comes to the individual abilities of the learners who are competent in more than one language, the Council of Europe use the term plurilingualism or individual multilingualism. Plurilingualism is defined in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages in the following way:

Plurilingualism is the ability to use languages for the purposes of communication and to take part in intercultural interaction, where a person, viewed as a social agent has proficiency of varying degrees, in several languages, and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw. (Council of Europe, 2001, p.168).

In the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*, the Council of Europe promotes plurilingualism describing it as a fundamental aspect of policies of social inclusion and education for democratic citizenship. One of the main aims of the *Language education policies* is to value and develop the ability of all individuals to learn and use several languages, to broaden this competence through appropriate teaching and plurilingual education. (Council of Europe, 2001, p.168).

According to the European Commission, people can be called multilingual or even multiliterate in three cases. The first one is when people speak an autochthonous regional or minority language in

addition to the major national language. The second one occurs when people speak a migrant language in addition to the language of the host country. The third one belongs to people who grew up in other multilingual environments (European Commission, 2007, p.6).

The second case is the most typical for linguistic minorities in Norway where multilingual students resort to two or even three languages in everyday life. They can speak one language at home or, in case of bilingual families, use even two languages at home, and then they are exposed to three languages at school: Norwegian, English and a second foreign language. This fact describes that multilingualism exists on the individual and the social level in Norway.

The learning of three languages at school is becoming more and more common in Europe and around the world. Lasagabaster (1998, p.121), points out three kinds of multilingualism which can take place: social, individual and school multilingualism.

Social multilingualism : this kind of multilingualism takes place in countries where three or more languages are used in the everyday life of the community.

Individual multilingualism : is close to social multilingualism but represents the presence of several languages in the everyday life of an individual. For example, it can be an immigrant who resides in a bilingual community and as a result ,a person is exposed to three languages in his/her everyday life. Another case which can represent individual multilingualism is, for instance, children with parents from different countries living in a third one.

School multilingualism : this particular kind of multilingualism occurs due to the presence of more than two languages in the curriculum or even the use of more than two languages as means of instruction. The case of school multilingualism can be school situations in which two foreign languages are added to the L1 of the students or when one foreign language is added to the L1 and L2.

In light of more recent immigration and globalization, individual and school multilingualism take place in Norway. Multilingual students are exposed to three languages at school since English and Norwegian are compulsory from the first grade and these languages are added to the students' L1. According to the Norwegian language curriculum, the third optional language can be chosen in lower secondary school, year 8. It can be German, Spanish or French. Thus, it will be the fourth or maybe the fifth language for multilingual learners.

The Common European Framework for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001) promotes the value of multilingualism and it is visible that Norwegian language curriculum is influenced by it. According to the curriculum, “linguistic diversity is an asset in the development of linguistic competence in children and young people” (Directorate for Education and Training, 2006). One of the aims of the curriculum is to promote awareness of linguistic diversity and it is the first stepping-stone to develop students’ multilingualism.

“Competence in foreign languages shall promote motivation for learning, and insight into several languages and cultures, contribute to multilingual skills and provide an important basis for lifelong learning” (Directorate for Education and Training, 2006).

4.2 Language mode and bilinguals

“Bilinguals’ are often described as persons who use two languages, and bilingualism is ‘the ability to speak two languages’ or ‘the habitual use of two languages colloquially’” (Kemp 2009, p.14).

According to Grosjean (2008), language mode can be defined as “the state of activation of the bilingual’s languages and language processing mechanism at a given point in time” (Grosjean, 2013, p.15). The researcher points out that bilinguals subconsciously have two questions in their mind when it comes to interaction with an interlocutor, writing a letter or reading a book. The first question is: which language in their repertoire should be used?; and the second one is: should the other language be brought in?. Grosjean (2008) states that the same apply to activation of three or more languages. In this case the language mode can be applied not just to bilinguals but also to multilingual learners who have more than two languages at their disposal.

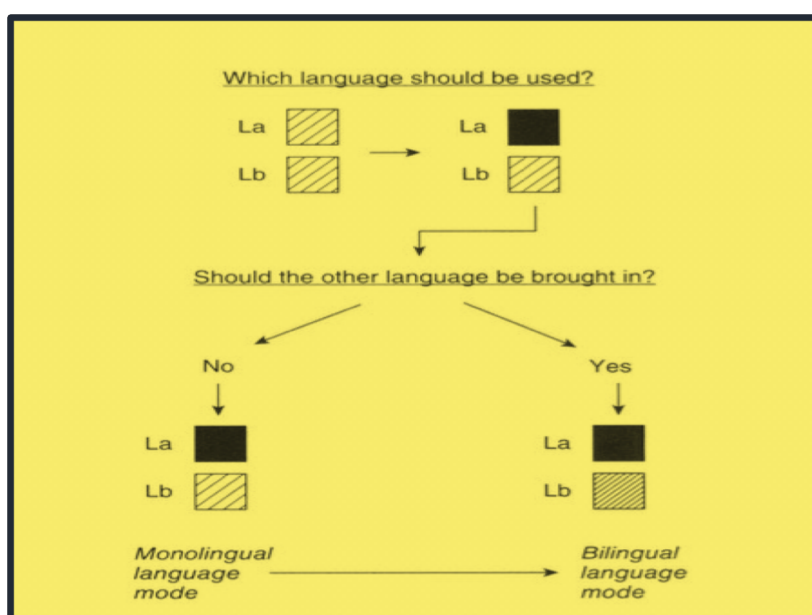


Figure 1. The two questions the bilinguals have to ask themselves, often subconsciously, when communicating with others. Adapted from Grosjean, Francois & Ping Li. (2013). *The Psycholinguistics of Bilingualism*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell., p.14

In this model only two languages are described in the language mode, but this model, according to Grosjean (2008), can be applied to three or more languages. At the beginning both languages, La and Lb are inactive and this is represented with squares filled with light diagonal lines. When it comes to the question which language should be used and the bilingual subconsciously answers - La, the square changes to the black square. It represents the full activation of La and such process is called "language choice" and the language chosen (in this example La) is called the "base language".

When the bilingual subconsciously puts the second question: "Should the other language be brought in, then there are two possibilities which can occur in the language mode. If the answer is "no", Lb remains inactive and in this case just one language will be used. Such a process is termed "monolingual mode" which is represented in the bottom left area of Figure1. Grosjean, (2008) describes the monolingual mode as a process of reading a book in a particular language, listening to a program which only uses one language, speaking to a monolingual adult or child, etc.

When the bilingual chooses subconsciously to use Lb, both languages are activated but, in this case, Lb is less activated than the base language (La). In Figure 4, this difference is marked by intense stripes in the Lb square in the right area of the model. An example of the bilingual mode can be the bilingual speaking to her/his bilingual friends who share the same language, another example can be interpreting from one language to another.

According to Grosjean, the bilingual in a monolingual language mode "call on their two or more languages to do the task asked for them" (Grosjean 2013, p.16). Moreover, the researcher indicates that the bilingual person may not just bring in elements of the other language in the language mode, but also change the base language completely. It will depend on his/her proficiency in Lb. Besides, bilinguals may move at various points along the language mode and it will depend on the person they are speaking to, the situation they define themselves in and the topic of discourse.

The activation of languages that bilinguals have in their repertoire can be related to the degree that bilinguals "perceive their mainstream and ethnic cultural identities as compatible and integrated vs. oppositional and difficult to integrate" (Martinez & Morris, 2002, p. 9) cited from Nairán Ramírez-Esparza and Adrián García-Sierra (2014).

Psycholinguistics argue that biculturalism may influence many aspects of cognition and language production. Grosjean (2013) states that bicultural bilinguals can find themselves at two endpoints: a monocultural and bicultural mode. In the first case they interact with monoculturals or with biculturals who share with them just one of their culture. Thus, bicultural bilinguals have to deactivate their other culture(s) in this mode. When it comes to bicultural mode, interlocutors will share the same cultures and they will choose a “cultural base” to interact in in conversation. Moreover, they will bring in the other culture(s) when they need to.

4.3 Third language acquisition

In recent years, there has been an increasing interest in multilingualism and third language acquisition (TLA). The phenomenon of multilingualism has established itself as an area of systematic research in language and linguistic studies over the last two decades (Franceschini, 2009, p.29) and TLA has become an interesting topic of research which has drawn the attention of many scholars (Bardel & Falk, 2010; Cenoz, 2001; De Angelis, 2007; Hammarberg, 1998; Jessner 2008, among others).

One of the reasons for increased attention to TLA research is the fact that third language learning has become common in many parts of the world. Globalization and mobility, greater global trade and increasing immigration had led to interaction between languages and cultures. Another reason is the status of English as a lingua franca. Jessner (2006, p.3) points out that the spread of English and the contact between English and other languages have implication at the psycholinguistic level and nowadays individuals acquire English not just as a second language, but also as a third or fourth. As a result, English has become one of the languages in the multilingual’s linguistic repertoire’ (Jessner, 2006, p.3).

The study of TLA focuses on various aspects of the language acquisition process and can be approached from different perspectives: psycholinguistic (De Angelis, 2007), sociolinguistic (Hoffman & Ytsma, 2004), educational (Cenoz, 2000; Hufeisen & Jessner, 2001), formal linguistic (Carcía Mayo & Rothman, 2012), and neurolinguistics perspective (Barbel & Falk, 2012). When it comes to the definition of the term TLA, there is a lack of commonly agreed statement upon it. According to Cenoz (2003, p.71) “[...] third language acquisition refers to the acquisition of a non-native language by learners who have previously acquired or are acquiring two other languages. The acquisition of the first two languages can be simultaneous (as an early bilingualism) or consecutive “ (cited from García Mayo, 2012, p.130).

Hammarberg (2010) gives another view on the term of TLA and points out that “L1 refers to any language acquired to a certain level in infancy, the period of time from one month to twelve months of life; and a second language (L2), any language encountered and acquired after infancy.” Thus, a person can have more than one the L1 or the L2 (L1s or L2s). According to this, Hammarberg (2010) gives another definition of TLA: “the term (L3) refers to a nonnative language which is currently being used or acquired in a situation where the person already has knowledge of one or more L2s besides one or more L1s. An L3 is thus a special case of the wider category of L2, and not necessarily language number three in order of acquisition” (cited from Bardel and Falk, 2010, p.187). De Angelis (2007, p.11) proposes the term “third or additional language acquisition which refers to all languages beyond the L2 without giving preference to any particular language”.

Third language acquisition can share many attributes of second language acquisition; however, it is important to notice the difference in the learning process between second and third language acquisition and the difference between the multilingual and bilingual person. Within TLA research, such concepts as ‘bilingualism’ and ‘multilingualism’ are used very frequently and they both refer to individuals who are able to speak more than one language.

Kemp (2009) refers to McArthur (1992, p.673) and describes a multilingual person as the one who has “the ability to use three or more languages, either separately or in various degrees of code-mixing. Different languages are used for different purposes, competence in each varying according to such factors as register, occupation, and education” (Kemp, 2009, p.15). She underlines that multilingual individuals may not be proficient in all languages they know, and their level of language knowledge may vary and not be equal. It means that a multilingual person can use more than one language to varying degrees of proficiency. Hoffman (2001) indicates examples of L3 learners discussed in the literature on multilingualism, taking into account the circumstances and the social context under which they become users of three languages (Hoffman 2001, p.3).

- Trilingual children who are brought up with two home languages that are different from the one spoken in the wider community.
- Children who grow up in a bilingual community and whose home language is different from the community languages.
- Bilingual children who acquire a third language, in many cases English, at school at an early age.
- Bilingual migrant children who move to a new linguistic environment.
- Members of trilingual communities.
- Children growing up with three languages from birth.

Hoffman (2001) points out that some individuals can straddle these categories and move from one to another during their period of life. Moreover, she states that “trilinguals vary from one another in many different ways, and that the word ‘trilingual’ can be used as a blanket term” (Hoffman, 2001, p.3). The researchers point out that there are different factors that can be dominant for a specific group of trilinguals. For example, motivational and attitudinal factors are more common to the category of bilinguals who acquire a third language in the school and those who became trilingual through immigration. Psychological and personality- related factors are more relevant to the first two groups of trilinguals.

Learning a third language differs in many respects from learning a second language. Cenoz (2000, p.40), states that second language acquisition is a part of multilingual acquisition and there are only two possible acquisition orders in bilingualism. The first one occurs when the second language can be acquired after the L1 ($L1 \rightarrow L2$) and another happens when the second language is acquired at the same time as the L1 ($Lx + Ly$). The example of it can be ethnic Norwegian children who have Norwegian as their mother tongue and English as their second language at school.

When it comes to third language acquisition, it presents more complicity and diversity than second language acquisition. Cenoz (2000) points out at least four possible acquisition orders in learning a third language:

1. The learner acquires three languages consecutively ($L1 \rightarrow L2 \rightarrow L3$).
2. The learner attains two languages simultaneously (Lx /Ly) after the L1 has been acquired ($L1 \rightarrow Lx /Ly$).
3. The learner learns two languages simultaneously (Lx /Ly) before the L3 is acquired ($Lx /Ly \rightarrow L3$).
4. The learner acquires three languages simultaneously ($Lz/Ly/Lz$).

Jessner (2008) points out that in multilingual acquisition the learning process can be often interrupted because the learner starts learning another language. Moreover, such learning process may be also “reversed by reactivating and starting to relearn the L3 ($L1 \rightarrow L2 \rightarrow L3 \rightarrow L2$)” (Jessner, 2008, p.20). This fact describes the complexity of third language acquisition. The case of such a process may be multilingual children who live in one country and then move to country where parents are coming from. For example, Pakistani children who were born in Norway and use their mother tongue at home and learn Norwegian and English at school. Jessner (2008) links the diversity and complexity in second

language acquisition to individual or psycho-social factors in language learning and stresses that in third language acquisition such complexity even increases. The way in which three languages are acquired varies from individual to individual. Moreover, language learning can take place in naturalistic or instructed settings, or in a combination of both.

4.3.1. Third language acquisition versus second language acquisition

Hufeisen & Marx (2004) points out that there is not just the quantitative difference between SLA and TLA, but also a qualitative one, and that third language acquisition includes the added variable of previous language learning experience. Second language acquisition research focuses on the acquisition primarily from a cognitive perspective. While dealing with research on third language acquisition scholars try to test new and existing second language theories in third language acquisition and find out how a new language is produced and processed by a multilingual learner who has acquired or is familiar with two language systems.

Cummins (1981) in his *Interdependence Hypothesis* underlines a positive and important relationship between a learner's L1 and L2. He states that "students' first language development, especially development at their literacy skills, can influence their second language development" (sited from Cenoz & Jessner 2006, p.46). It means that if proficiency in the learner's first language is high it will influence the process of acquiring the learner's second language in a positive way and facilitate L2 acquisition. Jessner (2006) and Lasagabaster (2000) refer to this hypothesis in multilingual acquisition assuming that the similar relationship among languages might be expected in the acquisition of the third or fourth language. It means that different degrees in the first and second languages would affect further language learning.

Many scholars faced a range of questions in their research on multilingualism and third language acquisition derived from interdependence hypotheses. Some of them are to find out which specific conditions are required for positive interdependence to take place among languages and how proficiency in L1 and L2 can affect the acquisition of L3. Other questions that arose among scholars were if different areas of proficiency in L1 and L2 could exert a specific effect on different areas of proficiency in the third language (Cenoz & Jessner, 2000, p. 46-48).

Herdina and Jessner (2000) point out the relationship of interdependence between language systems where the development of each language system depends on the development of other language systems in multilingual acquisition. "The development of each individual language within one

multilingual speaker largely depends on the behavior of previous and subsequent systems” (Herdina & Jessner, 2000, p.92).

Research that was conducted in order to identify specific conditions needed for linguistic interdependence to take place showed different results and are controversial. For example, Swain et al. (1990) investigating specific conditions for positive transfer among languages found that bilingual students who were literate in their first and second languages were more proficient in their third language compared to those who were literate only in their second language.

To sum up, despite of the fact that there are certain similarities between multilingualism and bilingualism, TLA cannot be subsumed under SLA since the process of acquiring a third language differs in many respects from a second language learning and include qualitative and quantitative changes, linguistic and cognitive variables (Jessner ,2006; Hufeisen & Marx 2007).

4.3.2. The factor model in the language learning process by (Hufeisen & Marx 2007)

Hufeisen (1998), in her factor model, shows the main stages of language acquisition, which illustrate the prototypical language learning process and analyze individual learning situations. She argues that third language acquisition cannot be subsumed under second language acquisition and her factor model describes the differences between the second and the third language learning. The scholar indicates six factors that have the influence on the language learning process. These are: neurophysiological, learner external factors, affective factors, cognitive factors, linguistic factors and foreign language specific factors (cited from Jessner (2008, p.23).

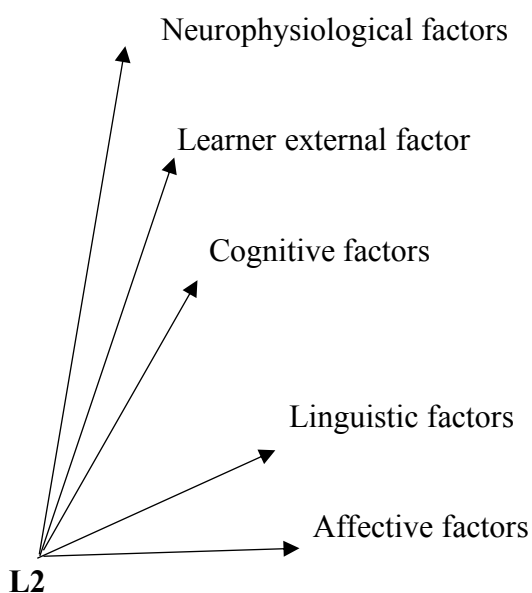


Figure 2. Factors that influence an L2

Figure 2 illustrates factors that influence second language acquisition according to Hufeisen's factor model.

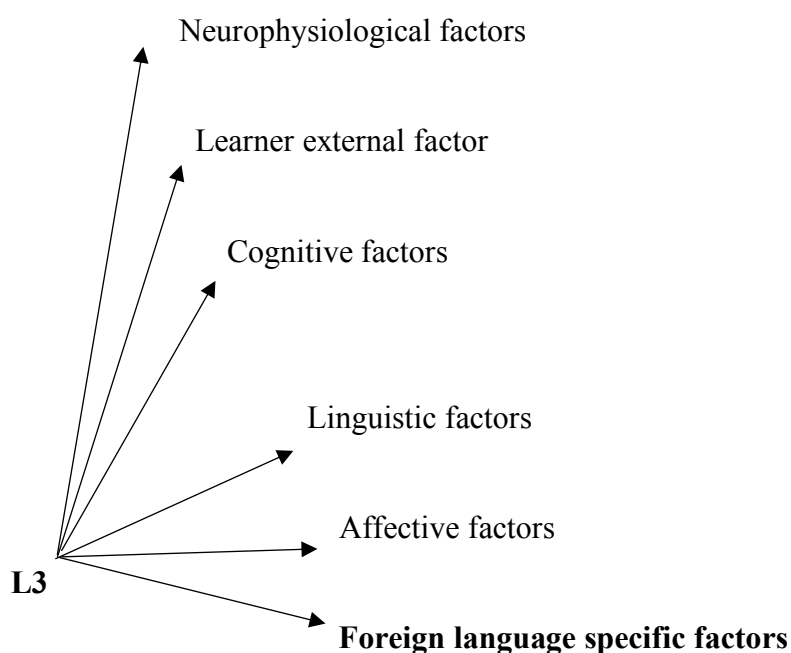


Figure 3. Factors that influence an L3

Figure 3 illustrates factors that influence third language acquisition and according to Hufeisen (1998), a L3 model includes *foreign language specific factors* that a L2 model does not possess. These factors show the difference between SLA and TLA (Jessner, 2008, p.23). Hufeisen states that foreign language specific factors include individual L2 experiences that can be explicit or subconscious, foreign language learning strategies and interlanguages of other learned languages. In this case, according to Hufeisen, an L2 may serve as a 'bridge' or 'supporting language' in the third language acquisition process.

Neurophysiological factors deal with general language acquisition capability, production and reception capabilities. These take into account learners' age, their ability to produce and perceive the target

language, IQ and aptitude, learners' declarative and procedural memory. Neurophysiological factors are very individual, and each learner will gain the different proficiency in the target language.

Learner external factors include socio- cultural and socio- economic surroundings. Moreover, they deal with culture-specific learning traditions, the type and the amount of input the learner is exposed to. Jessner (2008) states language learning can take place in naturalistic or instructed settings, or in a combination of both. If the learner is exposed to the target language in the school context and at home, then the proficiency in the target language will be higher comparing to those individuals who are exposed to the language in one context. Socio- cultural surroundings and culture-specific learning traditions have a great influence on the learner's development in the learning process of an L2 and L3. For instance, the learners who move to another country with the school system that is quite different from the home country. Another case may be the status of the minority language in the new country and the way it can reflect the learner's acquisition of a second and a third language.

When it comes to affective factors, they deal with motivation and anxiety and include the assessment of students' own language proficiency. Motivation is one of those factors that can foster further language learning and the level of it varies from individual to individual. Closeness/distance between the languages and acceptance of the new target language are also parts of affective factors. De Angelis (2007), Falk and Bardel (2010), Hammarberg (2001) point out typological similarity that can exist between languages. When two languages are typologically close it makes it easier to transfer previous linguistic knowledge from L1 to L2 or from L2 to L3. Rast (2012) states that learners' perception of distance can either enhance or hinder the process of noticing similarities. The interaction may depend on the learner's own perception of the similarity or distance between any particular form and function in the two languages (Rast, 2012, p. 161-162).

Cognitive factors focus on language awareness, linguistic and metalinguistic awareness. According to Jessner (2008), metalinguistic awareness influences further language learning. It includes the linguistic skills or abilities that multilingual learners develop owing to their prior linguistic and metacognitive knowledge. Cognitive factors deal with learning awareness, knowledge of one's own type and the ability to employ learning strategies and techniques in one's own learning. For example, L3 learners are already familiar with the language learning process and they possess linguistic skills and abilities that they have acquired in the second language acquisition. That gives them a possibility to set up their own techniques and strategies that can develop their own learning style.

Linguistic factors center on the learner's L1 and L2. Since L3 learners have already acquired two languages, they are more familiar with the language learning process than L2 learners are. Linguistic features of L1 and L2 will affect the acquisition of a third language. L3 learners have developed, different techniques and strategies acquiring already an L2 and they may possess a greater awareness of similarities and differences between the languages.

Foreign language specific factors deal with individual foreign language experiences and strategies, the ability to compare, transfer, and make interlingual connections, previous language interlanguages and interlanguage of target language

According to Hufeisen, each learner will develop a specific factor model in third language acquisition. In this way some factors may turn out to be predominant and some less important in the individual learning process. The author states that the L3 learner already knows about the foreign language process and has consciously or subconsciously gathered individual techniques and strategies, while the L2 learner is a complete beginner in the learning process of a second or first foreign language (Jessner 2008, p. 22-23).

4.3.3 Cross- linguistic influence in third language acquisition

Researches on cross- linguistic influence (CLI) emerges from a psychological strand and most studies that were carried out on language transfer had only two languages under investigation. The main focus of scholars was the influence of the mother tongue on a second language or interlanguage. (De Angelis, 2007). The term CLI covers a wide range of phenomena and it was first adapted by Sharwood-Smith (1983) in his paper about 'language loss'. Then it was fully discussed by Sharwood-Smith and Kellerman (1986) and scholars referred cross-linguistic influence to all concepts concerning the phenomena of language influence. Thus, CLI means more than 'transfer; it includes 'borrowings, 'influence on L1 from L2', 'avoidance of transfer' and 'language loss'.

It is a psycholinguistic term referring to the influence on the learner which one language system he or she possesses may have on another language system. This is irrespective of whether the language system is a mature language or whether it is in a developmental stage of fossilization before attaining maturity (Sharwood-Smith, 1989, p.185).

Odlin (1989), describes the term ‘transfer’ as: “... the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired (Odlin, 1989, p.27, cited from De Angelis & Selinker, 2001, p.42). According to Odlin (1989), the learner’s knowledge of two languages may influence the acquisition of a third language, moreover, the knowledge of three or more languages can lead to three or more different kinds of source language influence (Odlin, 1989, p.27).

Both terms described above refer to the influence of the learners’ previously acquired languages on the target language finding similarities and differences among language systems. Moreover, scholars point out that the influence of L1 or L2 may occur on different stages of acquisition of the target language. Despite of the fact that there is a range of researches on CLI, it is still not easy to determine the influence of previously learned languages on an L3. De Angelis & Selinker (2001) point out that “we still do not really know what in principle can and cannot be transferred from a non-native language into an interlanguage” (De Angelis & Selinker, 2001, p.43). Thus, language transfer is a complex phenomenon in multilingual acquisition.

In the case of second language acquisition a potential transfer can only be taken from the L1 and the cross- linguistic influence is limited to two language systems that can possibly influence each other. In third language acquisition, CLI happens among all three languages and they can influence each other to a certain degree. Jessner (2008) points out that third language acquisition includes an additional language comparing to second language acquisition, which leads to a greater variety in transfer possibilities. In the multilingual system, CLI may occur between the L1 and L2, the L2 and L3, and the L3 and L1; moreover, the influence can work vice versa in all cases (Jessner, 2008, p.31).

According to De Angelis (2007), cross- linguistic influence deals with the prior linguistic knowledge that learners have and how that knowledge may influence the acquisition of the target language. Research on cross- linguistic influence seeks to explain how and under what conditions the prior linguistic knowledge influences the production, comprehension and development of a target language (De Angelis, 2007, p.19). The activation of background languages (L1 and L2) in TLA is influenced by many factors. These factors include typological relation, target language proficiency and source language proficiency, recency of use, length of residence and exposure to a non-native language environment, order of acquisition, and formality of context (De Angelis, 2007).

There have been different points of view on the question of how the prior knowledge of L2 can influence the acquisition of a third language. Hammarberg (2001) provides four factors of such influence:

The first one is typological similarity which involves the degree of similarity between the languages concerned. If L2 is typologically close to L3, it has a stronger influence on the acquisition of L3, especially when L1 is more distant. Such examples can be found with non-Europeans speakers (e.g. a Chinese or Hindi speakers) who acquire their second and third European languages (e.g. German and English). Appropriate, L2 and L3 are typologically close which makes it easier to transfer previous linguistic knowledge from L2 to L3. De Angelis (2007) states that language distance or language typology refers to the “distance that a linguist can objectively and formally define and identify between languages and language families” (De Angelis, 2007, p.22). Falk and Bardel (2010) suggests classification of language distance according to language proximity based on genetic relatedness (e.g. Romance or Germanic languages), typological similarity of particular structures of the language and psychotypology that include the learners’ perception of similarity of languages.

The second one is proficiency which deals with learner’s level of competence in L2. It means that L2 influence is favored if the learner has a high level of proficiency in it. The further factor is *recency* which deals with the frequent use of L2. It means that L2 is activated more easily if the speaker has used it recently and thus maintained easy access to it. The automatized use of L2 and the amount of L2 knowledge stand in favor in third language acquisition. The last factor is *L2 status*, which indicates that there appear to be a general tendency to activate an earlier secondary language in L3 performance rather than L1 (Hammarberg, 2001, p. 22-23).

The role of L1 and L2 in third language acquisition depends on a complex set of interacting factors. Stedje (1977) and Ringbom (1987) point out two more factors that can influence third language acquisition, based on their findings from a case study. The first one is *oral versus written production*. That means that due to limited control in speech situations, cross- language influence is more often to happen in speech than in writing. The second factor deal with *the type of language phenomenon*. Ringbom (1987, p. 114) indicates that “generally the cross-linguistic influence between non-native languages in a European context has been shown to occur primarily in lexis”. (cited from Hammarberg, 2009, p. 18-19).

Åbo and Stockholm studies that were conducted by Stedje (1977) and Ringbom (1987) explored the cross- linguistic influence among three languages: L1 Finnish, L2 Swedish and L3 English. Findings

from the study indicate that when it comes to problems of ‘word choice’ in third language acquisition for Finnish learners, they tend to show the influence from L1, but when it comes to ‘word form’ they tend to show influence from L2. Grammatical influence on third language acquisition were found to be more common from L1 and more limited from L2. When it comes to phonological influence, L1 is reported to be predominant (Hammarberg, 2009, p.18-19).

De Angelis (2007) points out that “most researchers maintain that cross-linguistic influence is more likely to occur at the early stages of acquisition, when learners’ knowledge of the target language is still weak and fragmentary and the need to fill knowledge gaps in the target language is more pressing” (De Angelis, 2007, p.33).

William and Hammarberg (1998) conducted a case study of Sara Williams’ oral production in L3 Swedish taking into consideration language distance among three languages. Sara was a native speaker of English and with proficiency in German as an L2. The aim of the study was to find out how L1 and L2 influence third language acquisition. Findings from the study showed that two languages played different roles in oral production in an L3. Hammarberg (2001) proposed that L1 had an *instrumental role* and was used for metalinguistic comments, for pragmatically functional language shifts and asides. It means that Sara’s L1 English was mainly used for choosing words from the interlocutor in a conscious and strategic way. When it comes to an L2, Hammarberg (2001) pointed out that L2 had a *supplier role* and was used for lexical construction attempts in L3. Thus, supplementary and metalinguistic comments were implemented in the instrumental language whereas L2 was used as a supplier language, which means that it influenced the way in which the learner formulated the words in the utterance (Hammarberg 2009, p.12).

Hammaeberg (2009) describes different possible factors that can influence the choice of an external instrumental language. For example, the speaker’s personal identification with a certain language, the speaker’s knowledge of the language which is known to the interlocutor and the interlocutor’s response and attitude that is presented to the choice of languages.

Wang (2013) based on the study made by William and Hammarberg (1998) points out that third language learners unconsciously assign two roles according to their previously learned languages. The first one is the instrumental role that is referred to the language (L1 or L2) with which ‘the speaker identifies and with which the interlocutor associates the speaker, both linguistically and culturally’ (Wang, 2013, p.100). The second role is a default supplier role that is assigned to the language (L1 or L2) which as William and Hammarberg (1998, p.332) call “scoring the highest on all counts” based

on four factors: psychotypology, L2 status, proficiency and recency. Thus, this language becomes the main source of cross-linguistic influence (Wang, 2013, p.100).

4.3.5. Metalinguistic awareness

Study of metalinguistic awareness in multilinguals is an increasingly important area in applied linguistics, since metalinguistic awareness influences further language learning. Jessner(2006), as described before in this chapter, defines metalinguistic awareness as a general skill developed in particular by multilinguals, it is the ‘ability to focus attention on language as on object in itself or to think abstractly about language and, consequently, to play with or manipulate language’(Jessner 2006, p.42). Jessner(2008), in her article *A DST Model of Multilingualism and the Role of Metalinguistic Awareness*, refers to (Hamers & Blank 1989) that metalinguistic awareness encompasses the linguistic skills or abilities that multilingual learners develop owing to their prior linguistic and metacognitive knowledge, that are developed at a higher level of creativity and reorganization of information. Metalinguistic awareness can be defined as the ability to focus on linguistic form and to switch focus between form and meaning. Individuals who are metalinguistically’ aware are able to “categorize words into parts of speech; switch focus between form, function, and meaning; and explain why the word has a particular function” (Jessner, 2008).

According to Jessner (2006), cross-linguistic awareness involves the tacit or explicit awareness of the interactions between different languages in the L3 learning process and the influence they have on each other. Cross-linguistic awareness involves the ability to discern similarities and differences between different languages.

Herdina & Jessner (2002) describe dynamic model of plurilingualism and state that multilingual learners due to their knowledge of more than one language can develop specific metalinguistic assets about languages and language learning. Scholars point out that specific metalinguistic competences constitute a *multilingual factor* that is described in the following formula:

$$C(LS)1+ C(LS)2+ C(LS)3+ C(LS)n+ CLIN \text{ (cross-linguistic interaction)} +M \text{ (multilingual factor)} = MP \text{ (multilingual proficiency)}.$$

According to this formula, multilingual proficiency consists of the sum of competences (C) in different linguistic systems in contact (LS) and of specific competences emerging from this contact (CLIN) (cited from Moore 2006, p.127). The multilingual factor (M) in this formula describes specific proficiency skills developed by multilingual learners. These skills include language learning, language

management and language maintenance. According to Herdina & Jessner (2002) this factor distinguishes multilingual speakers from monolinguals.

4.4. The role of the teacher in the multilingual classroom

Jessner (2008) indicates that in order to raise multilingual awareness in the classroom, it needs to be manifested in the teacher through her/his own multilingual learning skills and knowledge (Jessner, 2008, p.41). It means that teachers themselves must possess the multilingual awareness in order to give the students the best possible instruction.

Šurkalović, (2014) points out some crucial factors that are important in English language teaching in multilingual classrooms in Norway. She indicates that English teachers should have general linguistic knowledge about language structure and language typology. Since there are many multilingual students with different mother tongues in the classroom, the importance of linguistic knowledge of the language as a system is fundamental in comparative analyses of the languages. Moreover, English language teachers should be aware of the language situation in Norway and be able to adapt their instruction to multilingual learners in their classrooms (Šurkalović, 2014, p.3-4). It means that in order to help students to take advantage of their previous learning experiences and the knowledge of languages they already possess; teachers' own multilingual awareness should be developed first.

Moore (2006) emphasizes that in some cases, multilingualism may not provide an advantage in a third language acquisition. It happens especially when learners are not aware of the benefits of multilingualism or if they are not literate in their home language or “when children are not encouraged in the school situation to rely on their different languages and language knowledge as positive resources” (Moore, 2006, p 136). The author states that very often teachers are unaware of learners' knowledge and abilities in different languages and because of that, they fail to see them as potential recourses for learning. Moore indicates the importance of the teacher awareness about multilingual education and their ability to see learners' potential as plurilingual speakers.

4.4.1. Teachers' language awareness. Components of teachers' plurilingual awareness

Andrews (2003) defines teacher's language awareness as the relationship between teachers' knowledge about language (subject-matter knowledge) and knowledge of language (language proficiency). Moreover, he stresses that knowledge of subject matter is a core of a teacher's language awareness and it is an essential part of teacher's professionalism. According to Andrews (2003), teachers' language awareness encompasses an awareness of language from the learners' perspective, an awareness of the learner's developing interlanguage, and an awareness of the extent to which the

language content of materials/lessons poses difficulties for students (Andrews, 2003, p. 86). He refers to Wright (2002) and indicates that “a linguistically aware teacher not only understands how language works but understands the students’ struggle with language and is sensitive to errors and other interlanguage features” (Wright, 2002, P.115). It means that the teacher is not just a language analyst, who has the ability to recognize and understand specific processes, structures and patterns in language learning but also takes into consideration learners’ possible difficulties and potentials in the language learning process.

Otwinowska (2014) uses a term ‘plurilingual awareness’ and states that in order to raise learners’ awareness of cross-linguistic similarity among the languages they know, it is important that the teachers themselves possess the type of awareness which can be called a “plurilingual” one. She indicates three main components of teachers’ plurilingual awareness that are instrumental for educators in order to help their learners to develop individual multilingualism. The very first component includes the area of cross- linguistic and metalinguistic knowledge. It involves the awareness of similarities and differences between the language that is taught and the learners’ L1, L2, L3-Ln. Otwinowska (2014) says that it is the role of the efficient language teacher to recognize similarities between the learner’s L1 and the target language, point them out in the classroom and encourage learners to actively search for similarities across any languages they acquire (Otwinowska, 2014, p.99-102).

It means that the teacher’s meta-knowledge of the language as a system is quite important here. According to Otwinowska (2014), teachers should be aware of that fact that the language they teach is not an isolated unit but one that bears similarities to the system of many other languages. These similarities and differences can be found in the areas of morphosyntax, vocabulary, grammar, phonology. The cross-linguistic component of language teachers’ awareness is also connected with the teacher’s own language competence in L1, L2, Ln and as Jessner (2008) states, the ability to reflect upon cross-linguistic similarities and differences would enhance their metalinguistic awareness.

The second component involves knowledge about adopting a plurilingual approach in the classroom that implies making use of the learners’ first and other languages. According to Otwinowska (2014), teachers can encourage learners to search for similarities across any languages they know in the form of simple activities that are based on training noticing similarity in the text, for example, underlining any word that looks similar. She points out that it can be introduced even at the lowest proficiency levels. Another cross- linguistic issue that is important for English teachers is that although English is considered a Germanic language, it comprises numerous words of Latin and Greek origin, which makes its vocabulary close to Romance languages. It happened due to the historical development of

the English language. Moreover, Slavic languages, which are typologically distant from English, borrowed extensively from Latin, Greek and from other European languages. Hence, these language families share numerous lexical similarities with English (Otwinowska, 2014, p. 102).

The third component refers to the psychological knowledge of individual learner differences that facilitate learning. This component includes the key factors involved in recognizing cross-linguistic similarity, such as influence of typological distance and the role of psychotypology. It also involves individual differences that play a role in the speed and success of learning. Such individual differences include noticing abilities, qualities of working memory and field independence.

4.5 Summary

As shown in this chapter, multilinguals have advantages when learning a new language. A number of scholars hold the view that learners who are multilingual have cognitive benefits, metalinguistic and metacognitive abilities (Cenoz & Jessner, 2000; Jessner, 2008; Hammarberg, 2001; Hufeisen & Marx, 2007; Hufeisen & Marx, 2004). Researchers have claimed that there are both quantitative and qualitative differences between second and third language acquisition (Cenoz, 2000; Jessner, 2008). This indicates that the study of third language acquisition includes linguistic and cognitive variables of previous language learning experience (Hufeisen & Marx, 2004). Thus, according to Otwinowska (2014), teachers have to be aware that the language can bear similarities and differences to the system of many other languages which can be found in the areas of morphosyntax, vocabulary, grammar, and phonology. In order to adapt a multilingual approach in the classroom that implies making use of the learners' linguistic backgrounds, the teachers need to develop their metalinguistic awareness first (Andrews, 2003; Otwinowska, 2014).

5. Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the methodological procedures that were used to collect and analyze the data and information required for this thesis. First, I will present the research design and research approach that were applied in this study. Further on, I will explain why this particular methodological approach was chosen. Finally, validation and ethical concerns regarding the study will be presented.

5.2 Research design

According to Nunan (1992), research is “a systematic process of inquiry consisting of three elements or components. The first one is a process of formulating questions, problems or hypotheses. The second one includes collecting data or evidence relevant to these questions/ problems/hypotheses. Finally, the last component is analyses and interpretation of data” (Nunan, 1992, p 2-3).

Christoffersen and Johannessen (2012, p.16) state that a method is a particular way towards goal. This thesis refers to the study of social relations since it has teachers and students as a target research object and according to Flick (2014), qualitative research is of a ‘specific relevance to the study of social relations’ (Flick, 2014, p. 11).

Creswell describes qualitative research as one that “begins with an assumption and the use of interpretive/theoretical frameworks that inform the study of research problems addressing the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (Creswell, 2018, p.43). One of the characteristics of qualitative research is that it focuses on participants’ multiple perspectives and meanings (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002; LeCoppte & Schensul,1999; Ravitch &Mittenfelner, 2016). This means that the researcher “keeps a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem, ... that further suggests multiple perspectives on a topic and diverse views” (Creswell, 2018, p. 44.).

According to Creswell (2018) and Edmonds & Kennedy (2013), the key features of qualitative research include participants’ multiple perspectives and meanings where the researcher is a key instrument in data collection. Moreover, a qualitative design deals with inductive and deductive logic. It demands that the study is conducted in a natural setting and involves an emergent and evolving design. Since the current research addresses both the teachers’ meanings concerning multilingual education and students’ experiences, a qualitative research is best suited for this study as it correlates

with its characteristics. It gives the researcher the ability to investigate and understand the meanings the participants have about the target phenomenon. By employing the qualitative mode of enquiry, I attempt to illuminate the meanings teachers have collected from their experiences in teaching multilingual students and students' practices learning English as a third language.

In this thesis the interest is both in the perspective of the newly arrived multilingual students, their experience in using their mother tongue in third language learning and teachers' beliefs and competence concerning multilingual education. In order to answer the research question, a qualitative approach was considered as the most appropriate method for collecting and analyzing the data.

Applying the qualitative method, the researcher 'is bound not by cause -and -effect relationships among factors but rather by describing the complex interactions of factors in any situation' (Creswell, 2018, p. 44.). Thus, qualitative research provides a holistic account that involves multiple perspectives and views that try to develop "a complex picture" and better understanding of the issue under study (Creswell, 2018; Hatch, 2002; Ravitch & Mittenfelner, 2016). In this thesis I attempt to provide a holistic account of the meanings teachers and students have regarding learning and teaching English in multilingual settings, and what role mother tinge play in third language acquisition.

5.3 Phenomenological research approach

A phenomenological research approach was chosen to collect and analyze the data for this thesis. According to Creswell 2018, a phenomenological approach is used when the researcher is aiming to explore "... the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept" (Creswell, 2018, p. 75). This means that a phenomenological study is an appropriate way of eliciting and analyzing the beliefs and experiences of the participants who experienced the same phenomenon.

Phenomenology has a hermeneutic aspect and refers to the study of personal experience and requires a description or interpretation of the meanings of the phenomenon experienced by participants in an investigation. Creswell (2018) points out that phenomenology represents an interpretive process in which the researcher "makes an interpretation of the meanings of the lived experiences" (Creswell 2018, p. 78).

The phenomenon of interest in this study is the role of the mother tongue when students learn English as a third language and teaching practices concerning multilingual education. Thus, the beliefs and experiences of both teachers and the newly arrived multilingual students' who learn English as a third language are the main objects of this study. From this perspective the research involves the common

meaning shared by several individuals who experience the same phenomenon. Thus, applying a phenomenological approach will give insights into students' experiences using the mother tongue when learning English and teachers' considerations concerning multilingual education.

5.4 Selection of research participants

The main interest of the target group in this research is newly arrived multilingual students who were assigned to Norwegian introductory classes and were acquiring English as a third language. The second group of interest were the teachers at introductory classes and teachers from mainstream schools with a high percentage of multilingual background learners.

During the research period a total of five teachers and nine students were interviewed divided between three target schools. The first interview was conducted in one of the introductory schools for the intensive Norwegian language learning, hereafter referred to as School 1. In this educational place newly arrived multilingual students received Norwegian introductory classes. There was a total of nine students and three teachers participating in the study in School 1.

The additional two interviews were conducted with the teachers from two different primary schools in Oslo. The target schools were chosen because they received multilingual students from the introductory schools. In this thesis, the two mainstream schools are referred as School 2 and School 3.

5.5.1 Students

All students in the introductory classes represented a linguistic and cultural diversity and had one or two languages as their mother tongues. Participation in the introductory school for Norwegian intensive language learning lasted no more than five months, after which the students returned to the local schools. All informants in this research were interviewed two weeks before they started attending their local school. The students had different ethnic backgrounds and mother tongues and their age group ranged from thirteen to sixteen.

In this thesis Norwegian is referred as a second language for multilingual students and English as a third one. It is important to point out that this does not refer to the order in which the languages were acquired. Some of the students learned English in their home countries and some had more than one mother tongue. Table 1 provides an overview of the linguistic background of the students.

Students	Age	Country of origin	Linguistic background	Time being in Norway
Alina	15	Rumania	Rumanian, Italian, German	6 months
Fata	15	Kenya	Swahili, Arabic, Somali	9 months
Helena	15	Greece	Greek, English	5 months
Linda	16	Poland	Polish, German	5 months
Theodor	15	Greece	Greek	5 months
Mana	16	Italy	Arabic, Italian, French	6 months
Anna	13	Greece	Greek, Albanian	5 months
Sara	15	Norway* (Iraq)	Arabic, Swedish	6 months
Simon	13	Bosnia	Serbian, Bosnian	3 months

Table 1. Linguistic background of informants

*) The informant was born in Norway but moved to Iraq at the age of five and lived there for nine years.

5.5.2 Teachers

A total of 5 teachers were interviewed in this research study. Three teachers were chosen from the introductory school and two teachers from the two primary schools. The reason why I decided to interview the teachers from the mainstream schools, was to compare English language teaching in different settings.

Table 2. Teachers' profiles

Participants	Educational degree	Teaching experience	Linguistic background
School 1			
Andreas	Bachelor's degree in Teacher Education that includes two teaching subjects: English and Norwegian, Master's degree in English Foreign Language Teaching	One year working experience teaching English and Norwegian in the introductory school; one year working experience as a Spanish teacher at the mainstream school	Norwegian, English, Spanish
Thomas	Master's degree in history and social sciences.	One year working experience as an English teacher	Norwegian, English and some German
Anna	Bachelor's degree in elementary education. One year of further educational training in Drama and English language teaching.	Twenty- five years' working experience as a primary school teacher and one year working experience with multilingual students	Norwegian, English, some Italian, French and German.
School 2			

Lina	Bachelor's degree in English and one year of the Teacher education programme at the university level	Five years working experience in secondary school	Sinhala, English and Norwegian.
School 3			
Dory	Master's degree in teaching arts	Seven years working experience in secondary school	Norwegian, English, some German

5.6 Interviews

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) define the qualitative research interview as ‘attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of their experience, to uncover their lived world’ (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.3). Moreover, in interview information is obtained due to the interaction between the interviewer and the interviewee. (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015) According to Padilla-Días (2015), p.104, the most appropriate data collection strategy for phenomenological research is the profound interview which should be open or semi-structured. These two types of interviews give the possibility for the informants to express their experiences, beliefs and meanings in details, “approaching reality as faithfully as possible” and it allows the researcher to investigate the phenomenon (Marshall & Rossman, 2010; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2009; Padilla – Días, 2015).

Relating to the research questions the aim was to get insights into both teachers’ and students’ thoughts and experiences on the subject of multilingualism and the role of the mother tongue when learning English as a third language. Thus, the semi-structured interview was considered to be the most appropriate method to answer the research question. Since this study aims to ‘unfold the meaning of the experience’ and deals with social phenomena, it can hardly be expressed in a questionnaire.

Two different interview guides were made in order to conduct the study. The first one had questions made for the teachers and another one had questions made for the students. In order to make an interview guide, the core themes regarded the research questions were established, then the concrete questions based on this were developed. The findings in this thesis are organized according to main themes in the interview guide. The interviews conducted with teachers contained open- ended

questions regarding the informants' educational background, their working experience, attitudes and beliefs concerning multilingual education and third language teaching and learning. The second part of the interview was centred at information about multilingual learners.

The interviews conducted with students contained questions about the students' backgrounds, their use of languages in different domains, language learning and the role of their mother tongue when learning English as a third language. All informants were offered to receive the interview guide in advance in order that participants would have the opportunity to reflect upon their answers beforehand. Both teachers and students were informed about the purpose of the study and that their participation was voluntary.

One-to-one interviews both with teachers and students were conducted in private rooms at the different schools. The student interviews lasted from 10 to 15 minutes and the teacher interviews lasted from 45 to 60 minutes. All interviews were recorded and later transcribed.

During the research study, a total of three hours of observation was made in three different classes in the introductory school. The main focus was the teachers' interaction with the students. The purpose of the observation was to look how the teachers provided English instruction to the multilingual students.

5.7 Data analyses

According to Moustakas 1994, (cited in Creswell, 2018, p.77) the data analyses consist of the description of two elements: "what" the individuals have experienced and "how" they experienced it. In order to elaborate phenomenological data analyses in this research the procedures recommended by Moustakas (1994) were applied in this thesis. The followings steps of systematic data analysis that were used are described by Creswell, (2018, p. 79) as follow:

- *Horizontalization* - go through the interview transcriptions and highlight "significant statements or quotes" that provide the information of how the participants experienced the phenomenon.
- Develop *clusters of meaning* - analyze the data by reducing the information to significant quotes or statements and then combine the statements into themes.
- Develop a *textual description* (what the participants experienced) and a *structural description* (how participants experienced that in terms of the conditions, situations, or context)
- *Essential, invariant structure* – report the "essence" of the phenomenon by using a composite description (focus on common experiences of the participants)

- Present the understanding of the essence of the experiences in written form.

First, based on the individual textual descriptions of the participants' experiences, the significant statements expressed by the participants were extracted. Then all relevant statements were organized into themes in order to answer the research questions. Six important themes emerged in the analysis: the use of the mother tongue in different domains, methods and strategies in teaching English as a third language, the teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism, the role of the mother tongue in third language acquisition, factors that can influence the process of acquiring English as a third language, students' motivation, and parents' attitudes. Finally, these categories were reduced to the following three main themes: teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism, methods and strategies in teaching English as a third language, and students' perspectives.

5.8 Validity and reliability in this qualitative research

In order to access the accuracy, trustworthiness and authenticity in the study, the researcher needs to employ validation strategies that provide the transferability of the study. This research was conducted in a reliable manner and include the following validation strategies adapted from Creswell (2018, p. 263).

Clarifying researcher bias or engaging in reflexivity. The researcher bias, personals' views and experiences can affect recording and interpretation of the data. Thus, it is important that the researcher is critical in self-reflection about her predisposition in the research study and discloses her potential biases. In order to make an objective analysis of the information, that the participants brought to the research and how they viewed the phenomenon "researchers must bracket out, as much as possible, their own experiences" (Creswell, 2018, p. 79). To address the potential problem the description of the personal background and motivation for the study was presented.

According to van Manen, (1990, 2014), interpretation of the data always incorporates the assumptions that the researcher brings to the topic of investigation and thus, it can be difficult for the researcher to bracket personal experiences. Nevertheless, "phenomenological research is often itself a form of deep learning and have a transformative effect on the researcher himself or herself" (Creswell 2018, p. 81).

Generating a rich, thick description. Descriptive validity addresses the accuracy in reporting rich information about the participants or settings under study. In this thesis it was achieved through the use of direct quotations in data analyses. This verbatim provides description of the participants'

interpretation and personal meanings. Thus, participants' exact words provided in direct quotation give possibility for the reader to experience the participants' personal meanings. It is important to note that I have chosen to quote what participants said verbatim, without correcting their English.

According to Christoffersen and Johannessen (2012, p.24) validation can be achieved by correlation of the collected data and the phenomenon in the research project. In this thesis the theoretical strands fit the data and, therefore, make the results credible and defensible.

This thesis does not describe the situation of all newly arrived multilingual students in Norway. It aims to present some aspects that are relevant in learning English as a third language and teaching practices concerning multilingual education. The research process and participants are described as adequately as possible in order to secure the transparency of the study. The interviews conducted both with teachers in introductory classes and teachers in mainstream schools gave the research the possibility to compare teaching practices in different settings. All teachers had different educational backgrounds. Students were chosen from three different classes and represented cultural and linguistic diversity. The participants represented both genders.

Oolbekkink-Marchand et al. (2014) refer to Anderson and Herr (1999) and state that teacher research can be validated when the goal of the research is to stimulate the professional development of the teacher and school. Kincheloe (2012) states that knowledge produced by research may be best validated "via its role in practice- thus the notion of pragmatic or catalytic validity" (Kincheloe, 2012, p. 181). In other words, "catalytic validity is described as the degree to which the researcher process reorients, focuses, and energizes both researchers and participants towards knowing reality in order to change their understanding or their view of their own role" (Oolbekkink-Marchand et al., 2014, p. 126). I base my research on this definition of validity in a qualitative study.

5.9 Ethical consideration

During the research process the ethical consideration have to be addressed in the study. Creswell (2018) points out that ethical issues arise in many phases of the research process and they need to be planned and anticipated. First, in order to conduct the study, the researcher needs to seek an approval for the inquiry. According to this the application of approval of the research project was sent and later approved by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD).

Before the data collection for this project all participants were informed about the aim of the research, what would happen to the information they would provide and that participating in the study is

voluntary. Besides, it was indicated that the participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any point. Two letters of consent were sent to the participants. The first one was addressed to the parents and students, and the other one sent to the teachers. The consent form of this research project is attached in appendix 3 and appendix 4.

According to Creswell (2018), ethical consideration should also be taken during the data analysis and the reporting phase when the researcher “shapes findings in a particular direction and in the reporting phase of research where inquirers need to be honest and the privacy of individuals needs to be preserved” (Creswell, 2018, p. 62). The data gathered in this project involved sensitive information about the participants, their family and linguistic background and some personal information. If the information can reveal the identity of the participants, where individuals might be identifiable in the reporting documents it is important to use pseudonyms. During the research analyses and data reporting, multiple perspectives reflective of a complex picture were presented. The schools’ names remain anonymous and have been changed with numbers. The students under the age of 15 provided written consent from parents. Both teachers and students’ names were anonymized and changed in order to protect their privacy.

6.Findings

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from the interviews that were conducted during the research period. The first part reveals data from the interviews conducted with both teachers and students in the introductory school for the intensive Norwegian language learning. The second part presents interviews with teachers from two different schools in Oslo with a high percentage of multilingual students. The purpose of interviewing teachers was to compare the language teaching in different settings and get insights into both teachers' beliefs and practices concerning multilingual education. The purpose of interviewing students was to get insights into learners' experiences concerned the third language acquisition and the use of the mother tongue in learning English as an L3.

6.2 Interviews in school 1

The first part of the interviews focuses on the teachers' educational background, their working experiences and the methods they use in their teaching. The second part of the interviews is concerned with multilingual education, students' background, mother tongue learning and community schools.

6.2.1 Interview with teachers

Andreas

Educational background and working experience

Andreas is educated as a teacher and can speak three languages: Norwegian, English and Spanish. His educational background consists of a Bachelor's degree in Teacher Education that includes two teaching subjects: English and Norwegian, and he has a Master's degree in English Foreign Language Teaching. Besides, Andreas has studied Spanish language for one year in Spain.

Andreas reported that he had one year's working experience as a teacher at Norwegian school. Furthermore, he worked as a Spanish teacher part time for one year while he was writing his master's thesis in Norway.

Andreas works at the introductory school for the intensive Norwegian languages learning and he teaches two age mixed classes. One class consists of multilingual students from 5th to 7th grade and

another is age mixed class from 8th to 10th grade. Subjects that he teaches at school are Norwegian, English, and the Theme that includes a combination of social studies, science and religion.

Teacher's knowledge about third language teaching and learning.

Andreas stated that he had not received any special courses regarding third language teaching. As for the knowledge from the university about third language acquisition, Andreas pointed out that it was a very little focus on this topic.

We spoke a bit about multilingualism when I studied at university, but it was very little. That is why I wanted to get more insights into third language acquisition and I wrote my master's thesis about it.

The teacher considered that during his study period there was not so much focus on the multilingual education. When asked if the teachers of English need specific training, a range of courses, in order to teach multilingual background students, Andreas emphasized:

It is definitely necessary that teachers need that, because what we learn at colleges and universities today is how to teach English to monolingual students. I think we need to learn more about how to develop this metalinguistic awareness that students need in order to exploit all of their languages in learning English as a third or maybe a fourth language. In the textbooks and elsewhere we only compare English to Norwegian language and for newly arrived students that is not relevant at all. They will compare it to their first language, so teachers need to know more about how to teach students with different linguistic backgrounds and not only with Norwegian one. Teachers should be able to give them the tools they need to do that. Besides, that can be useful for Norwegian students because there is a very little focus on metalinguistic awareness to compare languages, to see similarities and differences of different languages, so it is something that can be useful for anyone in the classroom.

Andreas expressed a strong belief that the language educators needed knowledge and teaching strategies regarding multilingual pedagogy. The teacher emphasized on the importance of employing students 'linguistic backgrounds in further language learning.

L3 learning and teaching

According to Andreas, to be multilingual is a positive factor in English language learning. He emphasized that if students had experiences from learning other languages from before, they would use these practices in learning English.

I believe, and I think research also supports that if you know many languages you have a stronger metalinguistic awareness, so I think there is a great potential there. On the other hand, if you don't get proper instruction, it can be confusing sometimes for students, so in that case multilingualism is not necessary an asset, but it can be with the right support.

Andreas promoted quite positive attitudes toward multilingualism and considered it as an asset in further language learning. In the teachers' opinion, students needed differentiated instruction in order to make use of their potential languages in learning English as a third language.

Teaching experience working with multilingual background students

Andreas reported that there were different multilingual students in the school, some of them came to Norway with very little knowledge of English, some had it as a mother tongue. The teacher stated that it could be challenging to provide instruction to the multilingual learners who had very poor knowledge of Norwegian and who came here with less English from before.

We need to teach according to the curriculum, so we need to catch up and students have to learn a lot of things in a very short period of time. All teaching is challenging but I don't think it is more challenging to teach multilingual students, but you need to work in a different way!

In the teacher's opinion, it was important to differentiate teaching in the multilingual classroom. Andreas reported that he spent a lot of time teaching and encouraging multilingual learners to see similarities and differences with Norwegian and English and he encouraged them to compare it to their first languages.

When I am teaching English, I need to work with multiple languages, and my students are learning two languages at the same time. In the class I encourage and give them time to compare English and Norwegian to their own languages. So, you need to work in a different way in that sense and it refers not only to grammar and language use, but it also refers to culture.

The teacher pointed out that he adjusted his teaching strategies to multilingual students and encouraged learners to use their mother tongues.

Methods and strategies in teaching English as a third language

Materials that were used for learning English is a book ‘Stages’, the same one that is used in mainstream classrooms, but in addition to that, Andreas reported that he spent a lot of time working on vocabulary with students. When learners read a new text, the teacher went through important vocabulary and then students translated it to their mother tongues through Norwegian dictionary. In that way learners used three languages simultaneously. Furthermore, the teacher reported that every time after introducing the new vocabulary and after students have translated it into their mother tongues he picked up about five learners and asked them to write down the new words in their mother tongues. The same strategies were applied when teaching grammar. Students were asked to find out if they had similar grammar constructions in their languages, and sometimes they were asked to write it down in their mother tongues.

Andreas emphasized that he chose themes in teaching that were suitable for the multilingual classroom. He stated that he talked a lot about global English with his students and did not focus just on the UK and USA. When it came to topics and texts that Andreas used in his teaching, he reported that they were adapted to multilingual reality compared to the monolingual reality.

We talk about English all over the world and I encourage students to think about the role of English in their home countries. “To be young in Norway” is a very popular theme in lower secondary school now, so we discuss how to be young in Norway and USA and then students need to compare it to their home country.

When asked about if it took more time working with multilingual students, Andreas reported:

I wouldn’t say you need to work more, you need to work different, in a different way. You have to be very aware of what you are doing, because you cannot just teach students to compare grammar structures to Norwegian, for example, if you talk about Simple Past in English. Because most of the students don’t know or they don’t completely know how it works in Norwegian. Teachers need to encourage student to find certain grammar phenomenon in their languages. And a lot of people ask how you

do that because you don't know their languages, but it is about to give them the resources, time and the tools to be able to compare.

The teacher emphasized that it was important to adjust the instruction in a way that multilingual students exploit their linguistic abilities. According to Andreas, everyone in the classroom have dictionaries for Norwegian and their first language. Students needed to buy it themselves and it was quite expensive, so they did not have dictionaries for English and their mother tongue.

Andreas stated that in the classroom students worked simultaneously with three languages all the time and he as a teacher needed to think about it all the time and prepare in advance, so students could exploit their languages. For example, when there was a new vocabulary from the text, he wrote it down on the blackboard in English and Norwegian and then students needed to translate it from Norwegian to their mother tongues.

The teacher reported that it was important to show students that he valued their languages. For instance, after introducing new vocabulary, he picked up about five students every time and asked them to write the English word in their mother tongues on the blackboard. He stated that there was always a great sense of pride when students could go to the blackboard and write the words in their own languages. Andreas considered that it was very important for their self-esteem and for their metalinguistic awareness in order to develop it further.

In Andreas' opinion it was crucial to acknowledge that students were multilingual in the classroom and he stated that as a teacher you should constantly focus on how you can include those languages in English instruction.

I try to involve their language all the time. I have it from my own experience when I moved to Spain and started to study a new language, I can recognize their situation how they feel when they don't understand what is going on.

Factors that can influence the process of acquiring English as a third language

Regarding the factors that can influence third language acquisition, Andreas pointed out that students' level of proficiency in Norwegian and their linguistic background were very important. If students were quite good at Norwegian, they could draw a lot from Norwegian to English and that went both

ways. If they had a language that was similar to English, for example, those who spoke Italian or Spanish learned English faster and they got a lot of Latin vocabulary for free.

Other factors were students' motivation, and their attitudes towards language learning. What instructions students had received before, some came to school with very little instruction in English and some had learned a lot.

To what extent do you draw on Norwegian while teaching English?

The teacher reported that it was helpful to draw on Norwegian in teaching because the language was close to English. For instance, in some Slavic languages they do not have definite and indefinite articles that are in English and Norwegian "a boy- the boy"; "en gutt" - "gutten". Andreas stated that if the Slavic students could not find similar grammar constructions in their mother tongue he asked them to try to find it in Norwegian or English and students found it very helpful.

Andreas pointed out that it was important to think about the different languages and the different subjects in a cross-curricular way. The teacher found it beneficial to teach Norwegian and English in the same class which gave him possibility to work across when it came to the topics and grammar structures.

Can students evaluate their language learning according to the curriculum?

Andres reported that he always talked explicitly about language learning strategies with students and that they needed to use their mother tongues in language learning. He stated that students in his class were young learners and it was challenging for them to evaluate their language learning but when he as a teacher tried to develop their strategies, in his opinion it worked very well. Andreas emphasized that it was important to give them strategies and talk about which of them to use, for example, when dealing with unknown text. He considered that it helped students to raise their awareness.

The teacher should point out these similarities and ask students to find if it is possible in their mother tongues, encourage them to do that and tell that it is important. Because some students may think they need to keep languages separately, but the teacher should point it out, because many students will not do it unless the teacher encourages them.

In Andreas's opinion, if the teacher encourages students to use only English or Norwegian in the classroom, they will not be able to exploit the languages they possess and implement the strategies to draw on their languages when learning English.

Mother tongue learning and community schools

Community schools are the schools organized by linguistic minorities that are living in Norway. Such schools provide mother tongue education, and in addition to it a combination of subjects such as literature, art and crafts and music.

In Andreas' opinion, all language learning should be built up upon the knowledge of the first language and students should be able to read and write in their mother tongues first. The teacher states that if students are literate in one language, they can transfer the similar structures into another language. Even though if their mother tongues have different alphabets, the students will be still familiar with such notions as a sentence, paragraph, text, etc.

When asked about mother tongue education outside the school, the teacher reported that in the class he teaches there were one Serbian and one Chinese student who attend the community school on weekends. Furthermore, Andreas added that there were some students who attended Arabian courses where they had Koran studies and students who attended Polish community schools.

Regarding mother tongue learning and teaching, the teacher emphasized that in a classroom with many different languages it was impossible to get enough skilled teachers to provide all learners with the mother tongue teachers. Andreas believes that by attending the community schools, students could get the opportunity to learn their mother tongue and he encouraged his students to value and learn their mother tongues outside the school.

Andres considered that if students were good writers in their mother tongues, they would become good writers in Norwegian and English.

I think it is very important for students not to forget their mother tongue and further develop writing skills in their first language because that can have a positive influence on both Norwegian and English language learning.

The teacher also represented some negative attitudes that students could have associated with mother tongue learning. To that statement he added that if learners' mother tongue was not valued and did not have a high status in society, they would not be encouraged to use it in the classroom and students would not see any purpose to learn it. In Andreas' opinion, both parents and teachers have to encourage students to value their mother tongues and see it as a resource in learning.

Students' Backgrounds

According to Andreas, most of the learners who attend the introductory school come from Europe, a few from Asia, Latin America and Africa. Students' level of proficiency in English varies greatly when they come to Norway.

The teacher reports that students code-switch when they learn English and Norwegian. Andreas states that those students who share the same mother tongue code-switch between it and English. For example: *"Do we have to do this (oppgave) exercise?"*.

Students that Andreas teaches are from Poland, Ukraine, Portugal, Serbia, Greece, Vietnam, Somalia and Italy. According to the teacher, students are quite motivated to learn more languages and English is the language they use at breaks in order to be able to communicate with their peers.

Andreas states that he communicates with parents regularly, at least once every week, he sends text messages to them and gets responses. In that way he gets the impression of their knowledge of English or Norwegian. According to the teacher, most of the parents speak some English and very few speak Norwegian. Andreas emphasized that none of the parents had a high proficiency in either of languages.

The teacher reported that parents had very positive attitudes to their children's education, even though they could have the poor educational background themselves.

Parents' education is important, and it reflexes a lot upon students, but on the other hand we have immigrants who come here to work with poor education background, but they value school, they bring their kids to the library and want their children to start to read Norwegian books. Maybe statistically it is not like this, but it is what I see here at school.

Educational background and working experience

Thomas is a teacher and has a Master's degree in history and social sciences. He has one year working experience as an English teacher and before he worked as a journalist. Besides English and Norwegian, Thomas can speak some German. The subjects he teaches at school are: English, social sciences, religion, and physical education. Thomas reported that he did not have experience in teaching multilingual learners and the students he teaches now are in the 10th grade and one age -mixed class that consists of students from 5th to 7th grade.

Thomas stated that he had not received any special training in teaching English to multilingual background students. In his opinion it would be useful to get information about third language teaching, but he did not see it as a requirement.

It would help probably in teaching, it would be an advantage maybe to see new methods in multilingual teaching.

The teacher considered multilingualism as an asset in English language learning and he supported it with the statement that students who are multilingual could draw on their previous languages and use metalanguage when learning English. Thomas reported that it was hard for students to focus on three different languages while learning English, but he believed that it was not an obstacle in students' language learning since they used a lot of English outside the classroom and during the break in order to communicate with their peers.

Methods and strategies in teaching English as a third language

The teacher could not name some specific strategies that he used teaching multilingual students. Furthermore, Thomas added that it was easier to draw on Norwegian in teaching English language.

Students here receive intensive Norwegian grammar teaching and I use a lot of Norwegian in teaching English.

Thomas stated that he encouraged students to try to build up sentences in three languages, so that the learners could get awareness of language learning.

It's a lot easier if they can many languages and can draw on them in language learning, cause then they can find some links among languages.

In the teacher's opinion, working with vocabulary and using the dictionary where students could look up words in their mother tongues was a very effective way of teaching. When it comes to grammar, Thomas reported that he tried to encourage students to compare some grammatical structures with the structures that could exist in their mother tongues.

In grammar we look at sentences and how to use different word classes, and then I can ask students how they build up different sentences in their own languages.

Thomas stated that not all students had language learning strategies. Most of the learners had good strategies for remembering and reproducing information, but not all could make use of the knowledge they had. Furthermore, Thomas added that students were not so critical to what they read. The teacher considered that it was important to assess students and give them strategies to use their knowledge.

I think it helps when we connect languages, but I am not sure they will be able to do it alone, but it is very individual, and depends on their level of English.

Thomas pointed out that multilingual students had advantages in learning English and he stated that the more languages they learnt the more insights they got into strategies how to learn the new language, especially if they could draw upon previous experience and previous learning. The teacher expressed the belief that Norwegian students had potential learning English since they were exposed to language everywhere.

Thomas emphasized that multilingualism could be confusing at the start and he expressed the belief that students at the age from 7 to 10 were faster language learners and they could separate languages they learn. He considers that students in 10th grade were getting more confused and they could not switch so quickly between languages. The teacher stated that since students were learning two languages at the same time they use Norwegian words in English texts.: *"Very often they use ks in words instead of x when they write texts"*.

Thomas considers that it could be challenging for students to learn completely the new language (Norwegian) and then learn English in addition to it but he believed that:

In long term it is a positive effect dealing with English and Norwegian at the same time. When students finish school, they will have three languages that they can use, and it is a huge asset. It would be probably easier to learn just Norwegian, but students need English when they start usual school, so in my opinion, it could have the negative effect on their development of English knowledge if they were exposed just to Norwegian.

Regarding the most important issues while teaching the multilingual students, the teacher pointed out that it was very individual since all learners were with different linguistics backgrounds and demanded different approaches in learning. He believed that a lot depended on students' level of the language knowledge they possessed. Thomas considered that it was important to teach the strategies in language learning and concentrate on how to develop students' metalinguistic awareness.

It is crucial to teach students the strategies to learn the new language showing them "what is created inside the bubble" the ability to see across the languages. Students need to learn the strategies in language learning and try to find out what is the next level in their learning. But it is very individual cause they are all different.

Students' backgrounds

Thomas reported that he teaches students with different linguistic backgrounds. In the class he had learners who came from Italy, Greece, Kenya, Poland, Serbia, Somalia and Thailand. In the teachers' opinion, the Thai educational system was the most different from the Norwegian one and he could notice it from the progress of the students. Thomas indicated that students were motivated in learning, they all had school backgrounds from their home countries and most of them had learned the second language before.

Furthermore, Thomas emphasized that those students who had very little experience in English had to use their mother tongue a lot. Thus, it could be challenging for them to learn two languages at the same time and it could affect their motivation. To that statement the teacher added that the use of previous language knowledge was very individual and depended on which country students came from. If their mother tongues were close to English, it was easier for learners to draw on their first language. Moreover, Thomas pointed out that some students did not have so much focus on English at their home countries comparing to Norway. Thus, they could often struggle with learning English.

Mother tongue learning and community schools

Regarding mother tongue teaching, Thomas reported that there were some students who got mother tongue instruction outside the school. The teacher believed that students would benefit from learning their first languages by attending community schools and he supported it with the importance for students' identity and culture.

As for the literacy in the mother tongue, the teacher did not have so strong opinion about it.

It is hard to answer because it is an individual choice that students and parents should take. Of course, it is an advantage if you can learn literacy of your mother tongue, but it is not necessary to be literate in all languages, but I don't have so much experience with it. Writing skills is a big challenge, sometimes it is hard to catch up with it if you have not learned it from the first grade.

Parents' attitudes

According to Thomas parents provided quite positive attitude to their children learning two languages simultaneously. The teacher reported that the parents' level of Norwegian and English varied greatly. In the 10th grade he taught there were four parents who did not speak neither Norwegian nor English, but the rest could speak some English or some Norwegian.

From my experience it's a big help if parents can talk with their children in English, in that way, they can get some learning outside the classroom

Anna

Educational background and working experience

Anna is a primary school teacher and has twenty- five years working experience at school and one year working experience teaching multilingual background students. At the moment Anna teaches English and Norwegian in 10th grade at the introductory school. Her educational background consists of a Bachelor's degree in elementary education and one year of further educational training in Drama and English language teaching. At present Anna is studying second language pedagogy at the university.

According to the teacher, she has not received any training regarding teaching English to multilingual students. She reported that she educated herself and learned various teaching strategies regarding second language acquisition. When asked about multilingualism as an asset or an obstacle in students' language learning, the teacher considered it as an advantage, especially when one needed to acquire a new language. To that statement Anna added that multilingual students had more advantages in language learning than their Norwegian peers since they had languages in their repertoire to compare.

You can transfer some structures from other languages when you are multilingual but on the other hand it can be confusing. Multilingualism is not an obstacle if you work in a good way, it will be beneficial in the end.

Anna expressed the belief that if the students had good language learning strategies they would benefit in further language learning. The teacher alluded to the notion that students might face difficulties in learning a new language especially if they had the low level of their multiple languages, but she did not consider it as an obstacle in students' learning.

Multilinguals have advantages, even if they have low level in their potential languages, they have metalanguage, and this is an advantage in learning. But students should have good knowledge in their mother tongues and it is important that they learn it.

Anna provided an example from the mainstream school where she taught only multilingual background students. She reported that those learners who had good knowledge of their mother tongues and Norwegian also showed good language skills in English. The teacher stated that after having experience teaching multilingual students she could stress the importance of mother tongue in further language learning. Anna reported that one could think that students could face difficulties acquiring English and Norwegian at the same time, and that would influence Norwegian language learning in a bad way. But the teacher did not consider it as an obstacle and argued that students would need English too when they would come back to the mainstream school.

The more languages you know the more it is easier to find and acknowledge the new phenomenon in further language learning.

In Anna's opinion, students' knowledge of other languages could foster further language learning.

Students' backgrounds

Anna reported that students she taught came from different countries, some of them had very good knowledge of their potential languages and some very poor, but all of them had good writing and reading competence in their mother tongues before they started the introductory school. When it comes to students' motivation to learn English, the teacher reported that students were eager to learn it. Besides, Anna pointed out that parents promoted positive attitudes towards their children learning Norwegian and English and she expressed the belief that this factor could influence students' motivation. Notwithstanding the fact that some of the parents could have the poor educational background and the low level both in Norwegian and English, they promoted positive attitudes towards their children's learning.

The teacher emphasized that the majority of students could evaluate their language learning and had language awareness. Nevertheless, Anna considered it important for teachers to give students good language learning strategies and draw on their potential language knowledge.

We have to draw on students' mother tongues, to use the language that can help them most in further language learning. In general, it would be good if students are literate in their mother tongues, but it is a big debate now if we can use time for it in teaching when you have, for example, twenty different mother tongues in the classroom. Another problem is to find good enough competent teachers, because if mother tongue education is a kind of bad quality, then it will not be beneficial for learners.

Anna believed that students' mother tongues had an important role in their learning and it was useful to draw on students' previous language knowledge. The teacher added that when she taught her students Norwegian it was a great support for them if they were good at English since they could draw on their previous language knowledge.

Factors that can influence third language acquisition

Regarding methods in third language acquisition, the teacher reported that students were promoted to use dictionaries and compare the constructions they were not familiar with into their mother tongues. Anna believed that working with vocabulary and making the students actively use the language in the classroom was an effective way of teaching. Among other practices the teacher listed speaking activities and the use of memory cards. Anna emphasized that she drew on learners' potential language knowledge when students found some phenomenon in grammar for example, that were difficult for

them. She stated that it would not be possible to go into every mother tongues during the lesson, but it would be useful to draw on grammar constructions that are similar or different from the constructions that were in students' mother tongues.

For example, Polish students have problems using articles both in Norwegian and English and then you can ask them if they have that grammar phenomenon in their language. In that way, you as a teacher know more how to adjust the teaching strategies to those learners.

In the teacher's opinion, the students' knowledge of the mother tongue and other languages is an important factor in third language learning. Moreover, Anna emphasized that learners needed to have good language learning strategies in order to draw on their previous language knowledge.

The most important issue teaching multilingual students

Anna considered that it was crucial to give students good language learning strategies and adjust the teaching according to their language needs. In the teacher's opinion, it would be beneficial for future English language educators to get the course of multilingual and second language pedagogy as a part of their education.

It would be useful for language teachers to have more focus on language typology and second language learning during their education. For example, in order to be able to understand students' particular mistakes in writing, it is important to analyze students' texts in regard to the language they have as a mother tongue. For example, you may build up sentences in Arabic in another way than in English. You need to explain it explicit to the learner.

Mother tongue teaching and community schools

Anna reported that there were some students who attended Sunday and Koran schools. Regarding community schools, the teacher considered that it would be a good opportunity for students to learn their mother tongues, but it would depend on their motivation and the ability to manage with two schools. In the teacher's opinion it would be beneficial to attend community schools, but it should not go over their free time.

6.2.2 Interview with students

The interviews conducted with students contained questions about students' backgrounds, the use of languages in different domains, language learning and the role of their mother tongues when learning English as a third language.

Alina

Alina is 15 years old, was born in Rumania but moved with her parents to Italy when she was a child. She can speak Italian, Romanian and some English. Besides, she was living one year in Germany and can speak some German. Alina reported that at home she spoke Italian (translanguaged, *said italiensk*) and Romanian. With her mother she used Romanian and Italian with her sister and friends. At school Alina used English and if there was somebody who knew Italian then she switched to Italian.

Alina reported that she did not attend the community school and she did not find it difficult to learn two languages simultaneously, besides, she found it helpful. When learning English, the language she used as a support one was Italian.

Alina stated that she could find some similarities between her mother tongue and English, especially some words and some grammar points that were similar in Italian language.

If I need to find words I don't know in English I try to find similar in Italian. But if I don't find it in Italian I use Romanian and sometimes German when I learn Norwegian, because they are close. If there is the same structure in my mother tongue, it helps me to transfer it to English and Norwegian, if I don't have any idea in Italian I use Romanian.

I have a dog ---Io ho un cane (Italian) SVO

Subject, verb, object (Alina said it in Norwegian – sibjekt, objekt, verb)

Alina reported that when she needed to build up sentences or write an essay in English she thought Italian. Furthermore, she added that she could use some words from English while learning Norwegian. Alina pointed out that she was able to see some differences between English and Norwegian language.

I can see that in Norwegian you don't have 'verbs bøing' : I- am; you, they – are; he, she, it – is; comparing to English.

Fata

Fata is 15 years old and have been living in Norway for 9 months. She comes from Kenya and can speak Swahili, Arabic, some Somalian and English. At home, when speaking with her siblings Fata uses mostly Swahili, but since her parents speak both Swahili and Somalian, she may sometimes speak Somali. Fata stated that she was not so good at that language and she felt most comfortable speaking Swahili.

Fata reported that she learned English in her home country and she transferred a lot from English while learning Norwegian. She stated that she did not receive mother tongue teaching outside the school and she could not find some similarities between her mother tongue and English, but she could find it between Swahili and Arabic language.

With Kenyan friends at school she used a mix of Swahili and English, with other friends only English and Norwegian, outside of the school very little Norwegian and mostly English.

When I learn Norwegian, I try to translate to English, but when it is hard I try to find words in Swahili. If I don't know something in English, I try to find the meaning of that but don't translate it to Swahili directly. It is good that we have Norwegian and English, if I cannot find a word in Swahili I use English, and if I do not know English it would be hard for me.

When asked about writing an essay about climate in Norwegian, Fata answered that she would think some words in Swahili, but she claimed that she thinks a lot in English.

If I need to write a text in Norwegian I will think English, it is close to Norwegian.

Helena

Helena is 15 years old, she comes from Greece and have been living in Norway for five months. She speaks Greek fluently, besides, she was studying at the English school and has a good level of English. Helena reported that with her mother she used both Greek and Norwegian and with her father she spoke Greek and English, and with her brother she used three languages: Greek, English and Norwegian. The reason why she spoke Norwegian with her mother is that her mother wanted to learn Norwegian.

Helena is quite motivated in learning English and Norwegian. Regarding mother tongue teaching, she states that she does not receive it outside the school but would like to.

I can read books in Greek for example, but I do not have a teacher to teach me my mother tongue. Well, I would not have a problem in learning more Greek and maybe it would be useful for me in the future, besides it is good to know more languages. It would be nice to receive mother tongue education. I think it is cool when you can speak with a certain group of people and nobody would understand it.

Helena claimed that in the classroom she spoke Norwegian, because she needed to learn the language, but outside the school she used mostly English with her peers. Helena reported that when she built up sentences in English she thought in Greek, but she emphasizes that it could come automatically in English. The student stated that she could find similarities and differences between her mother tongue and English.

I can find a lot of similarities between my mother tongue and English. For example, the way we make a sentence in Greek is pretty similar in English, but just in Greek we have some differences, for example, we don't say "you " a lot of times, because the verb shows which person does something.

When asked about what language Helena thought if she needed to write a text in English she answered that mostly it was her mother tongue. If she had some words in Norwegian she did not know, Helena tried to find similar in English but according to her, it was easier to find them in Greek first.

I think in my mother tongue, I have worked a lot with texts in the Greek language, so maybe some constructions are quite similar, so it can also happen that I can think a bit in English when I need to write in Norwegian. But for sure, I will start with my mother tongue and then I can use English as a support language.

Linda

Linda is 16 years old and comes from Poland. She has been living in Norway for five months. The student reported that she spoke Polish with her parents and siblings. She learned German at school in Poland and could speak some German. As for the mother tongue education outside the school, Linda

did not receive it and she thought she did not need it. Linda reported that at school she used both English and Norwegian but outside the school mostly English and with her Polish friends just Polish.

When asked about what language helped her to learn English, she answered that it was Polish, but she could not find some similarities between Polish and Norwegian. Linda was motivated to learn English and Norwegian at the same time and she wanted to learn Spanish at high school. Furthermore, she added that sometimes she mixes languages, but when she needed to build up sentences in Norwegian, she used Polish.

If I need to write a text in English, I build up a text first in Polish and then translate it to English., If I have a Norwegian construction I don't know I need to translate it to my mother tongue. It is good to learn two languages at the same time, but sometimes I mix languages in my head, but it is good training for the brain. It can also happen that my Polish words come up at school automatically.

Theodor

Theodor is 15 years old, he comes from Greece and has been living in Norway for five months. His mother tongue is Greek besides, he has been learning English from the first grade. At home and with friends Theodor spoke just Greek. The only place where he used English and Norwegian language was school.

Theodor reported that there was a school where he could get mother tongue teaching, but he did not feel he needed it. The student stated that it was not hard to learn English because Greek helped him a lot. He pointed out that he could find many words that were the same both in English and Norwegian.

It is a kind of hard for me to learn English and Norwegian at the same time, because it is different languages and it is a bit confusing. Sometimes I find something I can transfer from English to Norwegian.

Theodor reported that he used Greek in order to write texts in English. If he needed to do it in Norwegian, the student used the mother tongue first and then he maybe could draw a bit on English.

If I need to write an essay in English, I would think it in Greek, but if I need to write it in Norwegian I can use a bit English. For example, we have passive voice in Greek, the same like in English and Norwegian.

Mana

Mana is 16 years old, she was born in Italy, but her parents come from Syria. Mana can speak Arabic, Italian, English, French, and she is going to learn Spanish. “Jeg skal lære spansk” – the student translanguaged while answering my questions. Mana reported that she used Italian and sometimes Arabic at home. With her siblings she used just Italian and with school friends she spoke Italian, English and some Norwegian. Mana stated that she did not receive mother tongue education, but she learnt Italian at home.

In Italy I learned English just 3 hours per week. But here I use English more because I cannot use Italian and I don't speak norsk. (translanguaged). Italian helps me to learn English and I can find some similarities between Italian and English, but sometimes it happens that I can find it between English and Norwegian.

Mana reported that if she needed to write an essay in English, she would use her mother tongue first and then she would translate it to English language.

Adelina

Adelina is 13 years old, she comes from Greece and has been living in Norway for 5 months. Her mother is Albanian, and father is Greek but both parents do not speak English. Adelina uses Albanian just with her mother and with siblings and father she speaks Greek.

The student stated that she did not get mother tongue education in Norway, but she would like to receive it, both in Albanian and Greek. Adelina reported that she was motivated to learn English and she emphasized that she could find some similarities between Greek and English.

We have many words that are close to English and when I began to learn English at my home country, I have been told that a lot of words were transferred from Greek to English. I think it is helpful to learn English and Norwegian at the same time and I use my mother tongue if I need to find some words in English or in Norwegian.

Adelina stated that she thought in Greek if she needed to write English texts, to that statement she added that she mixed sometimes different languages.

Sometimes I can say: " do må I speak Norwegian"; besides I can mix Greek and Albanian, I can say the whole sentence in English and then one word in Greek, but if there is somebody who understands Greek then.

Sara

Sara is 15 years old and she comes from Iraq. She was born in Norway and at the age of 5 she moved to Iraq. She was living and studying there for nine years. Then she moved to Sweden and was living there for six months and then she came back to Norway again. Sara can speak Arabic, English and Swedish. Despite the fact that her parents could speak Norwegian and English, she used Arabic at home.

Sara reported that she spoke English at school and with her friends she used Arabic or some Norwegian. As for the mother tongue education, Sara stated that she had enough knowledge in Arabic, but if she needed help with it, her parents could help her. Moreover, the student added that the Arabic language helped her in learning English.

I like to learn languages and that that we combine them in learning. My mother tongue is Arabic, and the best what I can speak is Arabic. When I need to write a text in English I use Arabic and if I need to find the meaning of the sentence in Norwegian, I use Arabic too. For example, word reindeer, it is close to my language.

Simon

Simon is 13 years old and he comes from Bosnia. He has been living in Norway for three months. Simon can speak Serbian, Bosnian and some English. His parents do not know English and at home Simon speaks Serbian. The student reported that he mostly used English at school in order to communicate with his peers, but in the classroom, he needed to use Norwegian. As for the mother tongue education, Simon attends Serbian community school every Saturday and his classes last two hours. The student reported that the Bosnian language was different from Norwegian and English and when he needed to write a text in English, he used his mother tongue in order to formulate his thoughts.

6.3 Interview with a teacher in School 2

Lina

Lina is a primary school teacher and has five years working experience. Besides English she teaches home economics and religion in 6th grade. Her education consists of a Bachelor's degree in English and one year of the Teacher education programme at the university level. Lina comes from Sri Lanka and can speak: Sinhala, English and Norwegian.

The teacher reported that she had not received any courses or training regarding teaching multilingual students. Besides, she expressed the belief that it was not necessary for her.

I am a minority speaker myself, so maybe it is easier for me to teach multilingual learners.

Lina considered multilingualism as an advantage in students' language learning. However, she emphasized that not all learners had the ability to draw on their languages when they learned English:

A few students who are multilingual can use some of their knowledge of mother tongue and Norwegian to compare and confront different structures when they learn English. But it depends on where they are from and their family background. Besides, not everyone can see the opportunities that can come from previous language learning. I think it is good if you can compare certain structures in languages, but you need to have somebody who can guide you, and it is the teacher who should guide students.

Lina believed that for some learners drawing on previous language knowledge could be an advantage when learning English, but on the other hand it could be challenging and confusing to find similarities and compare languages, especially when students' mother tongues were different from the target language. The teacher pointed out that most of the students needed learning strategies in order to draw on their mother tongues in further language learning and when they were in the 6th grade, it is not so easy for them.

Regarding teaching strategies, Lina reported that she did not notice any difference between teaching multilingual and monolingual learners. The teacher admitted that she needed to adjust her teaching according to the students' level of English and she stated that in the classroom there was a group of both monolingual and multilingual students who struggled a lot learning English. According to Lina, students' level of English varied greatly, and she expressed the belief that it would be beneficial for learners if they could get some help from their parents at home. The teacher indicated that sometimes

it would be difficult for her to teach multilingual students, especially those who had very little knowledge of Norwegian.

Factors that can influence third language acquisition

According to Lina, there was a range of factors that could influence third language acquisition. Among them Lina pointed out learners' mother tongues, which country students were originally from and their parents' educational and cultural background. In the teacher's opinion the students who came from Asia were exposed to a lot of English and had advantages in learning it. Learners who came from Africa knew English to some degree and those who came from Iraq or Morocco were the least exposed to English. Lina considered that the last group of learners struggled a lot acquiring the language.

The teacher highlighted that when teaching English, she asked students to find similarities and differences between Norwegian and English.

In the curriculum it stands that students should compare English with their mother tongue, but it means to compare with Norwegian language. Because when it says mother tongue it means Norwegian since I cannot speak their languages. Norwegian has always been the language I took examples from.

Lina stressed the importance of using Norwegian in teaching English and she expressed the belief that those multilingual students who were born in Norway thought in Norwegian and she did not consider it necessary to bring other languages into her teaching. Regarding learners who moved to Norway as children, it could be challenging for them to acquire both Norwegian and English at the same time. Lina stated that there was one student in the classroom who had Spanish and Bengali as mother tongues. The language that was used mostly at home was Spanish and the student was exposed to Norwegian just at school. In the teachers' opinion, it was the learner's responsibility to find similar equivalents in her mother tongue while learning English. She emphasized that she gave all instructions in Norwegian since she could not speak the student's mother tongues.

Lina indicated that most of the multilingual students she taught were born in Norway and she expressed the belief that even if students could speak their mother tongues, Norwegian had a mother tongue status for them.

I have the feeling even if they can talk at home their mother tongues, it will be hard for them to see differences and similarities in grammar. I think they regard themselves Norwegians.

Lina held the view that those of her students regarded themselves Norwegians and she considered that Norwegian language is more dominant for them. According to the teacher, it was important to draw on the Norwegian language when teaching English, especially when it came to grammar structures. Lina stated that she always started to explain different grammar points in Norwegian and then she transferred it to English. Regarding strategies teaching multilingual students, Lina commented that she used the same teaching methods to all learners.

I don't see any point to have different strategies, maybe I should, but I have never thought about it, maybe I should.

In the teacher's opinion there was no need to apply different strategies when teaching multilingual learners. Lina stated that she paid a lot of attention to the strategies that were used in general teaching according to the curriculum. In English teaching it was, for example, strategies in reading and comprehension. When it came to students' ability to select and apply different learning strategies and evaluate their own language usage, Lina alluded to the notion that Norwegian was the language that students thought in when they learned English.

Some students are using strategies and can evaluate their language learning, but I guess they think Norwegian first and then transfer it to English. Maybe some of them think their mother tongue, but I am not sure. I have not thought about it in my class even if I am multilingual myself. It raises a lot of question in me now.

When asked about multilingualism as an advantage or disadvantage in students' language learning, Lina expressed a strong opinion that it was useful to draw on learners' language knowledge. The teacher highlighted that monolingual students did not have such advantages compared to multilingual one.

She suggested that it could be an advantage in learning, especially when learners needed to acquire Norwegian and English at the same time. Lina commented on it with the statement that students already had the knowledge of learning Norwegian, so that they could transfer it while learning English. In the

teacher's opinion, a lot depended on how much learners were exposed to English in everyday life but knowing Norwegian gave them advantages in learning another language.

Lina teaches three classes that are in 6th grade where sixteen of the students are multilingual learners. Some of them were born in Norway and some came here as children. According to the teacher, the students' level of English varies greatly. Lina pointed out that those multilingual learners who were born in Norway could be divided into the three groups according to their level of English. Those who belong to the first group could barely translate texts. The teacher provided an example of one student who was born in Norway and then moved with his parents to Morocco for one year and then came back to Norway. Lina expressed the belief that that factor influences student's language knowledge.

The second group consisted of multilingual learners who had good knowledge of English. The teacher provided an example of five students from Pakistan who were exposed to English a lot at home and that influenced their language knowledge. The third group consisted of students who had English as a mother tongue. The teacher gave an example of one student who lived in Australia and then moved to Norway.

Lina expressed the belief that some multilingual students probably could think their mother tongues when learning English:

Some of the students, I guess, think in their mother tongues when learning English, but I have not asked them directly. I think when I give them examples in Norwegian they try to see the connection in their mother tongues as well. They use sometimes their mother tongues at break.

The teacher described one Spanish student who had not learned herself the mother tongue properly and she considered that it would be challenging for the learner to acquire another language than English.

Mother tongue literacy

When it comes to the literacy in the mother tongue, the teacher promotes positive attitudes towards it and points out that there are some students from Pakistan that go to the community school and learn how to read and write in Urdu. Nevertheless, Lina does not consider it important for the multilingual students who were born in Norway to attend the community school. In Lina's opinion, for those learners it is more crucial to be literate in Norwegian.

The teacher pointed out that she was multilingual herself, and when it came to her own child, she spoke both Sinhala and English with her. Since English is an official language in Sri Lanka, Lina reported that it was important for her and her husband that the child was exposed to English from a young age. Furthermore, she added that even though her child used three languages from childhood, she had not chosen her daughter to be literate in Sinhala.

I don't think you need to know how to read and write in your mother tongue to use that as an advantage when you learn English. In my opinion, if you are clever enough to see the connection between languages it does not necessary have to be the reading or writing skills, but it's a matter of knowing to see the connection between the languages.

Lina considered that literacy in mother tongue was not one of the factors that could influence English language learning. To her mind it was more important to find similarities or differences between languages.

Regarding the most important issue when teaching multilingual students, Lina highlighted that the teacher should explain how the English language was built up. When it came to teaching grammar, she pointed out that it was important to provide examples in Norwegian, so that students could see the connections between languages.

As a teacher you should be clear and give the examples in Norwegian, so that the students themselves can see the connection in their mother tongues, if you teach grammar you have to give examples in Norwegian on how the languages are built, so the other multilinguals can see the differences in mother tongue.

Lina expressed the belief that providing examples in Norwegian would help multilingual students to find similarities and differences in their mother tongues when learning English. When asked how the teacher should provide instructions when the learners had very poor knowledge of Norwegian, Lina reported that it was important to differentiate between teaching strategies and adapt them to different students.

As a teacher you should always think about alternative methods that you can use in your teaching. For example, when I teach verbs I first show actions or pictures without using the language, then I wait and ask students to guess the meaning and after this I

translate the verbs into English and Norwegian. When working with the texts, I have to read it for students a couple of times, I have to read it differently, so they get the idea of the text. I think it is good for multilingual learners to see things in different ways.

Lina stated that she applied general strategies that were used in any kind of teaching that could suit both multilingual and monolingual students.

Students' motivation and parents' attitude

Lina reported that 80 % of her multilingual students were motivated to learn English. In the teacher's opinion, those students who were exposed to English at home were more eager to learn English since they got this attitude to use the language every day. Lina stated that many students were motivated because of music and video games but she could notice that there were learners who struggled even if they were motivated.

Even though the parents did not say it directly, but I think there are some of them who think it is very hard to learn three languages (English and Norwegian at the same time) since they cannot help children with learning. I do not think that those who come from Somalia and middle eastern countries were exposed to so much English. I guess that it is hard for them that their children are learning both English and Norwegian.

Lina considered that parents' education background played an important role in their children's learning. She stated that as a teacher it was her responsibility to provide students with the tasks and certain support that they needed in order to practice more at home. Lina expressed concern about those multilingual learners who did not receive help from home. In her opinion, that group of learners had more difficulties in learning English compared to their peers. The teacher indicated that she could not demand parents to help their kids at home, but she commented that it was a considerable advantage for multilingual students if their parents exposed them to English.

I think if parents feel that they cannot help their kids at home with English or if they do not have the knowledge of the language, they should come to the teacher and ask for advice, so that the child gets the correct help and support at home.

Lina considered it was important that parents cooperate with the teacher, ask for advice and support in order to foster their children language learning. In the teacher's opinion, for those students who had

low level of Norwegian it could be an advantage to attend the community schools, but Lina did not consider it important for the rest of the students. She argued that it could be far much work for students to attend two schools. On the other hand, the teacher thought that it depended a lot on learners' motivation and interests.

When it comes to the use of the mother tongue at school, Lina reported that there were a few students who spoke their mother tongues during the break. Among them, the teacher pointed out two Polish students who came to Norway at the age of three and some Pakistani students who used Urdu or a mix of Urdu and Norwegian.

6.4 Interview with a teacher in School 3

Dory

Dory is a secondary school teacher and has a Master's degree in teaching arts and crafts. She started to work as a substitute English teacher and had seven years working experience. Besides, she was teaching in introductory classes for one year. The subjects Dory teaches now are English, Norwegian, arts and crafts and history in 7th grade. She can speak a bit French and read in German.

As all other teachers Dory has not received any special training in teaching English to multilingual students. The only courses that she has attended was how to teach English in general from 5th to 7th grade.

The teacher reported that it was challenging for her to teach learners who had been living in Norway for a short period of time and who had not learnt English from before. Dory commented that students' knowledge of Norwegian was very low and it was difficult for them to acquire two languages simultaneously.

I felt that it was very difficult to try to teach English to multilingual students on the top of Norwegian and I felt that I need something, some resources, but I have not found any good literature about it. I have never thought I need to go and educate myself, but every now and then I think more about it, maybe we need other strategies for these children.

Dory expressed the belief that she needed instruction regarding multilingual education. She found it challenging to find appropriate strategies to teach multilingual learners. The teacher pointed out that the school had a tendency to think that English as a subject was very easy to acquire because students

were exposed to the language outside the school: playing video games, watching YouTube and listening to music. But in Dory's opinion it was not enough for learners to have just two classes of English per week.

The English subject is just two classes a week like history and religion and there is not so much focus on these children who do not speak Norwegian well and try to learn English at the same time. I feel that the school should have some focus on it, training in it or classes.

In Dory's opinion it would be helpful if the school could provide courses for the teachers to get instruction and strategies regarding teaching English as a third language to multilingual students. She considered that generally there was not so much focus on learners who had multilingual backgrounds.

I think it is tendency to go away from mother tongue teaching because they are here to learn Norwegian maybe. Now I feel like it has to be just Norwegian and then English, but it was different in the beginning it was a lot of Somalian learners who got mother tongue teaching.

The teacher stressed that the students did not receive mother tongue education and there was more attention paid to Norwegian language learning.

Multilingualism in language learning and teaching

Regarding multilingualism as an asset or an obstacle in English language teaching and learning, Dory expressed a positive attitude towards it and highlighted that students would benefit from their previous language knowledge when learning English. But on the other hand, Dory claimed that she found it challenging to organize and plan the lesson for the learners who did not have Norwegian as their mother tongues.

I think if you work in a right way it would be an asset. Because maybe students would look at the words and try to find the same in their languages or they would compare how it is in English and Norwegian. For example, things about sentences and grammar structures, how to pronounce certain words. I think it would be good, but as a teacher you need time to go into it and prepare for different classes every week.

Notwithstanding the fact that multilingualism could be an advantage in students' language learning, Dory indicated that she would need more time and resources to prepare materials for multilingual learners.

The teacher pointed out that those learners who did not know Norwegian and who were not exposed to English in their home countries, they struggled a lot acquiring it. Dory reported that she could notice the influence of the mother tongue on students' further language learning. To that statement she added that very often parents spoke their native language with children at home but if students' level of it was low they would use Norwegian with parents. In this case it could be confusing and challenging for learners if their parents were not good at Norwegian. Dory shared that there was a group of students who maybe would think Norwegian as their mother tongue since they had not enough knowledge in their native language.

Some of the students have really very big problems in learning English because I feel like they are getting confused. They "fall between two chairs" because they are not very good in their mother tongue and they are not very good in Norwegian, so they will certainly not be very good in English. They have three different language systems.

According to the teacher, multilingualism may have a negative effect on students' language learning as long as their knowledge of mother tongue is very poor. Dory expressed the belief that those learners would get confused about what language to use, because neither mother tongue nor Norwegian was acquired properly. Furthermore, the teacher shared that it was challenging for students to read, for example, science books since they were not familiar with the vocabulary in either of the languages. Dory stated that those students had extra hours with the special pedagogue where they got basic training in the Norwegian language.

I feel like they do not know how to express things well enough, it would help them to be literate at least in their mother tongue.

Dory pointed out that if students did not know a word in English or Norwegian they would not dare to speak and would not raise their hands.

Factors that can influence the process of acquiring English as a third language

Regarding factors that can influence language acquisition, the teacher alluded to the notion that parents' knowledge of English would play an important role in their children's learning. Furthermore, Dory added that students' mother tongues could be a resource in learning, but they would need strategies and more focus on their languages at school in order to be able to see the connections among languages.

It is important if students are literate at least in one language and can formulate their thought. Their level of frustration will grow faster if they cannot speak the mother tongue. I see that some students cannot really express to me or their parents exactly what they feel because they do not know those words. They do not have those vocabulary in Norwegian and it also comes with their behavior.

The teacher stressed the importance of being literate in the mother tongue since it would foster further language learning.

Methods in English teaching

Dory reported that she tried as much as possible to use and provide teaching instructions in English and made students always speak it in the classroom. Only when it came to difficult vocabulary or explanation of grammar, the teacher stated that she would always need to use Norwegian. Dory pointed out that sometimes she could draw on French or German while teaching English and try to find some connections among languages. To that statement she added that her knowledge of languages was not at a high level but when she taught a student whose mother tongue was French she tried to find some similarities between French and English.

If I am going to teach grammar adverbs, for example, and how to use them in expressions I would teach them in Norwegian. I will introduce it in Norwegian and then draw lines into English. Hopefully that they can find connections and I think they do.

The teacher reported that she had generally one strategy in teaching and she needed to adapt and adjust it to different students. Dory pointed out that there were learners who really struggled acquiring English because their Norwegian was not fluent at all and the only thing she could do was just to adjust reading to the students' level. Dory stated that she was not able to use learners' mother tongues as an asset in her teaching.

I would maybe need to give them a little bit different tasks, encourage them in a different way. I wish I would be able to say you are from Bulgaria what about your mother tongue and help, but I could not.

The teacher admitted that she did not have any particular methods teaching multilingual students. Dory highlighted that she always stressed the importance of knowing more languages and she promoted it among her learners.

I try to find out what are students' mother tongues, which language they speak at home and if they read books in another language. I always talk to children that when they live in Norway they have to learn Norwegian, but English is important too. So, I am always very positive that they can speak more languages, Norwegian and a little bit of English, but I don't feel like I am on top of the situation with being able to encourage them to use their mother tongues.

The teacher expressed quite positive attitudes towards multilingualism, but she did not feel that she would be able to help her students to use their mother tongues as a resource in English language learning.

From the teacher's perspective, Dory admitted that she used most of all the time Norwegian in order to explain English grammar. Moreover, the teacher stated that she had never asked students to find similar words in their mother tongues. To that statement she added that she had not been able to work in such a way that students could make use of their potential knowledge of other languages. Dory emphasized that the reason for that was a lack of time and pedagogical strategies in order to provide instruction for multilingual learners.

Students' backgrounds

According to the teacher, the biggest group of multilingual students in the classes she teaches consists of those who were born in Norway and a couple of students who moved at an early age. Some learners had half Norwegian parents and parents from Africa, Vietnam, Pakistan, Albania, Macedonia, Somalia. Dory admitted that there were multilingual students who were born in Norway and then moved to their parents' home country and in couple of years came back again to Norway.

Students' motivation

Dory emphasized that students had high motivation for speaking English. The reasons for that is traveling and online gaming where they chat a lot with people from all over the world.

It is more interesting for them I think to learn about English in USA and Great Britain than to learn about ny norsk and bokmål. It does not have the same appeal to them, I think. I feel that they have very strong motivation for learning English, sometimes more than Norwegian because some of them they feel that it is cooler to be good at English.

The teacher expressed the belief that students could be even better at their speaking skills since a lot of them were motivated. Furthermore, Dory added that she had one student from India who had very good strategies learning English since she got a big focus on learning English at home.

When asked if parents promoted positive attitudes towards their children learning English and Norwegian at the same time, Dory pointed out that sometimes it would depend on what country they are from. Some of the parents used just their mother tongue at home and did not pay so much attention to Norwegian or English. The teacher highlighted that it would be beneficial for students' learning if their parents encouraged and pushed them to read and learn at home.

Parents' level of Norwegian and English

Dory reported that in general if parents were educated and if they knew English it would influence their children learning. But the teacher considered that the most important was parents' attitudes towards education.

Sometimes it is not about the level how educated parents are, but what they want for their children, no matter if they do not speak English themselves or Norwegian, they will find time to encourage their children and push them gently to learn languages maybe even learn from them.

The teacher indicated that parents' attitudes towards education was very important in students' language learning. Furthermore, she added that there were some parents from Somalia that considered that it was up to school to educate their children and they did not need to encourage them at home.

Mother tongue teaching

When asked about mother tongue education outside the school, the teacher stated that there were students who attended Koran schools and online classes every day where they got education in religion. In the teacher's opinion, sometimes it was too much for learners to have it on top of the mainstream school since they got tired and did not have time to learn other subjects.

Dory promoted positive attitudes towards mother tongue education outside the school and she believed that if students could be motivated in learning the mother tongue it would impact on their further language learning in a positive way.

The most important issue in teaching multilingual students

Dory highlighted that teaching English two times per week is too little for students, and it would be more profitable for their learning if they could have more hours of English.

I would like to go to some kind of courses or classes to make me aware of things that I have not been able to find out by myself. For example, some basic information and tips where to read, which web site to use and then try it out. Maybe divide students in different groups and test it out and see if it works. Because when it is all up to me, I do not find time for it, neither resources. I am not able to use their mother tongues in a way to help them and I do not feel my colleagues can do it either.

The teacher admitted that she would need teaching strategies that she could apply to multilingual students. When asked if Dory had something to add to the interview, the teacher stated that it would be profitable to make more room for mother tongue education and concentrate on fewer subjects at school. She considered that two hours of English was not enough especially for students with the multilingual background.

6.5 Summary

The results from the interviews indicate that despite the fact that all teachers acknowledged the benefits of previous language learning, there was a difference in adapting their strategies and methods to the multilingual learners. Regarding the teachers from the introductory school, the findings showed that the participants realized the importance of applying differentiated instruction to the newly arrived multilingual students and attention was paid to the learners' mother tongues. The interview responses

obtained from the teachers from two mainstream schools showed that the language educators did not provide instruction that could exploit the students' linguistic backgrounds in the English classroom. Moreover, not all of them felt that they had the competence to implement English instruction to the multilingual learners.

Regarding the multilingual students, findings indicate that they used their languages in different domains. Some of the learners translanguaged among Norwegian, English and Polish during the interview. The possible reason for that is that I have these languages in my repertoire and the students were informed about that fact. The main finding that comes from the interviews with students is that for all learners the mother tongue was a reference point in order to learn English and Norwegian. Some of the students claimed that they would like to receive the mother tongue education.

7. Discussion

This chapter analyzes findings obtained from the interviews, tying up the various theoretical strands represented in Chapter four. The discussion includes two main categories that involve the participant teachers' and students' perspectives. The teachers' perspectives are presented in two subsections below: *Teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism*, and *Methods and strategies in teaching English as a third language*.

7.1 The teachers' perspectives

7.1.1 Teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism

In order to analyze teachers' attitudes towards multilingualism it is important to take into consideration the teachers' competence and the teachers' multilingual awareness. Regarding teachers' competence, the study showed that all participants had different educational backgrounds from universities with both English as their main teaching subject, or with further educational training in English language teaching. Their working experience as the teachers varied from one to twenty-five years. Nevertheless, my findings indicated that none of the participants received training in providing English instruction to multilingual learners. A common view amongst interviewees was that it would be a great support for the teachers to get knowledge about methods that are differentiated according to the students' linguistic backgrounds. Two teachers from the introductory school claimed that it was significant for future language educators to have multilingual pedagogy or second language pedagogy as a part of their education.

The findings showed that all participants promoted positive attitudes towards multilingualism and considered it an asset in further language learning. However, not all of them felt that they had the competence to implement instruction to the multilingual learners. One of the participants from the introductory school reported that she educated herself and took one year of second language pedagogy in order to develop her teaching competence. Another teacher claimed that there was very little focus on multilingualism during his educational program and as a result he wrote his master's thesis targeting multilingualism. The teacher from the mainstream school considered that the lack of knowledge about multilingual pedagogy posed challenges in finding and applying instruction to the multilingual learners.

These findings indicate and reinforce the point made by Dahl & Krulatz (2016) that English teachers do not feel prepared to differentiate teaching instruction to the multilingual students. There is overwhelming evidence confirming the notion that the teacher training program needs to have more focus on multilingual pedagogy. The educational authorities in Norway promote multilingualism and

the Norwegian language curriculum emphasizes that “linguistic diversity is an asset in the development of linguistic competence in children and young people” (Directorate for Education and Training, 2006). Nevertheless, the findings suggest that this is not supported in the teacher training program in a way that the language educators can feel competent enough to provide English instruction in a highly diverse classroom.

According to the theory, there are both quantitative and qualitative differences between second and third language acquisition (Cenoz, 2000; Jessner, 2008). This indicates that the study of third language acquisition includes linguistic and cognitive variables of previous language learning experience (Hufeisen & Marx, 2004). Thus, according to Otwinowska (2014), teachers have to be aware that the language can bear similarities and differences to the system of many other languages which can be found in the areas of morphosyntax, vocabulary, grammar, and phonology. In order to adapt a multilingual approach in the classroom that implies making use of the learners’ linguistic backgrounds, the teacher needs to develop their metalinguistic awareness first (Andrews, 2003; Otwinowska, 2014).

In order to exploit learners’ linguistic backgrounds when learning English as a third language, it is important to examine the relations between L3 and learners’ L1 and L2. Such a process is called cross-linguistic influence, which takes into account the prior linguistic knowledge that learners have and how that knowledge may affect the acquisition of the target language (De Angelis, 2007). Since the multilingual students may not be aware of the potential cross-linguistic advantage that their languages offer, it is the teacher’s role to raise learners’ awareness of cross-linguistic similarity in the process of acquiring English as an L3. From this perspective, it is crucial that teachers possess “subject-matter knowledge” that is central in teachers’ language awareness and a part of teachers’ professionalism (Andrews, 2003).

7.1.2 Methods and strategies in teaching English as a third language

All teaching is challenging, but I don’t think it is more challenging to teach multilingual students, but you need to work in a different way!

- **Andreas (the teacher from the introductory school)**

The central feature revealed in this study is that there was a considerable difference in adjusting English instruction between the teacher from the introductory and the two mainstream schools. The findings indicate that the teachers from the mainstream schools seemed to be aware of the benefits that come from previous language learning. Educators primarily focused on similarities and differences

between Norwegian and English in their teaching. This evidence suggests that the teachers possessed the knowledge of typological similarities between languages. According to De Angelis (2007), Falk & Bardel (2010), and Hammarberg (2001), if two languages are typologically close it makes it easier to transfer previous linguistic knowledge from L1 to L2 or from L2 to L3. Nevertheless, the participants were not able to include other languages in their teaching, and their preferred language of instruction was Norwegian. The policy to use only Norwegian in English instruction in my findings reflects and supports findings from the research study done by (Flognfeldt, in print).

Despite the fact that multilingualism exists on an individual and a social level In Norway, it seemed that it was not fully supported in a school context. In the descriptions brought forward by the participants from the mainstream schools it was evident that the use of the students' mother tongues in further language learning was left to the learners' own initiative. The findings present that the teachers did not provide instruction that could exploit the students' linguistic backgrounds in the English classroom. One of the reasons behind the absence of differentiated instruction was that participants claimed that they did not have knowledge of students' mother tongues. Another argument given by the teacher from the mainstream school was that she needed methods in order to differentiate her teaching to the multilingual learners.

The following quotes echo the concern for the teachers' beliefs about the role of the mother tongue in further language learning:

“I think it is a tendency to go away from mother tongue teaching because they are here to learn Norwegian, maybe. Now I feel like it has to be just Norwegian and then English at school” (Dory)

“I have the feeling even if they can talk at home their mother tongues, it will be hard for them to see differences and similarities in grammar. I think they regard themselves Norwegians. “ (Lina)

A possible explanation for the statements listed above, may be the status of the minority students' languages in society. Jessner (2008) refers to the factor model in the language learning process by Hufeisen & Marx (2007) and points out that one of the factors that influences third language acquisition is learner external factors. They include socio, cultural and socio-economic surroundings and have a great influence on the learner's development in the learning process of an L2 and L3. Jessner (2008) underlines that the status of the minority language in the new country may influence the learner's acquisition of a second and a third language. On these grounds, one can argue that if learners' mother tongues are not valued in the school context and in addition do not have a high status

in society, the multilingual students will not be encouraged to use it in the classroom and would not see any purpose in learning it and seeing it as resource in further language learning.

According to the Norwegian national subject curriculum for English, students are encouraged to use their prior linguistic knowledge in further language learning, find linguistic similarities and differences between their mother tongues and English. On the basis of the evidence currently available, it seems fair to suggest that the present situation does not align with curricular aims to incorporate the language involvement in the English teaching. Thus, these findings further support the idea of a revised curriculum, discussed by Flognfeldt (in print) and Iversen (2016) with regard to implementing the linguistic backgrounds of minority learners in further language learning.

Another possible explanation for the attitudes towards the multilingual students' mother tongues may be also influence from the media, see figure 4.

“Children who cannot speak Norwegian should not watch children’s television programs in their mother tongues”

“The use of the mother tongue at home may be an obstacle to children’s success”

“Speak Norwegian – get financial child support”

“A summer school in Oslo for ‘language-deficient’ children “

In the following statements one can notice the attitudes towards minority languages. The last title *“A summer school in Oslo for ‘språksvake’ ‘language-deficient’ children* can be accounted for with the reference to Laugerud et al (2014) in Iversen’s (2016) master’s thesis that “rather than adapting the instruction to the cultural and linguistic diversity, it seems that minority students who do not easily adapt to the egalitarian classroom are excluded, and provided with special education” (Iversen , 2016, p. 74).

Debatt i media



KRAV Fremskrittspartiet i Oslo vil ha strengere krav til innvandrere. Politiker Carl I. Hagen mener at de bør få kutt i pengestøtten hvis de ikke følger kravene. Foto: Håkon Mosvold Larsen / NTB scanpix

Skal ikke se barne-TV fra hjemlandet

Barn som ikke kan norsk, bør nektes å se barne-TV fra hjemlandet. Det mener Fremskrittspartiet i Oslo. Partiet vil også kutte pengestøtte for foreldre som ikke følger krav.

Frp vil stoppe barnetrygden til barn som ikke består språktest



Jan Bøhler (Ap) er redd morsmål hjemme gir barna dårligere forutsetninger for å lykkes

ANDREAS SLETTVÅG OSLO KOMMENTATOR
OPPLAG: 26 NOV 2013 16:21 | PUBLISERT: 26 NOV 2013 08:24



BTLEIRTE KRAV Carl I. Hagen på tur over Østlandet da han i oktober fikk kunningsen at han skulle bli, barn av et innvandrers par. Her har et innvandrers par språktest for de måler kompetansen. Foto: Jacques Høivang / Dagbladet

- Snakk norsk - få kontantstøtte

Carl I. Hagen vil språkteste innvandrereforeldre i Oslo som mottar kontantstøtte.

Oslo vil lage sommerskole for språksvake barn før skolestart



Figure 4, adapted from UIO, NOAS 2102

According to the theory on third language acquisition, multilingualism is not seen as an asset in the students' further language learning if they are not encouraged in the school situation to "rely on their different languages and language knowledge as positive resources" (Moore, 2006). Thus, it is crucial that the teachers possess awareness about multilingual education and have the ability to see learners' potential as multilingual speakers in order to exploit their linguistic knowledge in further language learning. The results from my research provide evidence that the teachers from the mainstream schools needed knowledge and awareness about multilingual pedagogy in English language learning.

According to Andrews (2003), teachers' language awareness encompasses an awareness of language from the learners' perspective, an awareness of a learner's developing interlanguage, and an awareness of the extent to which the language content of materials and lessons poses difficulties for students (Andrews, 2003, p. 86). Thus, teachers' language awareness is central in developing students' metalinguistic awareness.

Regarding the teachers from the introductory school, the findings from my research showed that the participants realized the importance of applying differentiated instruction to the newly arrived multilingual students, and attention was paid to learners' mother tongues.

“We have to draw on students' mother tongues, to use the language that can help them most in further language learning” (Anna)

The participants demonstrated a high level of multilingual awareness, which according to Otwinowska (2014), is the key element to develop students' individual multilingualism. A common view amongst the teachers from the introductory school was that it was significant to teach the newly arrived students strategies in language learning and develop students' metalinguistic awareness. The basic premises of their argument were that the newly arrived learners had different linguistics backgrounds and cultures. Thus, they demanded differentiated approaches in learning in order to transfer their linguistic knowledge to other languages. The findings indicate that the language educators from the introductory school possessed language awareness that according to Andrews (2003), is central in order to develop students' metalinguistic awareness.

Despite the fact that all teachers acknowledged the benefits of previous language learning, the results showed that there was a difference with respect to adapt their strategies and methods to the multilingual learners. The language educators from the introductory school made use of the students' mother tongues in both Norwegian and English classes, facilitating the development of the students' potential linguistic knowledge in further language learning. From the interviews in this study, one can see that the newly arrived students were given instruction differentiated to meet their linguistic needs. According to one of the teachers, texts and themes were adapted to the multilingual reality compared to a monolingual reality. When it comes to vocabulary, the students were encouraged to use dictionaries and translate unknown words into their mother tongues. Moreover, the teaching material and themes were suitable for the multilingual classroom. Regarding teaching various aspects of grammar, the newly arrived students were encouraged to find the grammar phenomena that were similar or different from the one that knew from in their mother tongues. Another teacher from the introductory school claimed that it was easier to draw on Norwegian, and he used a lot of Norwegian to teach English but still encouraged students to build up sentences in three languages when they faced challenges.

Regarding literacy in the mother tongue and community schools, the teachers promoted positive attitudes towards it. The language educators from the introductory schools claimed that the students' knowledge of the mother tongue and other languages was an important factor in third language learning. Moreover, two of the teachers stated that the mother tongue had the importance for students' identity and culture.

The findings from the introductory school differ from the ones reported in the study conducted by Burner & Carlsen (2017). I suggest two possible explanations for this. The first one is that the form and content of the English schooling in the introductory school differed from the one provided in the introductory classes. The school policy in the introductory school was to promote multilingualism and students' bilingual and multicultural competence was seen as a resource in further language learning. The learners were promoted to the use of mother tongues at home and it was allowed to use the first language at school. Moreover, all multilingual students who attended the school had age-appropriate educational backgrounds and were literate in their mother tongues. The students were assessed before they were allocated to the class that corresponded to their language level.

The second explanation that I put forward is that the language educators in the introductory school facilitated the development of the students' potential linguistic knowledge in English language learning. This evidence points to teachers' metacognition about teaching and learning in multilingual settings. However, I consider it important to highlight that two of the teachers from the introductory school educated themselves in order to teach the multilingual students. The third teacher is taking now a course of second language pedagogy. Hence, it could conceivably be hypothesized that it was only due to this they could provide instruction adapted to the multilingual learners.

When it comes to the participants from the mainstream schools, they also argued that the multilingual students needed language learning strategies in order to draw on their previous language knowledge. The language educators acknowledged that the multilingual students have potential compared to their monolingual peers, and they claimed that they have languages in their repertoire to compare. However, when the teachers referred to the methods applied to the multilingual learners in English teaching, it seems that it was felt as a challenge for them. The teachers' own articulation of beliefs regarded their practices of exploiting the multilingual students' mother tongues reflected their English instruction. The language educators applied teaching methods that were used in general teaching in their English classrooms. The participants held the view that the students' Norwegian language skills corresponded with their knowledge of English. The analyses showed that this was contrasted with their belief that the low level of Norwegian would pose challenges to the multilingual students when learning English.

Similar findings were found among the teachers in the introductory classes in the research conducted by Burner & Carlsen (2017).

The findings showed that the teachers did not develop students' multilingual proficiency, which, according to Moore (2006), consists of the sum of competences in different linguistic systems in contact and of specific competences emerging from this contact. Thus, the specific proficiency skills described by Moore (2006), which include language learning, language management and language maintenance, were not developed.

7.2 The students' perspectives

“...A multilingual is a speaker of three or more languages with unique linguistic configurations, often depending on individual history ... “(De Angelis & Selinker, 2001, p.45).

The findings obtained from the interviews in the introductory school in this study indicate that all students were bilingual and had previous experience with English language learning. The learners represented a linguistic and cultural diverse population, had one or two languages as their mother tongues, and were literate in their first languages.

The interview responses obtained both from the teachers and students indicate that learners' mother tongues played an instrumental role in their acquisition of English and Norwegian. Despite the fact that the newly arrived students had prior language learning experience from their home countries, the results showed that it was important for them that the language educators adapt their teaching strategies to the students' multilingual backgrounds and draw on their first languages.

The way English was taught in the introductory school reflected students' language learning strategies, their metalinguistic and cross-linguistic awareness. The findings indicate that learners were able to notice that their first language was typologically close or different from the target language. Some of the students could provide examples with similar or different grammar constructions that existed in their mother tongues and English. One learner reported that Norwegian was close to German and another that she could find differences between Italian and English. Moreover, the findings from the interviews reveal that all students were motivated to learn English and found it helpful to acquire two languages simultaneously. Notwithstanding the fact that some of the parents could have poor educational backgrounds and the low level both in Norwegian and English, they promoted positive attitudes towards their children's learning. According to the teachers' beliefs this factor influenced students' motivation.

The findings indicate that teachers' strategies facilitated the students' development of metalinguistic awareness. Since learners were encouraged to activate and draw on their mother tongues and their potential languages, they were placed in bilingual language mode. According to Grosjean (2008), a bilingual can activate two or more languages in their communication, and brings the elements of the other language, thus they "call on their two or more languages to do the task asked for them" (Grosjean 2013, p.16). The available evidence points out that the learners developed affective factors in third language acquisition which according to Hufeisen's factor model (1998), deal with closeness or distance between the languages and motivation that can influence third language acquisition in a positive way. Moreover, due to the differentiated instruction and language learning strategies, students developed their linguistic skills or abilities owing to their metacognitive knowledge. One of the factors that influenced their metalinguistic awareness was that newly arrived students had a good level of proficiency of their mother tongues. According to Jessner (2006) and Lasagabaster (2000), different degrees in the learners' first and second languages would affect further language learning in a positive way. The findings indicate that some of the students acknowledged the benefits of the multilingualism and some learners claimed that they would like to receive mother tongue instruction.

I can read books in Greek, for example, but I do not have a teacher to teach me my mother tongue. Well, I would not have a problem in learning more Greek and, maybe, it would be useful for me in the future, besides it is good to know more languages. It would be nice to receive mother tongue education. I think it is cool when you can speak with a certain group of people and nobody would understand it. (Helena)

The interview responses indicate that the students activated their language repertoires in different domains. It is important to notice that the school policy in the introductory school studied here promoted multilingualism. Both parents and teachers were informed to encourage students to value their mother tongues and see them as a resource in learning. This reinforces the assumption that activation of languages that bilinguals have in their repertoire can be related to the degree that bilinguals "perceive their mainstream and ethnic cultural identities" Ramírez-Esparza & García-Sierra (2014). Since learners' mother tongues were valued in the classroom and they were encouraged to draw on their linguistic backgrounds, the newly arrived students developed good language learning strategies. The findings show that all learners reported that in order to build up sentences or write an essay in English or Norwegian, they first thought in their mother tongues and then they could activate the other languages. Hence, one can argue that their first language played the dominant role in both English and Norwegian language learning.

The interviews conducted with the newly arrived multilingual students took place two weeks before they would start attending the mainstream school. Despite the fact that learners obtained good strategies at the introductory school, their first language was still dominant and served as a reference point when learning both English and Norwegian.

7.3 Summary

The findings in this study have shown that all the participants acknowledged the benefits of multilingualism in further language learning, but not every teacher could adjust their English instruction to the multilingual students' learning needs. The highly diverse classroom posed challenges for the language educators from the mainstream schools. The lack of knowledge about multilingual pedagogy and the role of Norwegian as a dominant language in their English classes influenced the teachers' instruction. The language educators applied general teaching strategies that were not responsive to the students' linguistic needs. As a result, the multilingual students' mother tongues were not used as a support in their English learning process.

Regarding the teachers from the introductory school, they facilitated the development of the students' linguistic knowledge. There was evidence in teachers' beliefs that the mother tongue was an important factor in language learning for the newly arrived students. The language educators in the introductory school provided the multilingual students with differentiated instruction that developed the students' multilingual competence. As for the learners' experience of multilingualism, findings from the interviews indicated that the newly arrived students demonstrated linguistic awareness which was developed due to the language learning strategies they received in the introductory school. All students held the view that their mother tongues were a reference point in learning English and Norwegian.

The reader should bear in mind that the current study was not specifically designed to examine explicitly the strategies that were applied in teaching English to the multilingual students. The main aim was to elicit teachers' beliefs about their self-reported practice, their knowledge base about multilingualism and how it influences their English instruction. Since teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards multilingualism are linked to their strategies and methods, they are important for the understanding and improvement of educational processes.

8. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to investigate teachers' and students' experience of multilingualism taking into account the role of the mother tongue in the process of learning English as a third language. A further aspiration of the study is an investigation of how linguistic diversity in the EFL classroom influences teaching practices. It discusses the extent to which and how language educators adjust their teaching strategies and draw on the linguistic backgrounds of multilingual learners when teaching English as a third language.

This thesis presents three main findings. First, the study has shown that the mother tongue was of the essence for the newly arrived multilingual students and served as a reference point when learning English and Norwegian. Almost all participants claimed that they think in their first language in order to build up sentences and write texts in English. The teachers' strategies facilitated the students' development of metalinguistic awareness. The way English was taught in the introductory school mirrored students' language learning strategies and their cross-linguistic awareness.

Second, the two mainstream schools which were presented in the study represented schools with a high percentage of multilingual learners. Moreover, these schools received students from the introductory school. The current study found that the Norwegian language played a dominating role in English classes, and the teachers from the mainstream schools did not draw on the multilingual students' linguistic backgrounds. The findings show that the use of the students' mother tongues in further language learning was left to the learners' own initiative. The language educators applied teaching methods that were used in general teaching in their English classrooms. The main reasons given for not including differentiated instruction was the teachers' own lack of the languages that a highly diverse classroom represented. Another reason was the teachers' view that the low level of Norwegian would pose challenges for the multilingual students when learning English. Nevertheless, the language educators seemed to be aware of the benefits that come from previous language learning. Their lack of knowledge about multilingual education and methods for third language acquisition had consequences for their English instruction. The issues that emerge from these findings are that if English educators take only Norwegian into account in their teaching, the multilingual students will not benefit from their mother tongues or the languages they may have in their repertoire. In the case of the newly arrived multilingual students, who will continue their study in the mainstream schools, this can lead to the potential challenges in their further language learning.

Third, and one of the most significant findings that have emerged from this study is that none of the participants obtained knowledge about multilingual pedagogy during their teacher training program. Some of the teachers did not feel competent enough to provide English instruction in a highly diverse classroom, and some claimed that the teacher training program should include multilingual pedagogy as a part of the teacher education. Two teachers from the introductory school educated themselves in the field of multilingual pedagogy, and this had an effect on their practices regarding English instruction in the multilingual classroom. Thus, one can conclude that in order to incorporate the curriculum's aim for mother tongue involvement, the teachers need more knowledge about how to welcome the multilingual students' mother tongues and see them as a resource in language learning.

Although the current study is based on a small sample of participants and cannot be generalized, the findings suggest that with the right support and differentiated instruction, learners can develop their multilingual competence and use their pre-existing knowledge in further language learning. For this to happen, first the multilingual pedagogy should be a part of the teacher training program. Language educators should be competent to meet classrooms characterized by linguistic and cultural diversity. It is important that the school can provide an inclusive environment where the multilingual students' mother tongues are valued and used as a resource in language learning. It applies both to Norwegian and English language teaching. In the case of the newly arrived multilingual students, it is of the essence that the school values and supports the students' mother tongues.

In the introduction to the curriculum that will be implemented in 2020, it says that "the school should contribute so that every student can develop his or her own identity in an inclusive and diverse community [...] All students are to experience that knowing more languages is a resource in the school context and in society" [my translation] (Norwegian Government, 2017, p. 6). In the section for an inclusive teaching environment it is written that: in the process of developing an inclusive and inspiring learning environment, diversity is to be recognised as a resource and students' involvement in learning must be a characteristic of school practices" [my translation] (Norwegian Government, 2017, p. 15). It seems that 'diversity' is indeed seen as a benefit in the school context, but the question remains whether educational institutions and language educators are ready to implement 'diversity' as a resource in teaching and learning English as an additional language.

The evidence from this study indicates that the greater emphasis should be put on ensuring that every learner gets equitable language education. Therefore, I believe there is a need for more research on teaching practices both in introductory schools and in mainstream schools. The findings obtained from my research can be viewed in light of possible implications for the development of English language

teacher education, where multilingual pedagogy should be included as a vital component in the theoretical and practical analysis and discussion of teaching practices. It is my hope that this research study may also be a relevant contribution towards improved and effective of language teaching in future multilingual classrooms with the aim of producing deeper and equitable learning for all students.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide - teachers

Teacher's background

1. What is your educational background?
2. How long have you been working as an English teacher?
3. Do you speak another language besides Norwegian and English?
4. What grade do you teach?
5. Have you had special training or courses regarding teaching English as a third language?
6. Which subjects except English do you teach?
7. In your opinion, do teachers of English need a specific training, a range of courses, in order to teach multilingual students? If yes, can you explain why?

L3 learning and teaching

1. Do you consider multilingualism as an asset or an obstacle in English language learning?
2. In your opinion, is it a difference between teaching English to multilingual students and monolingual one? Do you find it challenging to teach students who have English as their third language? If yes, why?
3. Which factors do you consider can influence the process of acquiring English as a third language, regarding from your teaching experience?
4. According to English language curriculum, students are required to draw on their previous language learning knowledge by identifying linguistic similarities and differences between English and their own mother tongue. How do you implement these competence aims in your teaching? What methods/ strategies/teaching materials do you use?
5. Do you draw on students' potential knowledge of languages other than Norwegian? If yes, so to what extent and how?
6. To what extent do you draw on students' knowledge of Norwegian when you teach English? If yes, so how? Do you find it helpful in your teaching?
7. Do you use different pedagogical methods/strategies teaching English to multilingual students than you do with monolingual one? If yes, which and why? If no, why?

8. The main subject area, *Language learning*, focuses on insight into own language learning and language usage. To your mind, do multilingual background students have the ability to evaluate their own language usage and learning needs in order to select suitable strategies in their own learning?

Students' backgrounds

1. How many multilingual students are there in your class you teach English? Where are they from?
2. Can you describe the level of English of multilingual students?
3. Do you feel that multilingual students have advantages in learning English as a third language? If yes, why?
4. What methods of teaching English as a third language have you used in your teaching? Do you notice that multilingual students use different strategies/methods learning English comparing to their Norwegian peers?
5. Do you feel that student's level of Norwegian language can influence the process of acquiring English?
6. Do you notice a difference in performance between multilingual students who are literate in their mother tongues and those who are not?
7. Do you feel that multilingualism may have a negative effect on the language learning process?
8. In your opinion, what should be viewed as the most important issue while teaching multilingual students?
9. Is there anything of relevance you would like to add?

Students' motivation, parents' attitude and mother tongue status

1. Can you describe the students' motivation to learn English?
2. To your mind, should minority students be literate in all languages they know? If yes / no, why?
3. Do parents promote positive attitude to the child learning Norwegian and English at the same time?
4. Do you know the parents' level of Norwegian and English? To your mind, how important is parents' educational background?
5. Do multilingual students receive mother tongue teaching outside of the school?

6. In your opinion, should multilingual students receive mother tongue teaching? If yes/no, can you explain why?

Appendix 2

Interview guide - students

1. How old are you?
2. What country are you from?
3. What languages besides English/Norwegian do you speak?
4. What language do you speak at home with your parents and why?
5. What language do you speak with your sibling and why?
6. What language do you speak with your friends and why?
7. Do you receive mother tongue teaching outside of the school? If yes, so how often?
8. Do you find it difficult to learn a third language? If yes/no, can you explain why?
9. What language do you use as a support one when you learn English?
10. Do you find any similarities or differences between your mother tongue and English?
11. How do you find out about words you do not know in English? Do you try to find the same equivalents in your mother tongue or in another language?
12. Do you find it difficult/ helpful to learn English and Norwegian at the same time, if yes/no why?
13. What language “do you think” when you build up sentences in English and when you use grammar structures?
14. If you need to write a topic in English about Environment in Norway, what language do you think and use first in order to write it?

Appendix 3

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet for lærere

Teachers' and students' experience of multilingualism: The role of the mother tongue in the acquisition of English as a third language

Bakgrunn og formål

Dette er en forespørsel til deg om å delta i et intervju og du er valgt på grunn av din erfaring som lærer som underviser til minoritetsspråklige elever på skolen. Prosjektet er en mastergradstudie ved Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus. Utgangspunktet for studien er økningen av flerspråklige elever i norsk skole som lærer engelsk som sitt tredje språk. Formålet med prosjektet er å finne ut hvordan elevens første og andre språk kan påvirke tredje språklæring. Denne studien tar utgangspunkt i problemstillingen: Kan flerspråklighet være en ressurs eller en ulempe i engelskundervisningen. Studien også undersøker om hva slags utfordringer lærere møter når de underviser engelsk til minoritetsspråklige elever.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

På bakgrunn av forskningsspørsmålet, benytter jeg meg av en kvalitativ tilnærming i form av intervju og observasjoner. For å få datainnsamling kreves det aktiv deltagelse i intervjuer av engelsklærere som underviser til minoritetsspråklige elever. Spørsmålene vil omhandle flerspråklighet og engelsk som tredje språk på skolen. Data vil registreres i form av notater og lydopptak. Foreldre som samtykker for barn kan på forespørsel få se intervjuguide for elever.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Det er bare student og veileder som har tilgang til dem. For å ivareta konfidensialitet, koblingsnøkkel vil lagres adskilt fra øvrige data. Deltakerne vil kunne ikke gjenkjennes i publikasjon. Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes 30.05.2017 og datamaterialet blir anonymisert.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert.

Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med prosjektleder Olena Iamroz, tel: 96713478, veileder Mona Evelyn Flognfeldt, tel:67237221. Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix 4

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet for elever

Teachers' and students' experience of multilingualism: The role of the mother tongue in the acquisition of English as a third language

Bakgrunn og formål

Dette er en forespørsel til deg om å delta i et intervju og du er valgt på grunn av din erfaring som minoritetsspråklige elev på skolen. Prosjektet som gjennomføres er en mastergradstudie ved Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus. Utgangspunktet for studien er økningen av flerspråklige elever i norsk skole som lærer engelsk som sitt tredje språk. Formålet med prosjektet er å finne ut hvordan elevens første og andre språk kan påvirke tredje språklæring. Denne studien tar utgangspunkt i problemstillingen: Kan flerspråklighet være en ressurs eller en ulempe i engelskundervisningen. Studien også undersøker om hva slags utfordringer lærere møter når de underviser engelsk til minoritetsspråklige elever.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

På bakgrunn av forskningsspørsmålet, benytter jeg meg av en kvalitativ tilnærming i form av intervju og observasjoner. For å få datainnsamling kreves det aktiv deltagelse i intervjuer av elever som har minoritetsspråklige bakgrunn. Spørsmålene vil omhandle flerspråklighet og engelsk som tredje språk på skolen. Data vil registreres i form av notater og lydopptak. Foreldre som samtykker for barn kan på forespørsel få se intervjuguide for elever.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Det er bare student og veileder som har tilgang til dem. For å ivareta konfidensialitet, koblingsnøkkel vil lagres adskilt fra øvrige data. Deltakerne vil kunne ikke gjenkjennes i publikasjon. Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes 30.05.2017 og datamaterialet blir anonymisert.

Frivillig deltakelse

Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert.

Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med prosjektleder Olena Iamroz, tel: 96713478, veileder Mona Evelyn Flognfeldt, tel:67237221. Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix 5

Mona Evelyn Flognfeldt

Institutt for grunnskole- og faglærerutdanning Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus

Postboks 4, St. Olavs plass

0130 OSLO

Vår dato: 19.01.2017

Vår ref: 51579 / 3 / STM

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 13.12.2016. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

51579 Teachers' and students' experience of multilingualism: The role of the mother tongue in the acquisition of English as a third language

Behandlingsansvarlig

Daglig ansvarlig

Student

Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus, ved institusjonens øverste leder

Mona Evelyn Flognfeldt

Olena lamroz

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, 15.05.2018, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Kjersti Haugstvedt

Siri Tenden Myklebust

Kontaktperson: Siri Tenden Myklebust tlf: 55 58 22 68

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

NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS	Harald Hårfagres gate 29	Tel: +47-55 58 21 17	nsd@nsd.no	Org.nr. 985 321 884
NSD – Norwegian Centre for Research Data	NO-5007 Bergen, NORWAY	Faks: +47-55 58 96 50	www.nsd.no	



Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Kopi: Olena lamroz nujerzey096@gmail.com

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Prosjektnr: 51579

Utvalget informeres skriftlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Foresatte samtykker for sine barn som er under 15 år. Informasjonsskrivet lærerne og foresatte er godt utformet. Det er oppgitt i meldingen at det vil bli innhentet samtykke fra foresatte dersom lærerintervjuene skal omhandle konkrete elever.

Merk at når barn skal delta aktivt, er deltakelsen alltid frivillig for barnet, selv om de foresatte samtykker. Barnet bør få alderstilpasset informasjon om prosjektet, og det må sørges for at de forstår at deltakelse er frivillig og at de når som helst kan trekke seg dersom de ønsker det.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at student etterfølger Høgskolen i Oslo og Akershus sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet.

Det oppgis at personopplysninger skal publiseres. Personvernombudet legger til grunn at det foreligger eksplisitt samtykke fra den enkelte til dette. Vi anbefaler at deltakerne gis anledning til å lese igjennom egne opplysninger og godkjenne disse før publisering.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 05.04.2017. 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)
- slette digitale lydopptak