OSLOMET

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Sticks and Stones May Break My Bones, but Discourse is Forever

A content analysis of Norway's national curriculum and in what ways its discourse reflects the country's growing cultural diversity

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Foreword

The writing process of this thesis has been long and intense. As with many in my graduating year know, writing a master thesis during a global pandemic is, for lack of a better word arduous.

Nonetheless a thesis was written. Firstly this was made possible by the support, but also necessary pressure at times from my advisor Tom G. Griffiths. There was a moment I was seriously considering postponing the hand in, thankfully however my advisor would not let me.

Secondly I must thank my mathematics teacher and principle from my middle and high school years, Victoria J. Robbins. Victoria is the reason, in many ways I have studied pedagogy. She is also my inspiration to the teacher I aspire to be. Victoria sees every student exactly as who they are, accepts them without arguing, and teaches them in the way they need. It was thanks to this magic of hers that I managed to pass my high school math finals.

Thirdly my parents, would not be here without them, literally and figuratively. My friends for putting up with me, especially the last month of this project. I would have lied in the fetal position on my couch a lot more throughout this process without the support of the best family and friends.

And lastly, to the teacher and school who allowed me to send them my questionnaire, and provided me with students to answer the questions. I know it has not been an easy year to juggle for students and teachers, and I am eternally grateful for the time you gave me.

Summary

This project is a content and thematic analysis surrounding Norway's most recent national curriculum that was published in the year 2020. Specifically an analysis surrounding the discourse employed when talking about those students who fall under the category of minorities. As well in what ways this newest curriculum creates space for those same students within the classroom. The inspiration for this thesis came from the most recent version of the national curriculum being published. This document being the main guiding document in Norwegian classrooms, as the document that dictates what core values are to be represented and valued in all aspects of education. It was especially interesting to see in what ways the most recent publication of a national curriculum takes into consideration the growing cultural diversity of Norway.

Through critical discourse analysis as a supporting approach to creating an analysis of the curriculum, it became evident that the curriculum could not be looked at through a single lens. That is to say, through critical discourse analysis it became evident that to develop a better understanding of Norway's relationship with ethnic minorities, a historical and socio-political approach had to be employed.

The project through, history, socio-politics, and discourse analysis showed the national curriculum is not necessarily a document written with all ethnic and religious backgrounds in mind. It rather proved to be a document much more focused on highlighting similarities, rather than potential differences and how to work with those who are different from ourselves.

Through this analysis, I make the argument for anyone who uses the national curriculum to become aware of the discourse this central educational document uses. Then through a more critical approach, strive to create a space for all ethnic and religious backgrounds within a classroom. Learn and teach to live with those who are different from ourselves, and have an intercultural understanding despite potential differences.

Abstract

This project uses a thematic, content, and critical discourse approach in its analysis of Norway's newest national curriculum. By employing these analytical approaches this project attempted to gather a better idea of the space that ethnic minorities in Norway are given inside and outside a classroom setting.

Keywords: Intercultural education, Multicultural, Nordic Exceptionalism, National Curriculum, Discourse

1. Introduction

This project was written during the COVID-19 pandemic, that affected everyone everywhere in the world. Luckily this thesis was only directly affected by the choice of way to go forward with the thesis more than anything. This is a project that is close to my heart, and was written with a younger self in mind. A younger self who struggled with never being quite enough Mexican or enough Norwegian to feel like she truly belonged anywhere. Yet also written with the knowledge that an ever-growing cross-global society is a reality many schools and classrooms have to face, and as a result, those in charge of implementing and creating national curriculums.

It is important to note, while reading this thesis, that the discussions being brought up are in an attempt to understand the nuances of the newest edition of the aforementioned document. This project was written through a critical lens, in trying to understand the new national curriculum, as well as a lens that wishes to open a discussion on how to do better and how to be better in terms of identity and cultural diversity education. In equal parts those who create the national curriculums, those in positions of power and decision making, schools, educators, and the students themselves who all are a part of the educational system that is as much a product of history as a product of its future.

1.1 Why this Project

In many ways, this thesis was begun when I wrote my Bachelor assignment. Throughout my education and studies, the subject that interests me the most, has always been about multicultural and intercultural education, and consequently the language surrounding those that fall under the category of multicultural or intercultural. This is perhaps self-explanatory considering my upbringing in Mexico, to a Mexican-American father and a Norwegian mother.

Personally, the experience of belonging to several cultures was seen and experienced as a great advantage, to have a foot hole in several cultures, and a better understanding of several cultures

equally, therefore I became curious with how educational platforms lay the field for a growing amount of students who encompass as much of the Global South and the Global North. However, when the new national curriculum, which I will abbreviate as LK20 throughout this thesis, was published, there did not seem to be much room for those often categorized as the "others". This inherent bias of the national curriculum surfaced through the language it used. Thus this project came to focus on exactly that, the language and terminology used in the national curriculum regarding those with backgrounds from the Global South, living and receiving an education in the Global North.

1.2 The Goal With this Project

With an ever growing cross-cultural society, it becomes increasingly important to have an understanding of and an ability to empathize with one another (Kulbrandstad, 2018). This especially evident in a world where the amount of children and students in the educational system who also experience this multifaceted understanding of cultures, having themselves grow up feeling at home amongst many cultures, is in constant growth. With this project I wanted to see how the newest national curriculum that was published at the start of the year 2020, and was put into use at the beginning of the 2020 school year in August starting at the 1st-10th grades, how this new curriculum was adapted, edited and modified, especially in the subsection that talked about cultural diversity and identity in schools.

This thesis had as a goal to look at this new curriculum and try and understand why the newest edition of the national curriculum, which could be viewed as a perfect opportunity to edit and create a curriculum more aware of the social realities of Norway. What is meant with awareness about Norway's social realities will be discussed in detail throughout the thesis. It is a way, however, of pointing out the growing cultural diversity in Norway, and especially in the larger cities (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2020).

As discussed at the beginning of the introduction, projects encompassing multicultural and cross-cultural subjects are close and personal, having grown up belonging to several cultures; therefore, when the new curriculum was published, it was the first subsection I headed to, to read and see how the Ministry of Education included those who are Norwegian, those who are Norwegian mixed with something extra, Norwegian not necessarily born into it, but since a young age, Norwegian born and raised in Norway like their parents before them, but also call another place home in equal amounts, amongst any other version of Norwegian.

However, when I did not find curriculum who included all, but rather gave the experience of an us versus them dialogue, I wanted to understand the why and how. This was done by looking at the history of Norway, as well as the language and terminology. The goal of this thesis is not and never was to single out anyone or anything. The goal of this project is to understand, and through understanding, perhaps be able to give insight into a better place, in this case educational platforms, for the Global South and Global North to meet.

1.3 Thesis Build-Up

The build-up of this project was made within the context of the Norwegian educational system, and even more specifically the one in Oslo, and surrounding the publishing, as has been mentioned earlier, of the newest national curriculum.

To start off, the thesis takes a look at the historical and modern day context of Norway, both as its role in the global society, but its own role in its educational system. The context of modern day Oslo is the aspect that take scenter stage here in an effort to present as much data as possible to create a clearer image of the surroundings this thesis was written in.
Later in the thesis we take a look at the theories and methodologies I used to gather the data I am presenting, with a focus on the discourse both in the national curriculum as well as surrounding it. The analysis of discourse in a historical perspective becomes also important to look at, to be able to present a better understanding of the origin of certain trends.

Towards the end of the project, while looking at all the data, theories, and methodologies that have been gathered and presented, I will present and discuss the results and findings that stood out, as well as the why certain angles and certain discourses are used when discussing education and the cultural diversity that is found in classrooms in Norway but Oslo specifically.

At the very end of this project, I will attempt to make a conclusion and try and present said conclusion in such a way that leaves room for discussion as well as receptiveness to ideas and solutions. When writing this thesis, the goal was always to not only analyze, but perhaps, through analysis be able to present some form of a solution, or a better understanding of the way forward for a more culturally diverse educational system, and the importance of such a goal.

1.4 Research Question and Thesis Statement

One of the most difficult aspects of writing this thesis, was landing on a research question and thesis statement, that encapsulated everything I hoped to cover in the thesis. There was always a general idea on how I wished to move forward, yet being able to find the words that presented that idea clearly was much more complicated to land on. However, as we see through this project, a couple of research questions came to light. These research questions were the questions that best encompassed what the thesis wanted to analyze and discuss surrounding the subject of the new national curriculum, and more specifically about cultural diversity. The research questions are;

"In what ways can discourse awareness help to understand the new national curriculum?"

and

"In what ways does the new national curriculum provide space for non-dominant identities to be represented in classroom curricular and pedagogical practices?"

These research questions came through by looking at the new national curriculum as well as Norway's relationship both presently and historically with different and diverse cultures. These subjects encompassed what was central to the conversation I wanted to have within this project. The research questions also lean heavily especially on the subsection within the national curriculum of cultural diversity and identity. This subsection, as we will see throughout this project is a large focus of the project due to the nature of the theme of this subsection. By reading and reflecting on the discourse of the cultural diversity and identity subsection, I was able to pick out key words that helped to inspire, and create a clear image of what was a good topic of conversation.

The key words within the research question are identity, visibility, and the Global South. These words from the research question, then combined with the thesis statement, created the new national curriculum as the center piece of analysis for this project.

The thesis statement itself, when written, was more an attempt at creating the open point of view when analyzing the new national curriculum. Something I hope to have successfully conveyed throughout this thesis project. The thesis statement goes as follows;

"A content analysis of Norway's national curriculum and in what ways its discourse reflects the country's growing cultural diversity"

Both the research question and the thesis statement have to be seen through the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic did not have a direct effect of the subject or theme of the thesis, yet it did affect the country that became the focus of study within this thesis. The plan, as I imagine was the wish of many, was to travel to a country to do field work, observe and gather data that way, however with the virus and a global pandemic, this became impossible. It would have been possible to conduct interviews online, both globally and locally, however when the focus of this thesis became the national curriculum and trying to understand the historical, academic, at times political, and any other possible angle the focus was shifted to the literature

and other written work. Leading to a thesis based almost entirely on data analysis and literature review.

2. Relevant Context of the Project

This project was written within the context of the Norwegian capital, Oslo. More specifically within Oslo's role as a part of the Global North, its educational system, and those students whose cultural background may have ties to the Global South.

Through this chapter I will attempt to present an accurate and clear context of Norway's educational history, and how it relates to the growing diversity and multiculturalism of Oslo. Norway's history with assimilation initiatives will also be presented, to thus provide, later in the project, a clearer analysis of how this might still be affecting the present day question of diversity and multiculturalism, and specifically within the newest version of the national curriculum.

2.1 A Short Introduction to the History of Assimilation and Integration in Norway

Norway has a long history of using the classroom as a tool for assimilation and integration (Skrefsrud, 2015). Assimilation, in the context of Norwegian history, is generally seen as the political practice of a language minority, cultural minority or immigrant groups having to adapt and become as similar as possible to the majority population (Tjora & Wæhle, 2021). The term assimilation today generally carries a negative weight to it, due to the implication of having to abandon one's own cultural heritage (Phinney, Berry, Vedder, & Liebkind, 2006). This as will be discussed later in the chapter, is largely due to the historical use of assimilation, and hence the denying of minorities of their language and culture (Phinney et al., 2006). Integration on the other hand, is a term still used today within the Norwegian context. Integration generally refers to the incorporation or becoming a part of the majority culture, without necessarily having to give up one's own language or cultural heritage (Brochmann, 2020). The term integration can at times carry, much like assimilation, a negative connotation to it. This due to the implication at times, as with assimilation, that the minority cultures or languages have to become more like the majority society (Brochmann, 2020). Despite this, the term integration is still widely used, and

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preferred over assimilation, since as mentioned above, the term integration does not carry the same weight of complete denial of one's cultural heritage and language (Brochmann, 2020). The same meaning of the words applies surrounding the conversations about integration and assimilation, specifically within the educational system. This especially since throughout Norway's history, it has been the schools and education platforms job to assimilate or integrate, depending on the political climate (Baune, 2007b). It is important to clarify that when talking about integration today, compared to the assimilation and integration of for example the late 1800's, they cannot and must not be treated the same. Historically in the past the processes of assimilation and/or integration were much more invasive and aggressive (Skrefsrud, 2015). These assimilation tactics were placed were upon schools by the government through and as central educational policies, if there were to be good and successful education (Skrefsrud, 2015). Historically the Sami people and Roma people, who are today recognized as native minorities, were amongst those subject to assimilation programs, that amongst other things, refused the national minorities their language (Skrefsrud, 2015).

In 1814 having gained independence from Denmark, and having been placed under the Swedish union, Norway became much more independent than it had been under Danish rule (Mardal, 2019). Following the release from Danish rule to a more autonomous state under Sweden, Norway wrote its very own constitution that same year in 1814 (Mardal, 2019). Having gotten a step closer to independence, and having created a constitution that was seen as by and for the Norwegian people, a strong sense of wanting to create a nationalistic unity was born (Mardal, 2019). This nationalistic unity or national identity was born from the need and want to create a sense of nationalism that was true to what it "traditionally" meant to be Norwegian, without it being tied to citizenship, or rather being more than simply citizenship (Hylland Eriksen, 1993, p. 18). This Norwegian identity that was developed is seen today through the birth of the national folk dress. The art of the era that was heavily based on the romantic painting style that reflected the beauty of Norway, with scenes depicting "typical" Norwegian people with dramatic nature in the background (Hylland Eriksen, 1993, p. 18). On the more political side of this nationalistic endeavor, there was as mentioned above, the development of the constitution of 1814 (Mardal,

2019). This constitution was written in theory by and for Norwegians, I say in theory here due to the nature of certain aspects of this new constitution. The constitution of 1814 of Norway famously took the trouble to explicitly exclude certain religious and ethnic minorities (Graatrud, 2014), something we will go into further detail later in the chapter. However, despite the exclusion of certain groups of people, what the constitution of 1814 also presented as central to the nationalism of Norway and what it meant to be Norwegian, was Christianity and the humanist belief systems (Rasmussen, 2020). Lutheran Christianity is the largest branch of Christianity in Norway, as well as being the state religion (Rasmussen, 2020). The humanist belief system that is practiced in Norway, and stands side by side to Christianity as we will see throughout the project, is a belief system that places humans at the center of their power of decision making (Bøhn, 2020). These two philosophies and belief systems are, as we will see later in the project, at the center of Norway's original constitution, and still central within the educational sector. Christianity and the humanist belief systems, were placed as the defining points of what it meant to be Norwegian, next to the folk nationalism with more artistic cultures in focus (Mardal, 2019). The second paragraph of the constitution of 1814 places in clear terms the religion of the country;

"§ 2 Our values will remain our Christian and humanist heritage. This Constitution shall ensure democracy, a state based on the rule of law and human rights." (Lovdata, 2020)

This paragraph, was true when originally written in 1814, and remains a part of the constitution to this day, something reflected in the education system. When the constitution was originally written it included a paragraph detailing how Jews, Jesuits, and monastic orders "are not to be tolerated" (Dørum, 2019), and are not to be allowed access to the Kingdom of Norway, as it was called back in 1814 (Dørum, 2019). The constitutional paragraph § 2, was edited already in 1851, editing out the sentences about Jews, Jesuits, and monastic orders, however maintained to this day the base value of Norway's heritage being Christian and humanist (Dørum, 2019). The approach to creating a sense of nationalism was most clearly expressed through the education system, both in 1814 and today (Skrefsrud, 2015). Through policies that taught and focused on the educating of Norwegian citizens, national participants. Schools and learning arenas became

the main tool of the government and policy makers to promote and teach future citizens, how to be a part of this new national front (Skrefsrud, 2015).

At the forefront of those who had to be "nationalized" in this nationalistic trend, starting in 1814 and lasting throughout the 1800s, were the Sami people (Baune, 2007c). The Sami people today are recognized as a national minority with equal status as those who belong to the majority of Christian and Humanist descendant Norwegians (Gaski, 2021). However, Norway's history is, as the rest of the world, long and complex, however for the sake of this project, when talking about Norway's history it will generally be from the 1700's and onwards. This is due to the time frame, the Vikings and the Sami people have historically been in contact with each other, yet it was not until the 1700's when a more intense and aggressive colonization and missionary work directed toward the Sami people began (Gaski, 2021). The Sami people have resided in what geographically today is Norway for centuries however have been since the 1700s subject to oppression, aggressive forms of assimilation, forced integration, in other terms colonization into the Lutheran-Christian Norwegian majority (Gaski, 2021). Such tactics of assimilation, as mentioned briefly earlier, was the denial and prohibition of the Sami people to speak their own language, as well as the practice of their religion and beliefs (Gaski, 2021). Due to the aggressive forms of forced assimilation, especially clear towards the end of the 1700s and into the 1800, when the growing nationalistic mission was at its peak (Gaski, 2021). These assimilation processes were most commonly implemented through schools and educational platforms, using teachers as the mediators (Gaski, 2021). This process of "making Norwegian" the Sami people, especially through the schooling system saw incentives and "prizes", being given to those teachers who were able to educate and make the most "Norwegian", acting, sounding Sami students (Gaski, 2021). These incentives and prizes given to teachers who successfully "made Norwegian" the most students was an active part of the educational system for nearly 100 years, beginning approximately from 1850 (Skogvang, 2021). Up until approximately 1850, the Sami people had been exposed to the missionary work that had as a goal to "make them more Norwegian", however after 1850, this policy was made stricter and became a part of the constitution and educational system (Baune, 2007b). For example, in 1851 the *"Finnefondet"* or

"Lapp Fund" was founded, a funding organization created to assist and strengthen any attempt at making the Sami and Kven people more Norwegian (Baune, 2007b). In 1880 parliament stated that all education shall happen in Norwegian when possible, however in 1889 this policy was made more rigid by stating that education will only ever be held in the Norwegian language (Baune, 2007b). By 1900 the education system that encompassed all corners of Norway, often referred to the common education system, since it was to be the same in all corners of the country, stated "By the border was there no place for right- and left-men, here everyone shall be a Norwegian" (Baune, 2007b). By the time of the 1900's there had also been developed and implemented boarding schools for the Sami and Kven children, with the goal of immersing the children in a Norwegian environment around the clock (Baune, 2007b). All of these policies and tactics came off the back of the strong nationalistic movement that was mentioned earlier. It was a desire to create a sense of nationalism in Norway, that was based not only off citizenship, but off of belief systems, art, music and traditional dresses (Hylland Eriksen, 1993, p. 18). And as we have seen above, the view of what was considered a true nationalistic Norwegian, was made, often through the education system, to become more like the Norwegian the nationalistic movement wanted to promote.

It is important to note, that this thesis will be focusing on the present day cultural diversity of Norway and how the educational system maneuvers in and around it. The history of the Sami people is long and complex, and the historical points I mention here and throughout this project, are a concise account of this history in an attempt to illustrate topics surrounding general policies and discourses today, specifically about minority cultures. These historical points present an idea as to why certain approaches, either in policies or national curriculums, can have ties to the history of those who were once seen to fall outside of the Norwegian nationalistic ideal.

By 1905 Norway gained its independence from Sweden (Sejersted, 2021). Shortly after the first world war era affected Norway greatly, even though Norway was able to keep itself out of the fighting, the economic collapse in Europe as a product of the war left Norway struggling (Sandvik, 2020). The second world war saw Norway falling under German rule, until the

liberation in 1945 (Grimnes, 2021). The period after the second world war saw a significant growth and improvement in the welfare state of Norway as well as technological advancement (Grimnes, 2021). The1970s saw an influx of working immigrants largely from areas of the Middle East and Eastern Europe (Sandset, 2019, p. 13). This influx in immigrants in the 1970's, was mainly working immigrants in search of better lifestyles, coming to a Norway who has climbed and placed itself as a successful welfare state and a good economy (Brochmann, 2020). Through the years immigration to Norway has grown, seeing groups ranging from working immigrants to asylum seekers and refugees, by 2013 13% of the population of Norway were immigrants (Brochmann, 2020). Now in 2021 the immigrant population, counting also those born in Norway to immigrant parents is at 18.5% (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2021)

This "first" migration wave to Norway, is often presented as the first instance of migration to Norway, prior to the 1970s Norway often presents itself and is presented as having been a largely homogenous society (Sandset, 2019, p. 13). Norway's often perceived notion of having in the past been a largely homogenous society is mainly false (Sandset, 2019, p. 14). This idea of being historically homogenous stems from an image presented by the predominantly "white" majority, whose homogeneity has been challenged starting around the 1970s (Sandset, 2019, p. 13) Though the migration of the 1970s is not the first time of there being movement between ethnic groups in the Nordic region, it is the one mentioned above due to its relevance to this day when talking about the growth in cultural diversity in Norway. The 1970s is the period that saw the largest change in the "ethnic composition" of the Norway (Sandset, 2019). This ideal of being a homogenous society, despite the existence of indigenous peoples, was supported especially in the 1920s and 1930s race biologists who sought out to prove the "racial inferiority" of these indigenous peoples (Heith, 2012). Though race biology has been dismissed, there remained this idea of some groups being "different" or "deviant" from the norm, the white majority (Heith, 2012) Through such ideals, the Nordic region, and Norway have been able to construct and maintain this ideal of ethnic homogeneity, until the 1970s, which saw the beginning of an immigration trend that created a change in this idea of a homogenous society (Heith, 2012; Sandset, 2019). This homogeneity in Norwegian society was not only an ideal or notion the

white majority had, but as we have seen through the treatment of the Sami and other indigenous people, was worked hard to achieve. It is important to note, that this homogeneity was not only an ideal, but a perpetuated idea were the first instance of it is seen clearly in the writing of the constitution of 1814 (Graatrud, 2014). When the constitution was written the authors chose to write certain groups of people out of the larger society, such as the Sami (Graatrud, 2014). That is to say, the Sami people were not only seen as not being a part of the Norwegian society, but by constitutional law were not recognized as such (Graatrud, 2014). The constitution of 1814 clarified who was allowed to vote, and since the Sami and other indigenous groups in the northern part of the country did not own land, they were not allowed to vote, by virtue of their nomadic lifestyle (Hommerstad, 2020). As we have seen earlier in the chapter those who were also excluded not only from voting, but were completely banned from entering Norway were the Jewish, Jesuits, and monastic orders (Dørum, 2019). All these harsh constitutional articles that excluded certain groups of people were adjusted or completely edited out through the years (Dørum, 2019). It is however to acknowledge such histories and previously held notion that can at times play a central role when conversations about cultural diversity later in the thesis arise, especially within the national curriculum and education systems.

So, as we can see above, this sense of homogeneity springs not only after a large influx of immigrants in the 1970s but was an ideal perpetuated throughout Norway's history (Sandset, 2019, p. 13). The ideal of homogeneity was perpetuated through the use of "racial biology", and excluding from the constitution those differing from the Lutheran-Christian majority (Sandset, 2019). And despite the constitution having been edited, and racial biology no longer being seen as a science, certain ideologies maintain themselves, and become a part of the belief system (Eidsvik, 2012). In the case of Norway, a belief of having once been homogenous (Hylland Eriksen, 1993). Yet by the very denial of including other ethnic groups into the constitution of 1814, in the desire of creating a society comprised of only the majority the constitution admits to a Norway that is in fact, anything but homogenous (Eidsvik, 2012).

2.2 Classroom Terminology

To understand and analyze the present, it is important to talk about certain ideals that existed in the past of a country. Therefore it felt relevant to present some of Norway's history in relation to ethnic minorities. Now that a clearer idea of Norway's past has been presented, the project will move forward to our present time. Another important aspect to be able to present a clear educational context of the present day this project covers, it is important to have an idea of the built up of classrooms within the Oslo area. Oslo being the capital of Norway is the city with the largest percentage of immigrants (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2020), this includes those born and raised in Oslo, but descended from immigrant parents. This sub-chapter will take a closer look at the percentages and statistics surrounding the immigrant community both in and out of the classrooms in Oslo. The terminology used in the gathering of numbers and data will also be presented. The data, terminology, and percentages will all be presented based on the official publications of *Statistisk Sentralbyrå*, Norway's Statistics Center, or as it is often abbreviated SSB.

SSB defines those born in Norway but with both sets of parents having been born in a foreign country, as being Norwegian-born to immigrant parents (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2021). This category is the one most relevant to this project, however, it is important to clarify other categories that are defined and used by Norway's Statistics Center. The different classification of immigration are divided in the following way, using letters of the alphabet. This table of reference can also be seen as a sliding scale of how Norwegian you actually are. The table also helps to clarify the way each "level" of Norwegian is categorized in more official documents;

A: Born in Norway to Norwegian-born parents
B: Immigrants
C: Norwegian-born to immigrant parents
E: Foreign-born with one Norwegian-born parent
F: Norwegian-born with one foreign-born parent
G: Foreign-born to Norwegian-born parents (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2021)

These categories and accompanying letters are often used when precenting certain data, to avoid having to write the whole term, both to save time and space when publishing (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2021). For the sake of clarity, whenever such a term as the one above needs or will be used, the whole term will be written down.

The terminology listed above, is the official categorization of those living Norway according to Norway's Statistics Center. A center who gathers and provides data for all sectors of the Norwegian government, universities, NGO's, as well as any other group or organization big or small (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2020). Interestingly enough however, though SSB is the official voice on data and statistics pertaining to any and all sectors of the Norwegian welfare system (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2020), the discourse used in, for example schools or by the media does not always coincide. Often and regularly, the term second generation immigrant is used to refer to those born in Norway, with parents born in Norway, but their grandparents having been born outside of Norway (Hylland Eriksen, 1993, p. 171). Another term often heard and used by the general population, the media, educational sectors, and so on, is the term ethnic Norwegian (Schakt, 2021). The term ethnic Norwegian does not have an official definition, however when used generally refers to those who are culturally attached to Norway through either the language and cultural practices (Schakt, 2021). Despite this, the term ethnic Norwegian when used by the public, in reality tends to refers to those of "pure" Norwegian heritage, that is to say, it refers to the white Norwegian population (Schakt, 2021)

Earlier mentioned terms such as second generation immigrant and ethnic Norwegian are important markers to how the society views these categories. It is as Hylland Eriksen (1993) points out in his essay collection, that despite the terms used are referring to peoples' background and heritage, they end up being used on an everyday basis to refer more directly to the color of a person's skin. It is interesting the power of words and how they are used. Norway's statistical bureau has itself admitted that certain words that were once official, had begun to be used in a way that highlighted the lack of Norwegianess of certain groups of people (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). The specific term was second generation immigrant (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008) This

term will be looked at more closely later in the project while simultaneously trying to understand the thematic and content of certain discourses.

The term second generation immigrant is especially interesting, since it had once been an official term used by Norway's Statistics Center (Statistisksentralbyrå, 2008).The SSB however, in the year 2001 decided to go away from the term second generation immigrant when presenting data surrounding the immigrant community, and began using the term Norwegian-born to immigrant parents (Statistisksentralbyrå, 2008). The SSB in an article published in 2008, explained their reasoning for stepping away from the use of the term, second generation immigrant, citing the term as being experienced as excluding (Statistisksentralbyrå, 2008). The Statistics Center goes on to admit the term was originally thought of as having purely statistical and data collection value, yet has gone on to gain a life of its own (Statistisksentralbyrå, 2008). This can be seen with the term "multicultural", which started out as a term to describe one or more cultures living or working side by side (Hall, 2004). With the years however, it has become a much more complex term which at times is seen as something positive, and other times as bearing a negative connotation (Chin, 2017a).

The terminology used by official statistics bureaus and the general public, as we have seen above, does not always match up. For it is as the SSB stated when they explained the change in word use, how at times what was once an official term has become irrelevant, yet still can stick and continue to be used by the larger society (Statistisksentralbyrå, 2008). This despite the recognized negative connotations of such terms, such as the descriptor second generation immigrant. Such terms, that seemingly take on a life of their own, can become harmful to those who they are used about. As we have seen above, terms tend to take on a life of their own, and the nuances and subtleties of a term and its discourse must not be underestimated. Especially within the context of society and the political climate that the discourse is happening within (Rogers, 2011). Discourse does not happen in a vacuum (Rogers, 2011), as we have seen above with the historical context, and as will be looked at more closely further in the project. Discourse

is generally the product of a trickling from a top down, the terms used by those in power, end up being the terms used by those in the general public (Rogers, 2011).

2.2 The New National Curriculum (LK20)

In the year 2020 a new National Curriculum was implemented (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). This new curriculum did not come as a surprise, seeing as Norway has a tendency to either publish new or revised versions of the curriculum approximately every 10 years (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). This new curriculum saw the largest changes in the introduction, also known as the general part or core curriculum, as well as the approach to how subjects in school are to be taught (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). The main change done to the teaching requirement in this newest revision of the national curriculum, is a focus on a more hands-on learning for the students (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). On the other hand the Introduction, or general part, of the national curriculums of Norway, is the part in the curriculum that highlights the values that are expected to be an underlying part of the education system in Norway (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2018). Similarly as the style of teaching having been adjusted in this new curriculum so has the general part, centering its focus on giving the centra values within education an update and lift (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019).

The new national curriculum, often referred to by its abbreviation LK20, has its focus centered around the students who will eventually become active agents the society and its democracy (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Such values and focus within the educational system is a part of this uplifted version of the values central within education.

Within this project, LK20 is the center piece for analysis. This thesis will be looking at this new national curriculum and analyzing the language and how the conversation surrounding certain subjects seems to be presented. The main focus within the LK20, will be within the introduction chapter, and its sub-section covering the subject of cultural diversity and identity, the whole sub-section can be found in the attachments at the end of this document.

2.2.1 LK20's Predecessor LK06

The national curriculum that preceded the LK20, was known as the LK06, due to its publishing year of 2006 (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006). Similarly to its successor, the LK06's curriculum focused on creating more active students, as well as more engaged (Andersen, Garaas, Norum, & Fredriksen, 2010). The LK06 curriculum was also seen as more demanding both towards students and teachers, demanding a higher level amongst the students and a clearer methodological approach for the teachers (Andersen et al., 2010) Examples on a narrowing of techniques, as stated by Andersen et al. (2010), is in wording that asks the teacher to instruct the students to interpret, understand, and formulate already starting at the fourth grade. Andersen et al. (2010), has argued that the discourse and techniques of the LK06 are felt as being too complex to expect fourth grade students to understand the whole meaning of. The nature of the wording of the LK06 also gave the impression that the goals were not something to strive towards, but rather goals they had to achieve to be considered good educators and students (Andersen et al., 2010). Within these expectations of the LK06 are the core values, which are common for all national curriculums. The change between the LK06 and LK20 is not big, but more of an editing in formulation. These core values which both curriculums, as well as previous curriculums have had, are there to educate active participants of society and the democracy, as highlighted by the following quotes;

"The objectives clause expresses values that unite the Norwegian society. These values, the foundation of our democracy, shall help us to live, learn and work together in a complex world and with an uncertain future." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020)

As well as this example from the new national curriculums predecessor, the LK06;

"The pupils and apprentices shall develop knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can master their lives and can take part in working life and society." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006)

As seen above, though the way the core values being presented is different, ultimately the values being expressed encompass the same end goal. The LK06 curriculum has been interpreted and analyzed at a much larger extent throughout the years. As the title of the curriculum mentions, this is a curriculum that has existed since the year 2006. This has given it the opportunity to be analyzed and scrutinized to a much larger extent than the LK20, which was just published.

2.3 The Education Act

Standing side by side to any and all curriculums published and implemented in Norway, is the education act (Opplæringsloven, 1998). The education act is the document that dictates the rights of any and all students within the educational system. In other words the education act is the document that by law must be followed by the teachers, and as mentioned earlier, that the students have a right to expect and demand on how their education should be (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

The Education Act is a section within Norway's laws that covers everything from the social, physical, and psychological rights of students within their years within the education system (Opplæringsloven, 1998). Unlike the national curriculum, the Education Act is not open to be interpreted by educators, parents, or students, but the laws that one must ensure are being enacted within any educational apparatus (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

Within the Education Act there are paragraphs dedicated to specific laws. Here we will talk about paragraph 1-3 and 9a-3, since these two are important paragraphs within the conversation that will be had throughout this thesis.

Paragraph 1-3 covers each students' right to a customized and personalized education (Opplæringsloven, 1998). That is to say, that the subjects being taught and the method of teaching are expected to be adjusted and "created" in such a way that students of all academic levels within a classroom are and feel included in the learning process (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

This section of the Education Act specifies also the importance of not only adjusting to each individuals academic levels and personal prerequisites, but also the importance of taking each individuals cultural backgrounds into consideration.

Onward in the Education act is paragraph 9a-3. The subsequent paragraphs under paragraph 9 cover the school's environment (Opplæringsloven, 1998). In other words paragraph 9 covers most topics to do with the physical and mental wellness of students, within the school's environment and community.

Paragraph 9a-3 is, however, especially central for this project. This due to its specificity covering the psychosocial environment of a school (Opplæringsloven, 1998). This means, the right by law to a safe psychosocial learning environment where the students do not experience bullying, racism, discrimination, or any form of mental or physical violence (Opplæringsloven, 1998). If breaches to the right of a good psychosocial environment is breached, then by law it has to be reported (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

In short, the education act is what by law educators, education organizations, and students have to by law abide to. As much to be able to provide what is considered a good education, but also as a requirement to what is considered a fair and equal education (Opplæringsloven, 1998). The national curriculums are there to lay out in what way the education should be taking place. The how and why of learning and the learning environments (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). These documents are important to have a bit of a background knowledge on, since it helps to create a clearer image of the history and how education is viewed in Norway specifically. Later on in the project, the core values which were briefly mentioned above, as well as the Education Acts opening article, will help to set the stage for a better understanding of the thesis statement and research questions.

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3. Literature Review

In this chapter I will review existing literature that is relevant to this thesis. In any such project, the literature review is central to not only show the work done to gather credible sources for the work being written, but also to be able to form a concrete critical view (Bryman, 2012, p. 8). For this project, the literature review is the central piece to this thesis to be able to present

Though the a literary based approach, does not necessarily create the opportunity to observe and gather data physically, it does have the advantage of looking at a subject through several academic lenses (Bryman, 2012, p. 8). The goal is to try and understand a subject in as much of a complete manner as possible. Through the literature review, I also hope to be able to create a more accurate content analysis as well as thematic analysis of the subject surrounding the new national curriculum and those considered to fall under minority students.

3.1 Culture

Culture is a term used with frequency in the national curriculum. Whenever they talk about cultural diversity, a unifying cultural heritage, or culture as an important factor to have knowledge over for a unified society (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). However, the vagueness of the term culture itself leaves a question mark when the national curriculum and policy makers lean so heavily on the term in their documents. Throughout the centuries, the term culture itself has changed and adapted meaning depending on the people using the term (Pieterse, 2020). Due to this culture has become a way of highlighting differences and placing one group and their culture above and as a result, often in a position of power, culture becomes almost a form of capital (Pieterse, 2020). This happens due to discourse being a key element in the struggle for power (Pieterse, 2020).

Due to the relative fluidity of the word *'culture'*, it becomes more complicated when tied to terms such as multicultural. Jensen and Loftsdottir (2012), argue that in the word multicultural,

in the hands of policy makers and curriculums, multicultural becomes an implication of the 'others' being allowed to be involved within the majority culture's standards and borders. Hence we see the implication of culture being used as a tool for power rather than unity (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012).

To be able to understand the discourse of culture within the national curriculum and other documents related to education in Norway, we have to understand what culture is. However, as discussed earlier, culture is a term that is considerably complicated to define (Pieterse, 2020). Depending on the context and the person that is using the term, it ca change drastically and be adapted to a meaning more suitable of the need of the user (Pieterse, 2020). For the context of this thesis however, the conversation about culture will be based off of what the national curriculum seems to have placed under the meaning of culture.

Within the national curriculum, there is the subsection titles, "Identity and Cultural Diversity", which is the section detailing what cultural values are important to have as a focus in education (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). The national curriculum mentions culture and its importance in the following ways; "our history and culture", "Christian and humanist heritage and traditions are an important part of Norway's collective cultural heritage", and "Sami cultural heritage is part of Norway's cultural heritage" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Culture within these contexts is equally as vague as it is otherwise academically (Pieterse, 2020). However, based on the opening sentences talking about culture, it seems to be that religion is a central part of Norway's cultural heritage, at least in the sense that it is the only explicit example of culture that is mentioned. The Sami culture is also mentioned but never specified, so what categorizes culture is open for interpretation by the reader of the curriculum.

Despite this vagueness, if we are to go by the curriculum's mention of cultural heritage, then for the sake of clarity within this project, culture will be viewed as the way of living that has been gathered and accumulated though the years (Pieterse, 2020). However, it is important to problematize the term culture, especially within such context as national curriculums. With the

years "culture" discourse has become a form of capital that has in many ways been monopolized by those involved in power struggles (Pieterse, 2020). Examples of this power struggle for the capital of culture, can be seen through the years in Norway, starting with the assimilation of the Sami people, or the nationalistic conversations about "what is typical Norwegian?" (Hylland Eriksen, 1993).When the world finds itself going through globalization, where the borders are getting erased, what are the chances that simultaneously conversations about maintaining Norwegian culture, what is typical Norwegian, and a nationalistic approach seems to appear in cracks and crevasses (Hylland Eriksen, 1993).

3.2 Multi- and Cross-Cultural Terminology

The terms multi- and cross-cultural are used increasingly often in different settings (Salole, 2020a) Therefore it is important to clarify these terms, multi- and cross-cultural, since they have a tendency of changing meaning depending on who is using the term and in which setting (Salole, 2018). An example of this, a government official giving a speech might use the term "multicultural" and/or "cross-cultural" differently than a child who considers themselves multicultural would use the term (Salole, 2018). Multicultural simply is a term applied to someone belonging to a minimum of two cultures (Salole, 2020a). Other such terms are multi-cultural, or bi-racial more often heard in countries like the United States (Salole, 2020a). The nuance of such terms tends to change depending on the country, for this very reason it is important to define these terms for the sake of clarity within the context of this thesis. Therefore the working term throughout this project of either the term "multicultural" or cross-cultural, is exactly as stated above by Salole (2020a) it is a word used to describe someone who grows up amongst two or more cultures. Whether those two cultures are through the parents being from a different culture than the country they grow up in, or any other ties to a culture different than the majority of where they live (Salole, 2020a). Words are subject to ideologies, and at times are born out of certain ideologies (Fairclough, 2011). Discourse and terms are often defined and given meaning by those in positions of power, especially what we consider to be official words. That is to say words used by the policy makers, or groups such as Norway's statistical bureau

(Fairclough, 2011). The words that are used by those considered to be "higher-ups" must never be underestimated. Discourse has a way of trickling down and ingraining itself into the everyday vernacular, something that one should be aware of. Especially since certain words might not always affect oneself, but can potentially for another person be or represent something problematic (Fairclough, 2011).

The term multi-cultural is applied to any person, school, or other settings, when describing there being more than one culture present (Hall, 2004). Culture being viewed as an attribute that someone acquires through being a member of society, that is to say customs and beliefs that are learned and shared (Pieterse, 2020). The key aspect of culture is that it is something that is acquired within a social group, never biologically as an individual (Pieterse, 2020). Hence multicultural becomes the meaning of belonging to several attributes that are distinctive to the culture one grows up in, and the culture of one's parents, several cultures in one. Multicultural in political terms, and in school settings, is used to describe the diversity within a school, business, or political climate (Chin, 2017b). That is to say, there are many cultures existing and living side by side, and is often used as a positive descriptor of a school or business (Chin, 2017b).

Though having the word multicultural attached to your school or business is seen as a positive descriptor, through the years many critics of the term multicultural have appeared (Chin, 2017c). Historically, the term multicultural, came into use in the early 1980's mainly in the context of school reforms (Hall, 2004). Originally these reforms were implemented in schools towards the white Americans, so as to teach them to be more sensitive of racial minorities (Hall, 2004). In 1992 multiculturism became a word that mainly signified the existence of "other" cultures or racial minorities in society (Hall, 2004) With time the term gained traction in more fields that only education, growing into the term of acknowledging the existence of different cultures, and no culture being above another (Hall, 2004).

Today, as has been mentioned earlier, the term multicultural is still widely used, and is a descriptor learning institutions wish to have attached to themselves (Chin, 2017b). Yet, the term

has been criticized widely for having been taken over by a more political tone (Tisdel, 2020). It has been argued that the term multicultural having been appropriated by politicians, it has now been used to represent a form of multiculturalism that supports the policies of its authors. A policy which is written as an agenda to support and legitimize the objective of the policy's author (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). Multiculturalism and policies are all subject to the discourse practices of the policy authors and others in similar positions (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). Both being formats of discourse, or being used within discourse to present and distribute ideologies and social practices (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). Within this same critical approach to discourse and specifically the term multiculturalism, it has therefore been criticized for creating an image of different cultures living and/or existing parallel, side by side to one another, but not mixed together and equal (Kymlicka, 2010). The equality aspect of the term multicultural is perhaps where the largest criticism stems from. Since it is a term that might construct cultures to be equal, however at times places cultures as existing separate from each other rather (Kymlicka, 2010). Which in term can strengthen the sense of otherness at times (Kymlicka, 2010). In that same line of critique, it has also been discussed that multiculturalism when used under certain policies it is a term that places one culture, the majority culture above, as the "us", while all other cultures become the "other" (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012). Therefore multiculturalism becomes a term that signifies the diversity and existence of several cultures within a society, while also at times representing a hierarchical approach, where the minority cultures need to assimilate to the majority (Kymlicka, 2010).

An example of this power over meaning can be seen through terms such as "first-generation immigrant" and "second-generation immigrant". These are terms that are still relevant today and often used and heard more often in an oral context (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). The use of both the earlier mentioned terms were used once by well-established and trustworthy governmental groups such as The National Statistics Bureau of Norway, SSB, when referring to those that fell under said category (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). However in 2008 both terms "first-generation immigrant" and "second-generation immigrant" were removed from SSB's terminology

repertoire, and was changed to "Norwegian born persons with immigrant parents" (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008).

Despite the change in use of terminology in 2008 by the SSB these terms are still heard and in use today, showcasing the life of its own a term can take on, despite it no longer being in official use (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). Within this same frame of though one can look at ethnicity and other categorizing agents as being all malleable terms that often are adjusted by those in power to be used in ways that help maintain and/or create certain hierarchies within society (Tisdel, 2020). Culture is after all as Tisdel (2020) remarks a powerful political tool. Since the language of culture, and how certain groups re referred to, can be ways of highlighting ways of being as well as highlight differences and thus feed into and create the idea of culture clashes (Tisdel, 2020).

Within this project the term multicultural will be used often. This is due to it being the Norwegian translation of the word multicultural, *flerkulturell* (Salole, 2020c). In Norwegian context multicultural can also be used, but both multicultural and *flerkulturell* are used somewhat interchangeably within Norwegian contexts where these words get used (Salole, 2020c).

Within the world of terms encompassing the existence and interaction of several cultures, one can come across the term cross-cultural. Cross-cultural is generally not used when referring to people, but rather is used in contexts of businesses or educational institutions and approaches (McAlinden, 2018). It is a term that refers to the interaction that can and happens cross culturally (Salole, 2020a). The term cross-cultural you might come across at large businesses who have international offices, or deal with other countries regularly in relation to their work. Cross-cultural courses are taught at such businesses on how to interact with offices based in other countries and with cultures different from oneself (McAlinden, 2018). It is not uncommon for universities to have cross-cultural courses as well, courses where the focus is on how differing cultures interact with each other, and how to interact with differing cultures (McAlinden, 2018). One could even argue that the new national curriculum calls for a cross-cultural approach, to teach the students how to interact with cultures different from their own. This is highlighted in

for example this sentence taken directly from the national curriculum, LK20; "The experiences the pupils gain in the encounter with different cultural expressions and traditions help them to form their identity" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

3.3 Multicultural and Intercultural Pedagogy

The term multicultural, as discussed above is a word that came into use in the 1980s and gained popularity in the subsequent years that followed (Hall, 2004). It was a term developed to describe the need to acknowledge and learn about "other" cultures living as minorities in places like the United States (Hall, 2004). With the years the term came to signify the existence of more than one culture, within a person or within a society, in a school, at a work place, or any other place where people interact with one another (Hall, 2004). With the years the term multicultural has also grown to be a desirable descriptor, either a term placed on a school, group, company, society, and so on, by those in higher up positions, by society, or by the ones running and/or owning the place being referred to themselves (Kymlicka, 2010). Within the Norwegian context the word multicultural is used just as much as in other places. However, often times it is exchanged with the term "flerkulturell" which means the same as multicultural, only a term more Norwegian language related. One can also hear the term multicultural in Norway, these two terms are used interchangeably within the Norwegian context.

The interesting thing about the term multicultural, especially within Norway's context is who and where it is used, especially when talking about the educational sector. An example of this is especially clear with which schools who get to call themselves multicultural in the context of their location in Oslo. Those schools who happen to find themselves on the deep east side of Oslo, where the population is mainly immigrant, or people of immigrant descent, those schools tend to be referred to as the East side schools (Tandstad, 2014). Phrases such as that uttered within Oslo, lets everyone know the schools one is referring to. The difficult schools, the problem schools, the schools with the highest dropout rates, the schools where the majority of the student population are not "ethnic Norwegian" (Tandstad, 2014). As a contrast, those schools

who find themselves on the west side of the city, that clear invisible border where the classrooms are diverse and multicultural, but on more desirable terms, they are afforded the luxury of being referred to as having a multicultural student population (Tandstad, 2014). These west side multicultural schools, are often diverse and filled with many different cultures, the difference is often however in the placement of the school. Not to mention the diversity of the student population is often within upper middle class immigrants. Compared to the east side where the immigrants tend to be middle and lower middle class.

These tendencies in term use highlight the desirability of diversity, however within the borders of a certain kind of multiculturalism. It is for this very reason that multiculturalism with the years has at times been a word criticized and problematized (Kymlicka, 2010). Some academics and critics of the term multicultural, express a worrisome trend of the term to have been taken over by politicians and other people in positions of power (Darder, 2011c). This hijacking of the term leads the critics of the term to worry that multiculturalism does not mean what it once did, but rather has become diversity that is multicultural under the desirable standards of certain politicians (Darder, 2011c). Another critique of the term is the way it portrays an image of a society with different cultural backgrounds as being something new, when the reality is that there has always been cultural diversity in society (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012). This is same remark is also seen in the way multiculturalism is presented historically in todays history books. This growing multiculturalism is at times presented as a "problem" that began in the post war period, rather than multiculturalism always being a reality within the European borders (Chin, 2017a). Not to mention, as we have seen above, how much of a selective term it can be depending on who uses it.

Multiculturalism, has at times also been used by certain groups of people and politicians to showcase perhaps why a country might be struggling, or why it is facing certain issues. Chin (2017a) uses Germany as an example in her work, where she discusses the positives and negatives of multiculturalism. Especially in how Germany has presented multiculturalism. Not only Germany, but other large European cities, having experienced terrorist attacks from home

grown extremists, has given some politicians proof that the whole concept of multiculturalism has failed or will fail further (Chin, 2017a). Multiculturalism is a hard line to walk, depending on one's political stance. It can be seen as something to strive for, or something that is the reason why a country should not work towards multiculturalism (Chin, 2017b).

Despite the criticism, and scrutiny the term multiculturalism often faces. It is important to point out that within the context of education especially, it is a term that is desirable and considered something that educational systems should strive for. It is also important to point out that the goal should not be to only make schools multicultural, but education as well. That is the to say, revise the curriculum, and what books and documents are used when educating.

On the other side of the same coin we have interculturalism. Interculturalism and its pedagogical aspect, tackle the communication that happens across several cultures (Dasli, 2011). While multiculturalism focuses more on the different differing cultures learning to live under one roof, interculturalism shifts the focus to make it more about understanding and having mutual respect despite potential differences (Dasli, 2011). Intercultural tries to teach people that common ground does not matter. One should be able to respect and empathize with someone even if they are completely different from oneself (Dasli, 2011).

Intercultural communication, pedagogy, approach and so on is a newer approach to communication between cultures than multiculturalism (Dasli, 2011). Despite its freshness, it has a growing popularity, especially amongst more business and corporate circles. Those large businesses who deal in the international community often have intercultural communication courses for their employees. A course that helps the employees develop the communication skills necessary when dealing with branches of the company. It is also a course at many universities that can be taken (McAlinden, 2018). Ironically the skills that so many businesses value, and universities acknowledge as central, is a skills that those who belong to the multicultural community have as a second nature (McAlinden, 2018).

Within the talk of multicultural and intercultural aspects and pedagogy, it is important to recognize those who did not have to learn it through a course or through university. Those who grow up with. The intercultural skill is something that those who grow up having are able to use said skill in a much better way. Those who learn it as adults as a part of a course for work or their education struggle a lot more to look past preconceived notions that one might have (McAlinden, 2018). McAlinden (2018) uses teacher education especially as an example of intercultural courses not always making a difference in the approach a teacher might use. It was found, however, that those kids who grew up between cultures, or surrounded by more than one did not have to learn about intercultural skills, they simply had them implicitly as a part of how they dealt with different social circles (Dasli, 2011).

Such code switching is nothing new within academic circles. The ability to seamlessly transition from one cultural group or social circle to another has always been studied and seen as an asset amongst those who implicitly have this skill (Dasli, 2011). Most of those who implicitly have the skill to code switch are those who grew up with a home cultural significantly different to the majority or school culture (McAlinden, 2018). This is not to say that everyone does not code switch to some extent. As people who move between groups and places, we are subconsciously code switching (Dasli, 2011). The way we behave in our homes amongst our family is not the same way we behave amongst friends, for most people. Such code switching that is an inherent part of socializing and social life is not something most people realize they are doing, and this applies also to those doing larger code switches (Dasli, 2011). Such as those who switch between two vastly different cultures, when for example the home culture is mainly Mexican, while going to school in Norway and subsequently in Norway's culture.

Intercultural and multicultural pedagogies or approaches are rooted in similar ideas, yet in certain ways as discussed above, different. Throughout this project the term multicultural is the one that is used the most. This in large part because it is the term that is the most used in Norwegian context. Though as we have mentioned earlier, within the Norwegian context the Norwegian language version of *"flerkutlurell"* is the most common word to hear (Salole, 2020c). However,

for the goal of this thesis, intercultural pedagogy and approaches are the better term to be applied. This is because multicultural approaches do not necessarily demand that the different cultures living together have to learn to interact or work together (Kymlicka, 2010). Multiculturalism has the tendency to create an approach that is exactly that, different cultures living together, side by side. While intercultural approaches create the opportunity to learn from one another as well as to actually live intertwined with other cultures, and not in parallel worlds (Dasli, 2011).

Intercultural approaches and pedagogy can also seem as the better option, since at times multicultural, as we have mentioned above, can be used in a negative way to showcase the "dangers" of allowing for "differences" (Chin, 2017b). This naturally, is not always the case, that is multiculturalism being used to highlight the difficulty and impossibilities of several cultures living side by side. The term has also been criticized for creating an opportunity for politicians and policy makers to promote and present an international and diverse image. However, that diversity is still under the premises of the majority culture, or simply the majority which in turn often means those in positions of power (Chin, 2017a).

Therefore bearing all of the earlier mentioned points into consideration, intercultural pedagogy sees like the approach where one maintains respect for those cultures who are different from oneself. While still learning to live and interact with those cultures through mutual respect and empathy (McAlinden, 2018). There is also something to be said about the courses at companies and at universities one can take to be in a position to interact interculturally with others. If it is something that is deemed as central as this to good and successful communication, is it not something that should be a part of all levels of education? Intercultural pedagogy is also important for teachers to be aware of and use. For through no one's fault but human nature, as people we automatically gravitate towards what is familiar and similar to ourselves (Blumer, 2004). This in turn means that people also tend to have more empathy for those that are similar to ourselves in some way (McAlinden, 2018). It is these exact tendencies of human nature that teachers must be aware of, so as not to make the mistake of letting subconscious tendencies, such

as to lean towards those who are similar, to overshadow the relations. Again, this is not something people generally do consciously, but for this exact reason it is important to be aware of said tendencies.

The growing relevancy of the terms intercultural and multicultural can be seen as a reflection of the society that larger urban areas, in the Global North especially, find themselves in. The increase in migration and immigration of all types of people with socioeconomic backgrounds creates more diverse cities and countries (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2020). As we have seen Chin (2017a) talk about earlier in this section, this is something that can at times be used as a point against why perhaps immigration policies need to change. However, if intercultural knowledge becomes a part of any and all curriculums, it could pave a path to better communication and interaction amongst those who are different from the majority (Dasli, 2011).

3.4 Nordic Exceptionalism

Nordic exceptionalism the phenomenon that attempts to describe a view, or rather an attitude the Nordic countries have of themselves, as well as how they perceive themselves in the global community (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). This perceived view of themselves that the Nordic countries have within the Nordic exceptionalism theory, is exactly as the name of the theory describes, that these countries are exempt from certain critique and conversation being had within the global society (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). This exceptionalism is based in the belief in the success of the Nordic countries within the social welfare system, high level of standard of living, and lower crime rates compared with the rest of the globe, but Europe especially (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012).

Nordic exceptionalism is a term that has come into use in more recent times to describe the attitude of exceptionalism that is rooted in the history of the Nordic region (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). Historically the Nordic region has been seen both externally and by themselves, as a relatively homogenous society (Sandset, 2019, p. 13). Norway within this exceptionalism

approach, sees itself as an outsider to the colonial history of Europe, since they do not consider themselves as having participated in the colonial period and subsequent slave trade (Sandset, 2019, p. 22). In fact, Norway having been a colony of Denmark during years of colonialism and slave trade, uses this history to place themselves separate from the colonial narrative that is a large part of many Europeans countries legacy (Sandset, 2019, p. 22). Yet despite this narrative that Norway presents about itself both nationally and internationally, the countries role during the colonial period, was much more significant than is presented (Sandset, 2019, p. 14). Norway presents itself as having has little to no hand in the colonial period and the transatlantic slave trade (Sandset, 2019). In later years Norway has also seemed to place itself in the position of having been unable to participate in the transatlantic slave trade and colonization (Sandset, 2019, p. 22). The poverty that was prevalent in almost all of Norway for years helped to cement said image. The lack of participation amongst the large European powers such as England, Spain or France. Even the powers that ruled in Norway at that time, Sweden and later Denmark (Sandset, 2019, p. 22). It is important to remind the reader here of Norway's poverty. The Norway of today that everyone knows, is a wealthy country with large oil reserves, a health and education system covered entirely by the welfare system (Sandvik, 2020). This was not the case until the 1970's, when Norway discovered the oil off their coast. Up until that point, Norway was and had been one of the poorest countries in the European continent (Sandvik, 2020). All of these points helped to cement an image of Norway, both nationally and internationally, as an innocent bystander of the colonial period, the transatlantic slave trade, and all of the fallouts from this era. Today, Norway is beginning to come to terms with its hand within the colonial period and all of its subsequent effects. NRK, the national broadcasting channel of Norway, released a documentary about one specific slaver ship, and another documentary talking about Norway's general role in the slaving industry (Tellefsen, 2020). Despite this, Norway's role in this worldwide industry, and the subsequent horrors that followed is not a well-known fact amongst Norwegian's themselves, hence the potential for Nordic Exceptionalism.

The earlier image that has been proliferated both in and outside of Norway has lead Generally speaking, people in and out of Norway do not simply not consider themselves as having

participated in the colonial period and the subsequent trans-Atlantic slave trade, they are unaware of Norway's role (Eidsvik, 2012). It is true that Norway did not participate in colonialism and the slave trade at the same scale of countries such as England and Spain, nonetheless they did participate (Eidsvik, 2012).

Norway's participation in the slave trade was mainly due to the country being under Denmark's rule at the time, the late 1700s (Sandvik, 2020) During this time, Norway was providing ships and the captains tied to those ships, but Norway was simultaneously while providing transport was also providing plantation owners and managers who would migrate to colonies, particularly in the African, and thus would profit and participate in the same exploitation larger countries such as France and the UK were responsible for (Eidsvik, 2012). Within the same line, Norway in proportion to its population has been the European country who has exported the largest amount of missionaries (Eidsvik, 2012). Most importantly within this participation of the colonial period, is the colonialism of the Sami people in the north, who were subject to forced assimilation and integration (Sandset, 2019, p. 14).

Despite everything noted earlier, it is important to acknowledge that Norway did in fact play a much smaller role within the colonial projects, than its Nordic counterparts (Eidsvik, 2012). Missionary work and colonialism are at times spoken of as separate actions taking place during the colonial period, yet their ties to each other are undeniable (W. D. Mignolo, 2011a, p. 256) Within the conversation of colonialism Christianity and the subsequent missionary work aimed towards the "barbarians" undergoing the missionary work there was not only an intent to convert "them", but also make them more civilized (W. D. Mignolo, 2011a, p. 256). Christianity and its spread through the colonies, and through more local indigenous groups such as in Norway, the intent converting and hence civilizing the colonies was to have them under the model of European Christianity and hence modernity (W. D. Mignolo, 2011a, p. 256). This of course meant that for these "barbarians" being colonized and Christianized, that it was not enough to convert, they had to leave everything considered un-civilized (Mills, 2006). This meant not speaking their language, practicing their religious rituals, the way they dressed, behaved, ate,

everything had to be to the Christian-European standard (Mills, 2006). So this civilizing, missionary work, was done (based on population size) by the largest amount, from Norway (Weihe Wallin, 2021). The large exportation of missionaries not only helped to Christianize abroad, but also helped to create a certain idea of the people from these colonies at home in Norway (Eidsvik, 2012). By exporting missionaries and working migrants those same Norwegian migrants played a significant role in the construction of colonial discourse, as well as the maintenance of such discourse on the home ground in Norway (Eidsvik, 2012). These migrants would return and tell stories and write books about their experience. Through these stories, notions about "race" and "ethnicity" were implemented and spread (Eidsvik, 2012). Creating, through these stories, the foundation for the "otherness" of those who did not look like the "white" majority of Norway, as well as maintaining notions and preconceived ideas of those "others" (Eidsvik, 2012).

Despite this history Sandset (2019, p. 59) argues that, Norway and the Nordic countries in general, have a view of themselves as being exempt from conversations of race (Sandset, 2019, p. 59). One can often hear, when conversations about race and ethnicity arise, such utterances as "Norway/Norwegians do not see color" (Harlap & Riese, 2021). Such utterances come from a place of Nordic exceptionalism within the Nordic countries, despite their history in the colonial period, and their history with their own indigenous groups, the Nordic countries have managed to construct and express a view of themselves as an exception to the rest of Europe, especially when it comes to the ties of the slave trade and the effects of colonialism (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). The dominant arguments believe this exceptionalism comes from having, as stated earlier, established what is recognized globally as some of the most equal societies, and best working welfare states, as well as a well-established notion that the Nordic countries, and Norway especially, had little or no role in the global colonial period (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012).

3.4.1 Postcolonial Studies

Postcolonial studies is a vast academic field that has many branches and disciplines, depending on which academic direction and specialty one focuses on (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012). Regardless of one's academic discipline however, one has to remember that the study of postcolonialism does not look at the effects of colonialism right after colonial rule, but rather a look at the effects of colonialism to this day (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012).

As we have seen earlier, though it is not widely acknowledged or talked about, Norway did in fact play a part in the colonial era. Therefore it is interesting to study postcolonialism and tie this perspective to a country such as Norway. As well as looking at postcolonialism as something that does not solely affect those who have been former colonies, but also those who helped perpetuate and maintain the ideologies of colonialism (Eidsvik, 2012). As has been discussed earlier, Norway falls into this category of a perpetuator of colonial ideologies, despite being seen as and being considered a periphery European country. Here when referring to Norway as a periphery European country, it simply refers to Norway's geopolitical position, of physically being on the periphery of the European continent, as well as politically not having the same power as larger metropolitan countries, such as France, Spain, or England (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012).

The colonial period was long and had social, cultural, and economic effects on both the countries under colonial rule and the colonizers, that are being felt to this day (W. D. Mignolo, 2011b, p. xxvii). As we have seen earlier, Norway did in fact play a significant role in this colonial period, both on local soil, as well as foreign (Eidsvik, 2012). It is important to acknowledge the role Norway played both in the colonial period and the subsequent postcolonial period as much through missionary work as through the slave trade. There is also the important aspect to recognize that the knowledge that was perpetuated, was knowledge that was created and documented by people who had ideals that supported the policies and ideologies of those in charge during that time (Go, 2017). The sociologists and race biologists of the times, writing up "educational" pieces about the different people being colonized, were writing under the influence of the ideologies of the time (Go, 2017) The perpetuation of the colonial ideals both internally and externally in Norway, makes the branch of postcolonial studies relevant to this thesis it aides

in looking at Norway through its own lens, Nordic exceptionalism, as well as the lens of a history not often talked about, postcolonial theories. The discourse that was used, and still is used today when talking about minorities, multiculturalism, and subsequent policies tied to these is equally relevant discourse to be aware of today, both within educational and governmental policies (Woodside-Jiron, 2011).

3.5 Identity

Identity is an underlying common factor throughout this project. It is within the research questions, as well as in the title of the subsection of the national curriculum that is the focus of this project. Therefore, to better understand the term, it was important to define, to gain clarity in how an individual might experience identity, how the school as an educational platform understand identity, as well as how Norway understands identity.

Identity according to Mead, is the vague, yet highly central aspect of an individual's everyday life, how they present themselves to others and how others might perceive them (Blumer, 2004). Identity is generally seen as a very personal interpretation and representation of who we are (Blumer, 2004). However according to Mead, the way we perceive ourselves is not something that happens separately from our surroundings (Blumer, 2004). Our identities and how we view ourselves and others is directly influences by our immediate community and the larger society (Blumer, 2004). Due to the development of our identities being a direct reflection of our surroundings, this also means that our identities are in fact not unchanging but rather an aspect that changes in accordance to our surroundings (Blumer, 2004)

Our identities being shaped by our surroundings and our community are an important part of identity shaping (Arnett, 2014). Our identities are shaped by so many factors, socio-cultural, societies, our home culture, internal dialogue, all aspects that make us who we are and are never static (Arnett, 2014). Our identities are what make us who we are, it is the make-up of our defining characteristic that have been built and influenced by the earlier mentioned factors

(Salole, 2020b, p. 211) These characteristics that one experiences as central to their person, can be disrupted and challenged by our surroundings, especially if there is not a conversation across our environments (Sand, 2009).

Such a challenge is often experienced by multicultural, especially children, when their home environment clashes with their school environment, as an example (Engen, 2006). The education system can at times not be built to support the existence of a multicultural identity, something at times reflected on the focus on minority languages in certain schools (Engen, 2006). This, for example when the school is unable to, or does not know how to create a network of support for those students arriving as minority language speakers, and using their home language to strengthen the learning in the majority language (Engen, 2006). Students who experience a clash or disconnect between their home environment and school community, where their identities at home and who they are at school does not match up, these students are referred to as experiencing double loneliness (Sand, 2009).

Double loneliness amongst multicultural students is a reflection of the discourse surrounding their identity, that at times can be strengthened by certain educational policies (Salole, 2018). This, as mentioned earlier, by not being able to provide a successful integration, but rather a policy more akin to assimilation (Engen, 2006). A discourse surrounding their cultural identity, where they do not receive understanding at home or at school (Salole, 2018). The curriculum which determines the values of the educational system, are values determined by the middle class majority, seen as highlighted by the opening paragraphs both in the Education Act and the national curriculum;

"Education and training must be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature, on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights." (Opplæringsloven, 1998; Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020)

These are values that can at times be implemented and interpreted in such a way that creates less space for those falling under the category of minority students (Kostøl & Mausethagen, 2009). This disparity between the identity being developed between home and school, and a lack of recognition for this identity can create an identity crisis and confusion (Salole, 2020b, p. 212). It is also important to remember that students are never passive agents in their learning and development (Freire, 1970). Which then creates the questions of whether some weaker learning models aimed at minority students are there to create assimilation or integration (Engen, 2006).

An identity crisis can naturally occur to anyone and can also be experienced by those multicultural children whose home and school are in agreement with each other (Wodak, de Cillia, Reisigl, Rodger, & Liebhart, 2012). For as we have seen, an individual's identity is a complex collection of someone's interaction with their surroundings, and if those surroundings do not give us recognition, we can struggle with how we perceive ourselves, how we wish to be perceived by others, and how we are perceived (Wodak et al., 2012).

The identity of students, as we have seen, does not happen in a vacuum when in a classroom. It is as Wodak et al. (2012) states, that our social identities are a part of our social roles and status within the group we are in. Our personal identities are something that is made available to us through our backgrounds, either ethnic or cultural which we share with others (Wodak et al., 2012). What often happens with stigmatized individuals within a group where they are for example a minority, is that they choose which part of their identity to engage within that society, which in turn can affect our ego identities, leading to an identity crisis (Wodak et al., 2012). Therefore, even though everyone can experience an identity crisis, within minorities or marginalized groups that identity crisis is about the parts of them that the marginalized feel the majority population will not like or react negatively to (Wodak et al., 2012).

Within a classroom setting, the identity of the teacher is an important factor since as we have seen earlier identities are developed within our surroundings. For young people one of the largest communities and groups one is a part of during development is school (Dewey, 1997). Therefore

all settings of a classroom and a student's growth needs to be considered, hence the identity of the teacher. Here the focus will mainly be surrounding the teacher's professional identity, which in turn is a reflection of their identities outside of a school setting (Dewey, 1997). For just like students, teacher do not arrive to a school and teach as empty vessels, they arrive with existing experiences that affect their identities (McAlinden, 2018).

Tough a teacher generally speaking is someone who has studied a certain amount of years, acquired some qualifications and then been sent out to work, they are still someone with preconceived notions and experiences (McAlinden, 2018). One cannot expect someone else to successfully be able to separate the identity they have at home and the identity they have as teachers (McAlinden, 2018). Bearing this in mind one can better understand how a teacher's personal and professional identity plays a role in a classroom and hence in the education of students.

Within the subject of identity there is the identity of a country and how it presents itself to the international community as well as how it is perceived nationally and internationally (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012). A countries identity is not only something that concerns the international aspect, it also plays a role in how people living and growing up in that country perceive themselves (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012). The country's identity can get played out through for example the values that are presented as important to the country via governmental policies and educational spaces (Baune, 2007b).

As was discussed in chapter 2 of this project, Norway is a country that gained its independence relatively recently. For 500 years until 1905 Norway was under either Danish or Swedish rule (Mardal, 2019). After its independence, Norway has cultivated a global picture of itself where they are a peace keeping and peace loving country (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). The peace loving and peace keeping image central to Norway's identity was especially cultivated throughout the 1970's through an active participation in anti-fascist programs (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). Prior to the 1970's Norway was actually one of the poorest countries in Europe,

until the discovery of raw petroleum in the Norwegian sea in 1970 (Sandvik, 2020). This discovery catapulted Norway to become one of the richest countries in the world as well as being one of the most efficient welfare states in the world (Sandvik, 2020). There was also a growth that happened gradually prior to the discovery of oil, however this discovery gave Norway the last push necessary to establish the strong economy it has today (Sandvik, 2020). An image and identity that as a country they proudly present as an important marker of who Norway as a country is, since this money and welfare state gives Norway the opportunity to provide economical and political support (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012).

Norway is also able to present an image of peacekeeper better than other European countries, since Norway's role in the colonial period is much less known, both locally and in foreign countries (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). This through the work done throughout the years of providing aid both politically and otherwise to other countries (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). One such notorious aid that was provided was to political refugees escaping Chile, during Pinochet's dictatorship (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). Through the giving of political assistance on foreign soil, and a sense of equality being born in Norway, the country through the years has built up said reputation as the "good guys" (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). The principle of equality that is central to the way Norwegians view themselves, is something that runs through the country as a central pillar to who they are as a whole and as individuals (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). It is an ideal born out of this idea of Norway being a homogenous country, that as has been discussed earlier, is false (Eidsvik, 2012).

Each individual's or a whole country's identity is central to themselves and others. How an individual interacts with their surroundings, as well as the aspects of themselves they choose to leave out. Either way, if it is an individual's or a whole country's identity, both of these are anchored in values that are seen as central to themselves.

3.6 The Oslo School

The Oslo school is what is referred to when talking about those schools that fall within the borders of Norway's capital, Oslo. Due to the proximity to parliament of the Oslo schools, Oslo schools are the first schools then subject to reform change and the newest policies (Baune, 2007b). Such a reform pertaining to education that was recently instated and first put into use in Oslo before the rest of the country was the level of education of the teachers (Baune, 2007b). Teacher education used to be a four year long education, but in 2017 was changed to a five year long education with a master thesis included (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2014).

Oslo being the capital and the city in Norway with the largest immigrant population, with about 50% of the immigrant population, including those born in Norway to immigrant parents, live in Oslo (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2020). Oslo also being the capital means it often ends up being the subject to the early versions of school reforms and policies (Baune, 2007b). Not to mention terms that are born out of the capital, examples of such discourse would be multicultural, minority students, dual cultural, immigrant children, second generation immigrant, minority Norwegians, foreign cultural child, and foreign language child (Salole, 2018). This terminology is often applied to and around the children who belong to a category that is not necessarily belonging to the majority (Salole, 2018). Those who are considered to be a part of the majority population, both in and out of the educational system are generally referred to as 'ethnic Norwegian' (Tisdel, 2020) The term "ethnic Norwegian" as used in Norway is to refer to those "native" to Norway, however more often than not and more specifically, to the 'white' Norwegians (Tisdel, 2020).

The above listed terms and discourse are large parts of the Oslo school system, as well as the way people express themselves around the subject of immigrants and multicultural children and people. A large amount of this discourse heard in schools, have trickled down from the government and policy makers (Salole, 2018). Such discourse, especially when trickled down from policy makers, has a tendency to take on a life of its own, and change meaning (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). Though discourse tends to trickle down and change meaning, this does not mean that the policy makers and politicians who begin the use of certain discourse are not aware

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of certain subtleties of language, discourse is power after all (Fairclough, 2011) An example of the power of discourse can be found within the term 'ethnic Norwegian'. For term ethnicity in reality refers to the shared culture and practices of a group, so by this standard anyone who grows up in Norway should be considered an ethnic Norwegian (Folkenborg, 2008, p. 67). However, it is an unspoken truth that the term 'ethnic Norwegian' refers to the 'true' white Norwegians (Folkenborg, 2008, p. 67)

4. Methodology

The methodology within this project helps to clarify the approaches used to be able to present a grounded thematic and content analysis. These thematic and content analysis, as has been seen so far in the project, are mainly aimed towards the core values of the new national curriculum. Throughout the project critical discourse analysis has also been drawn on to be able to produce a strong analysis and through that a clear and strong interpretation of the texts being used and the curriculums being analyzed (Bryman, 2012, p. 536).

Within the project epistemological and ontological approaches are used to gather and present the data as best as possible. When employing the epistemological approach throughout this project the goal is and was to create a question, targeted mainly at the national curriculum, and through that a reflection on the methods implemented in this thesis to analyze said curriculum (Bryman, 2012, p. 6) Through said reflections then to develop a credible, well-reasoned account of the curriculum reform and the larger picture that plays a role in such a central aspect of the education system (Bryman, 2012, p. 6). An epistemological lens also allows and opens the possibility to ask the method and research presented in this project, if the methods applied were in fact the strongest options (Bryman, 2012, p. 6).

Within this project, the epistemological and ontological approach will each play a role in creating strong foundations for the thematic and content analysis within this project. In the paragraph above we talk about the use of the epistemological approach, the ontological allows the reader to view certain aspects of our everyday lives and how they are connected and how they function within the societal frame (Bryman, 2012, p. 6). As well as the effect the social aspects have on us directly (Bryman, 2012, pp. 6-7). That is to say, looking at our role within a social frame, as well as that social frame's role on us. And key to the ontological approach the amount of politics involved in the field of study of social research (Bryman, 2012, pp. 6-7) The analysis of the national curriculums, educational policies, and especially those policies surrounding those with ties to the Global South, all have the social research aspect where politics

play a large role (Fairclough, 2011). Policies and discourse are all a part of the buildup of society and social hierarchies that exist within society (Fairclough, 2011). So in a project that heavily focuses on the national curriculum it is important to also acknowledge the discourse and social aspects that education, policies, and the curriculum find themselves in (Fairclough, 2011). Hence the political context at the time the data and theory are gathered and analyzed, not to mention the inherent subjectivism of the one doing the analysis, all of these pieces are vital to creating the analysis within this project (Bryman, 2012, p. 7)

4.1 A Critical Theoretical Framework

The focus of this project, as has been discussed earlier, is a critical approach. By building a critical theoretical framework, it allowed for the thesis to look at certain societal hierarchies that help maintain certain social standards (Fairclough, 2011), as well as the policies surrounding the educational system that has created the newest national curriculum, the LK20.

A critical interpretation of the document involved in this project, that is Norway's national curriculum, is the center piece to the goal of this thesis. To be able to create a content and thematic analysis, there was a lot of focus on critical approaches, one such approach was qualitative content analysis. By looking at Norway's history with its own indigenous groups, as well as their role during the colonial period and trans-Atlantic slave trade, some underlying themes shine through (Bryman, 2012, p. 557). This search for themes within the educational system, policy writing, and societal hierarchies have also led to a varied view on the literature. By looking at the historical context, as above, but also by observing the literature that exists surrounding the subject of multiculturalism, diversity, and educational policies (Bryman, 2012, p. 557).

As is with all aspects of an analysis, especially when employing a more critical approach is the importance of viewing ones approach from several angles. Bryman (2012, p. 555) talks about the trap that one can fall into, of viewing a document as a revelation of what is the true social and

political environment that document has been written in. Rather documents create an image of the reality they were written in, and should be treated as a larger part of a whole (Bryman, 2012, p. 555). For exactly this reason it was important to look at the past and present as a part of the national curriculum, not to mention past and present political climates concerning those falling under the categories of minorities. For these exact nuances critical discourse analysis was drawn upon to assist with the interpretation of certain texts.

4.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Critical discourse analysis approach, or CDA for short, is a theory that has been employed throughout this thesis to assist in the analysis and interpretation of the policies and literature used pertaining to the subject of the project. Critical discourse analysis is a theory that looks at discourse and language through the lens of the ideologies and socio-cultural contexts related to said discourse (Bryman, 2012, p. 536). CDA looks at language not only as something that gets used on a daily basis, but also the power and nuances of it (Fairclough, 2011), which is why it is so central in this thesis. Within this theory there was the possibility to look at discourse through several angles, and in a more nuanced way to understand how the national curriculum might represent specific groups within society, while excluding others, specifically looking at those who have ties to the Global South, or might fall under the category of minorities. It is especially interesting to look at language through critical discourse analysis since it opens up for a conversation surrounding the power sources, ideologies, and social hierarchies that can and might exist in discourse (Rogers, 2011). Within this project critical discourse analysis functions as much as a theory to analyze and gain a broader view of something as complex as language, but also as an analysis of the politics within which language exists (Fairclough, 2011). On top of these functions, within the critical analysis and understanding of discourse we potentially gain insight into other's perceptions and understandings of identity (McAlinden, 2018). Fairclough (2011) talks about certain aspects of action and interaction, especially within classroom learning, and how these structures become a part of the discourse. These are genres, which is the ways of

acting, discourses which is how one communicates or talks, and styles which is how one is in a learning environment (Fairclough, 2011).

One of the advantages of using critical discourse analysis within this thesis, is its status as a theory widely acknowledged and used in differing academic fields (Rogers, 2011). Which thus within this project allows for views and work with the theory that are parallel to each other (Rogers, 2011). This nuance and diversity of approaches within the field of CDA has been brought forth through the differing academic works by different academics who focus within the theory on different central aspects which they feel expresses what is most important (Rogers, 2011).

Within critical discourse analysis there is however one academic who often appears at the forefront as the base theorist within CDA, and that is Fairclough (Rogers, 2011). Fairclough is most well-known for emphasizing the *critical* dimension within critical discourse analysis, rather than focusing on the *discourse* part of CDA (Rogers, 2011). One such theorist who focuses more on the *discourse* side of CDA is Gee (Gee, 2011). More exclusively, Gee focuses on the difference between *discourse* within critical discourse analysis, and whether discourse is written with a capital 'D' or a little 'd' (Gee, 2011). This distinction between a capital letter or a small letter for Gee symbolizes the difference of whether the discourse being talked about is focusing on the *discourse* as in grammar, or *Discourse* which represents the systems and politics (Gee, 2011). This is unlike Fairclough who blends sociopolitical theories with the linguistics involved in discourse (Rogers, 2011). Another important academic amongst the branches of CDA is Kress who is known for taking critical discourse analysis as only one of many ways of creating meaning (Kress, 2011). Meaning that people and other language users simply make use of what is available to them and combine linguistics with other forms of communication available to them to create meaning (Rogers, 2011).

Within the same line of thought of Kress, and an aspect that plays a potential role in how the language of the national curriculum is how the naturalization of discourse occurs and is

important to consider when talking discourse (Kress, 2011). This naturalization of discourse is something that can occur both as a top down phenomenon or vice versa (Kress, 2011).Within the setting of this project which is focused on education, such naturalization might occur when policy makers, authors of the national curriculum, and so on use certain discourse approaches and discourse styles (Kress, 2011). Through the language in said document and since the language is being used within an official context they help to naturalize certain terminologies creating less of a questioning around the way a text is written (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). The naturalization of a text happens both through a trust towards those presenting the text, as well as the presentation of the text in such a way that it is read as a clear and grounded message, which causes less questioning of the text by those reading it (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). This naturalization of language through official texts, as in the case of this project a national curriculum, can create and perpetuate certain hegemonic mindsets. Certain notions are also made clear through the words used both officially and unofficially, when using certain language especially language surrounding certain peoples (Tisdel, 2020). It is as Tisdel (2020) refers to it the hyphenated people, which is conversations surrounding subjects about immigrants, immigration tendencies, minorities, and so on.

Within all of the potential branches of critical discourse analysis, and the different focuses of what is central to the theory there is one that for this project becomes one of the central ways to view discourse. The branch of the theorist Bernstein (2000), who Woodside-Jiron (2011) refers to in her work, is known for the highlight on discourse and social practice as two aspects that should not and cannot be seen as two separate entities. Discourse and social practice are in fact two important sides of the same coin in which social change in either direction can take place (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). This ties in to Fairclough (2011), and how he states the importance of viewing language as power. A form of power that is often used and controlled by those in power to decide meaning and significance of not only the spoken language but also the written language (Kress, 2011). Due to critical discourse analysis' variety in branches and in approaches to the study of language, it opens for many opportunities to be able to discuss and view the language both within and surrounding the national curriculum (Rogers, 2011). CDA together with other

analytical and critical approaches opens the opportunity within this thesis to view the written language both through the eyes of the policy makers and politicians, as well as through the eyes of those whose job it is to interpret and implement the national curriculum.

4.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis in Education

Critical discourse analysis with a focus of how it is applied within the frame of education, placed the critical aspect that has been the focus of this thesis, at the center. Critical discourse analysis that focuses on education views not only the discourse of education critically, but equally the policies and politics surrounding education (Rogers, 2011).

Applying critical discourse analysis within the framework of education becomes also especially relevant, seeing as this project is trying to create a thematic and content analysis of a national curriculum. Through critical discourse analysis, it becomes clear that at certain points the inseparability of knowledge, learning from communication which is a socially situated "activity" (Rogers, 2011). The approach to CDA within education, also helps to highlight the power dynamics that exists within education (Rogers, 2011). The advantage of critical discourse analysis focused specifically towards education, as is being done within this project, is the opening of an analysis and conversation of a wider situation within the discourse of education. Said conversation within CDA and education, as many approaches within critical discourse analysis, focuses on the power dynamics that can play a role when it comes to discourse (Rogers, 2011). This disparity between language, and power, and education when critically looking at discourse, also opens for the conversation surrounding the students falling under the category of minorities, and how certain discourse can lead to those "minorities", or of lower socio-economic standing, to fall behind, or simply out of school (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011).

Such critical approaches to language, especially within education, creates an opportunity to view the curriculum under the same scrutiny. Lopez-Bonilla (2011) talks about such a failing, of the discourse and linguistics failing to be adapted to the socio-cultural standing of the target

students, which in turn creates an expectation of failure. The focus on discourse within this project is of course central, while analyzing the national curriculum, as a new document that is expected to be implemented into the schooling system. In turn also analyzing the language surrounding minorities and the educational system.

4.2.2 Critical Social Theory

Within the critical aspect of critical discourse analysis, we have critical social theory (Rogers, 2011). This is the part of the critical discourse analysis that incorporates the analysis and exploration of the relationships between discourses, unequal power relations, and how social practices in general have a role to play (Rogers, 2011). Critical social theory, within this project when used hand in hand with critical discourse analysis, allows for a fuller view of the use of language and social aspects as something, as discussed earlier, go together (Rogers, 2011). CST is an important basis within CDA, which allows to recognize and analyze the structure of power within our society, and the role it plays in maintaining hierarchies (Rogers, 2011).

Being able to view the power dynamics and language in correlation to each other, allows a closer and potentially deeper look into why the analysis of the language of something as central as a national curriculum, plays an important role into how said document is interpreted (Rogers, 2011). Critical social theory also allows for a rejection of naturalism, rationality, neutrality, and individualism (Rogers, 2011). In other words, rejecting the earlier listed approaches as anything but having and being affected by power dynamics and social constructs (Rogers, 2011). Something that this project will touch upon especially when dealing with the new national curriculum, LK20, and students falling under the category of "minority".

4.3 Data

To be able to present a solid analysis of the newest national curriculum, and other subsequent educational policies it was central for this thesis to look at certain documents. The document that has been at the center of this project has been the newest national curriculum, known as LK20.

As seen by the thesis statement and research questions, the focus has been aimed towards those students with any tie to the Global South, in other words, anyone falling under the category of minority.

The research questions focus on the language surrounding minorities, as well as spaces being provided for these same minorities within the educational system of Norway. With the educational system being such a central focus one of the most central pieces of data was the national curriculum itself. Specifically the first chapter, titled the core curriculum in Norwegian (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). The core curriculum is the chapter that details the values that are expected to play a role in all subjects and all aspects of education (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Another central document, that works as a parallel supporter of the curriculum, is the Education Act (Opplæringsloven, 1998). The Education Act dictates the laws and rights that protect anyone tied to an educational system, whether it be required basic education, or adult education (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

To be able to have an understanding of the curriculum and other educational policies, a historical approach was employed. As well as looking at extensive literature discussing pedagogical approaches and academic approaches to the conversation surrounding multiculturalism and cultural diversity. All of this while employing a critical approach to the discourse, as well using critical social theories. The approach used when deciding what best way to create a good content and thematic analysis was by looking at the correlations between education, policies, and discourse. The historical aspect allowed for a more complete understanding of the power dynamics that are central to a critical discourse and social analysis of documents and knowledge surrounding the education system (Rogers, 2011).

Questionnaires were also employed to a lesser extent. The idea with the questionnaires was to gauge both amongst teachers and students their relationship of certain discourse. A more detailed look of the process of the questionnaires will be had in the following section.

4.4 Questionnaires

When it came to the questionnaires there was a long process of adapting and learning. Originally, ideally for this thesis there were going to be face to face interviews, and observation of a classroom, to gather data on the new national curriculum being applied in classrooms. However, the COVID-19 restrictions within Norway when the pandemic hit, made this method of data collection unfeasible. The restrictions due to the pandemic created the focus on text, content, and thematic analysis.

Due to these situations, a questionnaire seemed like the obvious solution. When the questionnaire was first developed it began as a 27 question long sheet of paper. Where the questions ranged from gaining a slight insight into the students backgrounds, as well as their personal feelings on the school system in relation to the subject on multiculturalism.

Naturally, before these questions could be handed out in the classroom they had to be approved by both the teacher, who was my contact, as well as the principal. Due to the nature of some of the questions being slightly invasive, and might cause some students to feel singled out, the questionnaire was edited.

After several editing sessions and meetings with the teacher who was my contact it started to become apparent that perhaps my questionnaire was not going to be approved so easily. The principal of the school, naturally had to ensure the protection of teachers, students and school. Due to this it became more and more difficult to create a questionnaire with the questions I had originally planned. Therefore, I stepped away from the 27 question long list, and ended up with three long answer questions, which will be attached at the end of the thesis.

The three questions with which I ended up were created in such a way to not make anyone answering the questionnaire singled out, or as if they are the target. In many ways, though it was not the original plan, a questionnaire seemed like a reasonable compromise. With this method of

data gathering, there is at least less of a chance of the pupils experiencing a difference in status, and thus answering in a way that they believe is what I want to hear (Johannessen, Tufte, & Christoffersen, 2016, pp. 84-85). The power dynamic in interviews, especially with minors must always be considered as a factor that can affect the answers (Johannessen et al., 2016, pp. 84-85). Though the students answering my questionnaire never see me, there is still the risk that they will answer in such a way that they believe is expected of them, rather than honestly how they would wish to answer (Johannessen et al., 2016, pp. 84-85).

4.5 Ethical Considerations

As with any large project there are certain ethical aspects that have to be considered as a part of the project. There are personal emotions to take into consideration, there are the emotions of others, as well as the main subject matter, how it is represented and who is represented (Johannessen et al., 2016).

This project being quite personal, and close to my heart, some assumptions and opinions were brought into the thesis. There are also some political perspectives that and political assumptions on my part as the writer that I had to maintain the openness of the data potentially pointing in another direction than my own personal assumptions (Bryman, 2012, p. 475). There were also times throughout this project that I found myself expecting a certain result or answer, and perhaps received something not quite as predicted or completely different to the prediction (Bryman, 2012, p. 39). That is, however, one of the adventures of writing such a project.

Personal reflection becomes then a central aspect of research, to be able to analyze not only the data, but also oneself in relation to that data (Solbue, 2014). It is important to be aware of oneself in relation to data and how that data is perceived (Solbue, 2014).

One must also be aware of one own's personal preconceived notions and expectations playing a role in how one might interpret certain writings or data results (Bryman, 2012, p. 39). A completely neutral standpoint on a matter is impossible to achieve as a human being who exists

with experiences and pre-conceived notions (Bryman, 2012, p. 39). However, awareness over these biases, and warning the reader, can assist in keeping oneself and the reader open to other possibilities than those presented in one's data collection (Bryman, 2012, pp. 39-40). Personally I am aware of a strong set of emotions when talking about the subjects of multiculturalism, interculturalism and so on, due to personal experience within the subject. Due to this, I might read certain articles or data expecting certain results, and made sure to be aware of this.

It is also important to highlight that the processes referred to and discussed in this thesis are complex, and therefore cannot be seen through single lenses (Seeberg, 2003, pp. 34-50). Another question is how generalizing is the work being done (Solbue, 2014). In the end the interpretation cannot be presented as the only way to view the documents and literature, however based on the background work it is a good presentation of the data and literature.

4.5.1 The Ethics of the Questionnaire

Any gathering of data has to be treated and respected, especially when there are people's, and in this case underage people's opinions. It was important to anonymize both students, teachers and the school that participated in the questionnaire, so that there was no way of tracing any answer back to any one person (Johannessen et al., 2016, p. 91). This to protect both the informants and the educational institute they belong.

Because of this need for protection it became an arduous job to be able to create a questionnaire that was respectful of the need for anonymity, did not create questions that singled out any student, and did not place the school or teachers in it in a bad light. COVID-19 did not make the job easier for anyone either, the teachers and students bouncing between stay at home school, attending the physical school, and the principal having to administer all of these changes while looking and giving feedback on the questions.

No one is a neutral data gatherer, everyone has pre-conceived notions and experiences, which is important to be aware of despite ones chosen method of data gathering (Bryman, 2012, pp. 39-40). It was also important to make sure to look at and gather literature that was as recent as possible. The world of academia within any field changes and evolves. Perhaps certain ideas stay in their core the same, but new discoveries are often made, and thus it becomes important to try and keep the literature used within a thesis, relevant as well (Bryman, 2012, pp. 168-170) As with most things, however, there are exceptions, to the date of a journal or article. Such established researchers such as Mead (Hammack, 2014), (as discussed in The Oxford Handbook of Identity) Dewey (Dewey, 1997), and Freire (Freire, 1970), though old, are such recognized individuals and their theories, that they stay relevant and thus become central to the data gathering.

5. In what ways can discourse awareness help to understand the new national curriculum?

Discourse is the way we communicate in our everyday lives, and is more than the exchange of oral words (Rogers, 2011). It is the written language, the spoken language, the meaning of certain words, but also how subtext can be read and interpreted depending on the political, social or historical context (Rogers, 2011). Hence the general critical approach, as we have seen earlier in this project, that can be used to uncover or investigate or provide insight into discourses, hierarchies, and socio-political situations, to name a few. This focus on a critical approach felt especially important for the analysis of the new national curriculum, the LK20, which is a document influenced by many aspects. As much policies, as historical influences, as socio-political hierarchies, and discourse. The 'critical' aspect within discourse analysis especially, as a central piece for a strong thematic and content analysis within this project, is best presented by Fairclough. It is as Fairclough (2011) states, to be able to have and present a critical discourse analysis, it is important to look at the discourse in question through several lenses, such as political and historical (Wodak et al., 2012).

The new national curriculum, LK20, was the largest editing of the national curriculum since 2006 (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2018) The goal with an edited and refreshed national curriculum was to create space for more in depth learning and less superficial learning, that is to say, a stronger focus on not only touching superficially on different subjects, but rather going in depth into the subjects, to truly understand them and not only be able to answer fact questions (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). This has been one of the larger criticisms of the previous curriculum, LK06. The previous curriculum was often seen by teachers and educators as being too large and expecting schools to cover very large knowledge areas in short periods of time, which did not allow for in depth learning of a subject (Andersen et al., 2010). The *overordnet del*, or core curriculum as udir.com has translated it the official site of the national curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020), is the introductory chapter to the new curriculum where the core

values central to education were also updated an revamped to adapt and be more relevant to the times, according to Kunnskpasdepartementet (2018) when they announced the future publication of a new curriculum.

As has been discussed, it is the core curriculum section of the LK20 that is the focus of this project. This due to the values of the core curriculum being required to be a part of all aspects and angles of education, it is not something that can be argued away or removed when planning and giving classes (Opplæringsloven, 1998). The values of the core curriculum, are by law, what all education in Norway has to be built on, despite religious, cultural, or socio-economic background (Opplæringsloven, 1998). Within the core curriculum the core values therein are divided into sections detailing different aspects of education, such as principles for the school's practice, principles for education and all-around learning (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Each of these sub-sections are divided then once again and go into detail covering the core values of different aspects of education such as identity and cultural diversity, or social learning and development, amongst several others. Below we see an overview of the index to give an idea of the content within the national curriculum;

<div align="center">

"About the core curriculum
The purpose of the education
1. Core values of the education and training
1.1 Human dignity
1.2 Identity and cultural diversity
1.3 Critical thinking and ethical awareness
1.4 The joy of creating, engagement and the urge to explore
1.5 Respect for nature and environmental awareness
1.6 Democracy and participation
2. Principles for education and all-round development
2.1 Social learning and development
2.2 Competence in the subjects
2.3 The basic skills
2.4 Learning to learn
2.5 Interdisciplinary topics
2.5.1 Health and life skills
2.5.2 Democracy and citizenship
2.5.3 Sustainable development" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020)

</div>

The index shown above is of only the two most relevant sections for this project. This due to the social focus of this project, rather than the more school subject based material of the curriculum. Hence the above part of the index, which is the section which focuses on social aspect of learning. The whole index can be seen in the appendix at the end of this thesis.

For this chapter the goal is to present the importance of being aware of the discourse that is at the center of such an important educational document as the national curriculum. As well as being aware of certain discourse that is a part of political, social, and educational circles that can and at times are born from a historical and deeper political perspective. Hence the support of critical discourse analysis to try and create a nuanced approach and analysis of the discourse that is the make up in large parts of the newest national curriculum, and at times its predecessor.

Critical discourse analysis, though mainly a supporting tool throughout this thematic and content analysis, opened up the possibility to understand the new national curriculum from several angles. As mentioned above, through the process of writing this project it has become increasingly clear the influence several factors have on official discourse used in policy making, as well as in everyday situations.

5.1 The New National Curriculum, History, and Critical Discourse Analysis

When this project began, it was first an analysis of the document that is the national curriculum through critical discourse analysis. However, it quickly became apparent through a better understanding of CDA, and a closer look at official documents and policies tied to education in Norway; that to gauge a better understanding of the curriculum, a look back in time was necessary. This look back at the previous curriculum, apart from serving an understanding on what was changed, was also interesting to see what was not changed. Therefore creating a broader understanding of what was part of the curriculum revision, what core values where felt to be timeless, and what core values needed an update. It is also interesting to see the central

values through critical discourse analysis and history. Especially since these core values are mentioned so much in the national curriculum. Looking at LK20 through critical discourse analysis, and drawing awareness to the discourse in this chapter will also pave the way for the next chapter. There we will take the this and previous chapters to see in what ways a growing multicultural population are given space in pedagogical and curricular practices.

As mentioned earlier, the LK20 is a revised and edited version of the previous curriculum, LK06 (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). Generally speaking the national curriculums go through edits and adjustments throughout the years of its publishing, but as we have talked about earlier, approximately every 10 years the new curriculum comes out (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). The new curriculum that gets published every 10 years is generally a document that has gone through large edits on what should be the focus of education, how the education should be provided, and most importantly for this project, the underlying values that must exist in the education (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). In the same line when talking about the national curriculum it is important to think of LK20 not as a stand-alone document, but rather a document that leans on and is uplifted by other policies and laws within education (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

The new national curriculum is a document 127 pages long encompassing every subject in every school grade level, as well as adult education. The document as we have seen talks about the values of education, the basic skills that are seen as essential to education, and then the level of knowledge students and teachers are expected to have gone through by each grade levels (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019).

The discourse within the introductory chapter of the curriculum, translated to the core curriculum, is interesting to look at through critical discourse analysis. Then through CDA, be able to create an awareness surrounding the discourse of the curriculum. This awareness can be important since discourse, as we have seen, does not exist in a vacuum (Kress, 2011). Discourse exists in relation to, and as a result of those in power using the language in a certain way

(Fairclough, 2011). While reading the curriculum there were certain trends that kept appearing that give the impression of implicitly expressing certain values within the national curriculum. Some of these values, and the way they are expressed are trends seen both in the newest curriculum, as well as in its predecessor. One aspect within this new curriculum that stands out as an interesting choice of words is the use of *"our"*. The word *"our"* in the curriculum appears most commonly when cultural heritage and history is mentioned as seen by the quote below. The following excerpt is from the section of the core curriculum detailing identity and cultural diversity in the education system;

"Insight into our history and culture is important for developing the identities of pupils and their belonging in society. The pupils shall learn about the values and traditions which contribute to uniting people in our country." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

When reading the above quote, as a reader and as someone seeing the core curriculum through the lens of critical discourse analysis, then the question that begs, is who exactly is this *"our"* that the curriculum is referring to? Following the historical events looked at in chapter two such choice of language can open up for an analysis and review of the historical aspects. The historical aspect here is approached not only due to the critical discourse analysis that at times employs a historical aspects within their analysis. It is as well something the curriculum is inviting by explicitly mentioning the importance of *"our"* shared history. Therefore the natural inclusion of what this shared history is, and how it may affect the discourse of the curriculum.

If we look at the new national curriculum through the eyes of Fairclough and critical discourse analysis, then the *"our"* referred to above is the majority population, or perhaps those who identify with the national identity of Norway. For according to Fairclough (2011), one can never look at discourse as existing separately from those using it. Language cannot either exist apart from the history and context of the politics and values of a country. Which then when looking at the *"our"* often placed in the curriculum in front of the topic of culture and history, it must be referring to the *"our"* of the majority of the country, the ethnic Norwegians, as they are referred to (Tisdel, 2020).

As in the excerpt above, this explicit mention of "our" history and culture highlights not only what aspect of the Norwegian experience is considered central to education, it also creates an us them discourse. This focus on the us, the our of Norwegian culture, creates a divide between the correct "our" culture to teach and learn about in a classroom, and the "them" history and culture, as separate.

"Common reference frameworks are important for each person's sense of belonging in society. This creates solidarity and connects each individual's identity to the greater community and to a historical context." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

As we see by the above excerpt the references to one single common history continues to be central to, not only the education, but as a part of the students future identities, and solidarity. Within the core curriculum, the mention of Christianity and humanism comes up twice, as an explicit mention of what the central values and current democracy are built on, as seen by the following two excerpts;

"Christian and humanist heritage and traditions are an important part of Norway's collective cultural heritage and have played a vital role in the development of our democracy." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).
and
"Education and training shall be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature, and on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

Despite the explicit mention of Christian and humanist values as being central aspects to the national curriculum, and hence education, these values are only mentioned twice throughout the whole curriculum. Despite this, the mention is so explicit in its fundamental meaning, of the centrality and importance of Christianity and humanism as building blocks of Norway. This creates and automatic response as a reader of the national curriculum, where when the mention of "our" history and culture is brought up, one assumes automatically it is the Christian and

humanist background. It is also important to point out that all the earlier excerpts are taken from the subsection titled, Identity and cultural diversity. As we have seen by employing the critical approach of critical discourse analysis, having looked at Norway's history with colony abroad and on its own soil, the choice of words seems to create an us versus them discourse (Nes, 2018). This us/them discourse can be argued to exist within the LK20 by the nature of the language used, because the national curriculum, as seen by the excerpts above, is creating an inside and outside understanding of history, culture, and common reference framework (Nes, 2018). The language of the LK20 is asking for assimilation, by expressing that those who wrote this document, are the ones who have decided what is the "our" or "inside" history and culture, that the rest must assimilate to (Nes, 2018).

The core curriculum section of LK20, is read in a relatively more neutral position regarding the values of the schooling system. Nonetheless, the rest of the core curriculum cannot be expected to be read apart from the paragraphs that does highlight the importance of ,*"our shared cultural history"* (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). A sentence such as this one is especially interesting when thought of in relation to the history that was covered in chapter two of this project. As has been looked at earlier in the project Norway generally speaking presents itself in the global world as a peace promoting country, and generally the "good guys" (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). This image has allowed for a sense of Nordic exceptionalism to grow when talking about history and the present day society (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). Thus, by employing Nordic exceptionalism, the Scandinavian countries, but Norway in particular in the case of this project, has arguably been able to avoid addressing certain parts of its history, that could play a role in the countries policies and curriculums today (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). It is also due to this that the focus of this project, though directed at the core curriculum, on an even finer point has been directed towards the subsection within the core curriculum titled, *"Identity and Cultural Diversity"*.

This subsection that focuses on identity and cultural diversity in education specifies and highlights the importance of the cultural heritage that should be passed down in classrooms, as

well as the history (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). For example, the document this section also specifies the importance of teaching about Norway's cultural heritage, which is inherently Christian and Humanist based The discourse here is presenting what is considered as the central values of all education and the cultural heritage of *"our"* history. Which when preceded by a statement of Norway's values and democracy having been developed from Christian and Humanist values, makes it hard to not read these two aspects as being tied together.

Despite the earlier mentioned focus on the Christian and Humanist values as the building blocks of Norway's democracy and cultural heritage, as we have seen earlier in chapter two this is not necessarily accurate. Not only does Norway have several minority groups, acknowledged as national minorities, but the ban of certain religious and ethnic groups written into the constitution of 1814 (Dørum, 2019), can lead it to seem that Norway had in fact other religious and cultural influences apart from Christian and Humanist. The exclusion was directed towards the Jewish, Jesuits, as well as Monastic orders (Dørum, 2019). In 1851 this section of the constitution was edited (Dørum, 2019). Despite this, the fact remains that between the making more Norwegian of the Sami and Kvenn people, as well as the exclusion of specific religious groups, Norway has a history of trying to homogenies the country. Something seen through the treatment of certain minorities, but also through the creation of a narrative of Norway as a homogenous country, that is still seen today (Sandset, 2019, p. 14). This debate is not to subtract from the role that Christian and Humanist belief systems have had on Norway in its development to become the country it is today, as we are reminded by the national curriculum as well as the Education Act. Rather, it is an attempt at bringing awareness to a curriculum that is in fact written, edited, and published by those in positions of power (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). Hence the importance of the importance of garnering an awareness surrounding the discourse of the new national curriculum. Especially when, as we have seen earlier, the guiding documents within education fosters an us/them discourse.

Apart from the earlier discussed subsection that focuses on the cultural aspect of the core curriculum, the LK20 is a vast curriculum covering many aspects of the students education and

values therein (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Other subsections cover subjects such as *Menneskeverdet,* The Human value, which is based on the undeniable value of each individual based on the laws of Norway. The core curriculum goes on to cover the value of teaching students how to be critical thinkers and ethically aware. There is also the importance of teaching students the joy of being creative, to explore, and be engaged in subjects both in and outside of school. Towards the end of the values that are presented as central to have within the educational system is also respect for nature, as well as being and having awareness surrounding their environment. At the very end, we then see a presentation of the value of learning about democracy and participation within this democracy (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

As has been mentioned earlier, the subsections listed above, that are under the core values of education are elements that teachers and educators are expected to have running through all subjects and all aeras of learning, whether it be practical or more academic (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019). One such core value that appears regularly throughout the core curriculum is the promotion, or education, of students to become active participants of society and to be able to work with others within said society, examples of these are seen in the following excerpts (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020, pp. 10, 11, 12). All translated excerpts, from Norwegian to English, are taken directly from the Education Departments official website, hence their official translation;

> "School shall support the development of each person's identity, make the pupils confident in who they are, and also present common values that are needed to participate in this diverse society and to open doors to the world and the future." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

> "Creative abilities contribute to enriching society" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

> "Such experiences have a value in the here and now, and prepare the pupils for becoming responsible citizens in society." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

All of these earlier mentioned points are pieces that were looked at and analyzed to try and understand the discourse of this new curriculum. Awareness towards this new curriculum and its discourse allows educators and others who have to relate to the document to have a reflected

approach towards the document. A document that as we have seen, can be a direct reflection of those in positions of power, and the social history of a country (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). Education, much like discourse, is under the influence and effect of those in positions of power (Baune, 2007b, p. 51). Influences of the politicians hand in education, in Norwegian context, can clearly be seen through such acts of new policies being written, and which are actually followed through in schools (Baune, 2007b, p. 51) As discussed earlier, and as seen in the excerpts above those in positions of power when editing the newest national curriculum, made a decision along the way, to use a language that can be perceived as exclusive rather than inclusive (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). A discourse that in an attempt to create unity, as seen through the excerpts in this project, uses a language that creates unity, based on the requirements of those on the "inside", the us group (Nes, 2018). A societal unity, that as we have seen throughout this project, is based on Christian and humanist values, as the only values ever explicitly mentioned.

A whole other project could be done to analyze the effect of this us/them discourse used in such central educational documents. One could compare West side schools with schools on the East side of Oslo, look at how teachers and students interpret the new national curriculum. However, for this project, it became an analysis of the language and discourse through several critical lenses, in an attempt to construct an understanding as well as an analysis.

It was interesting to read this new national curriculum through a critical lens, in an attempt to create a content and thematic analysis. Also bearing in mind it is such a new curriculum, there has not been an opportunity yet for a large work of analysis by other academics, of this curriculum to build up. Bearing in mind the political climate that has surrounded Norway during the time of the writing of this national curriculum, creates an interesting angle when viewing the discourse. It was also essential to keep in mind own biases when analyzing this new national curriculum. For with the lens of CDA it was easy to at times become hyper critical and hyper aware of certain language and sentence construction. Regardless, within a balance of own preconceived notions and values, the critical discourse approach allowed for an understanding

and awareness of language which was interesting to use when analyzing the new national curriculum.

It was interesting to look at the new national curriculum and see what trends in discourse appeared frequently within the core curriculum. That is to say the values that are considered central to have and maintain throughout the educational system (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Some such trends in discourse is the goal of teaching and creating future participants of society (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). This is expressed several times throughout the curriculum, however below is the earliest example, taken from the first section titled, "*Core values of the education and training*";

> "The objectives clause expresses values that unite the Norwegian society. These values, the foundation of our democracy, shall help us to live, learn and work together in a complex world and with an uncertain future." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

Another value that seems to be central and is mentioned often, is assisting in the development of the identity of students, as well as growing up to be team player within the democracy and the subsequent democracy they belong to (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Mentions of the development of personal identity, democracy, and future active participants of society all create a narrative within the curriculum, which not only guides in the educational system, but also reveal the attitude of those who have written the text (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011).

The opening paragraph of the core curriculum, is a direct replication of the opening paragraph to Norway's education laws. This opening paragraph in both Norway's laws and the core curriculum, is titled as the purpose of education (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020) (Opplæringsloven, 1998). This seen as the direct quote earlier in this chapter illustrates.

This already creates a clear idea of the importance of this section, it is more than just the values central to education, is the purpose of education, by the curriculum and more importantly, by law (Opplæringsloven, 1998). Now, bearing this in mind together with everything we have talked

about earlier in this chapter, it is then interesting to look at paragraph two of section one of the education act, which then dictates the national curriculum, and the subsequent values that are so often mentioned.

This second paragraph in the education law states;

"Education and training must be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature, on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights." (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

As seen in the above quote, by law and hence the core curriculum as well, education must follow the fundamental values of Christian and humanist traditions. It is later in the sentence stated that the Christian and humanist values that all education must be based on, can also be found in other religions, as well as in human rights law. However, after learning about Norway's history in chapter two, and being aware politically of whom find themselves in positions of power at the time of the writing of the new curriculum, it is hard to ignore the opening words. The opening words are what are setting up the whole theme for the rest of these central documents (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). It is the opening statements that are deciding how one reads the rest of the document. Hence when the first paragraphs highlight what values are to be in all forms of education, it is a telling sign of the document as a whole (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). It is as Gee (2011) states that for something to in fact be looked at through the critical aspect of critical discourse analysis, we must look at all the "building tasks", which were covered in chapter 3 earlier in this project.

Gee (2011) "building tasks", remind us of all the aspects that play a role in discourse, especially in critical discourse analysis. However when looking at the above mentioned exert, that is the introduction to Norway's education laws and national curriculum, there are certain aspects of the critical discourse analysis and other critical approaches that are to be considered. Here I mention curriculum as a whole, and not solely the introductory paragraph for both law and curriculum.

This is due to the fact, that as the introductory section, it paves the way for the whole core curriculum. As an example, the second paragraph of this introduction, as cited above, is telling us the reader/educator/parent/student that the values of education shall be based on and built upon the values of Christianity and humanist belief system and tradition (Opplæringsloven, 1998; Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Due to this, the reader must then assume that whenever the word "values" is used later in the core curriculum, it is referring to the values that have been presented as the most fundamental ones within Norway's education (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011). Here then if we refer to Gee (2011) fifth and seventh "building tasks", politics and sign systems and knowledge respectably, a more solid explanation for the above assumption. The fifth "building task" titled politics is based more specifically of the distribution of social goods (Gee, 2011). This element is more about the social goods aspect that ties into the politics, for example as cited in the exert above. As an example, when the above paragraph mentions the values that Christianity and humanist belief systems encompass, towards the very end of the sentence the mention of other religion and human rights is also listed as sharing these values. However if we use the seventh "building task", as well in the analysis of this, the exclusive mention of Christianity and humanist, places these two belief systems above and in a position of privilege compared to aforementioned "different religions" (Gee, 2011). This is in line with what has been discussed earlier, where some cultures, religions, and histories are placed on the "inside", where the rest are part of the "outside" (Nes, 2018). In other words, the ones on the "us" part of the discourse are the ones to strive towards (Nes, 2018).

Historically the role of Christianity and humanist belief systems in Norway, has indeed played important roles in the countries development (Mardal, 2019). However, the important role of these two belief systems, does not reduce the importance of other ethnicities, cultures, and religions who have also played a role in Norway's history. However, certain aspects, especially within the educational sector, are in large parts due to Christianity. The school for all system, which is the term used to referred to the school system in Norway, that is a school system for everyone despite location (Baune, 2007a). This term is still employed today and was born out of catechism school, for children heading into their Christian confirmations (Baune, 2007a). Yet, as

we have seen in chapter two, in Norway there have existed many different ethnic groups simultaneously and parallel to this Christian society that was and is at the center of what is considered the most central building blocks to the Norway we see today (Sandset, 2019). Yet this placement as Christianity and humanist as the core most fundamental values of education, can create an "insider" and "outsider" sense of discourse (Gee, 2011). For not only does the core curriculum establish what they consider to be the central values, this also creates an awareness of whose cultural heritage, whose values bring Norway together as a country the core curriculum is referring to.

All of the above points serve to highlight the necessity for an awareness about discourse of not only Norway's curriculum, but any curriculum. This in large part because curriculums and education reforms are written by those in power, and as is the case in Norway, those in power are the majority that have power over the discourse of the national curriculum, the core curriculum, and the values therein (Woodside-Jiron, 2011).

Despite the focus of this section of the project having been largely directed towards a small section of the core curriculum, and education act, it must be looked at and analyzed as a telling aspect of the new core curriculum. That small section cited above, is the section that dictates what is referred to every time the mention of fundamental and/or values appear anywhere in the core curriculum. Therefore, though the core curriculum does a good job of reminding anyone referring to the curriculum for work or otherwise, of the importance of understanding and working together despite our differences. It becomes difficult to shake the author and politicians placing themselves in the category of "normal", and everyone else outside the Christian and humanist belief system, as "different" (Gee, 2011).

5.2 Decolonization of Education

Colonialism is more than simply the institution of colonialism rule, it is in fact an ideological and economical system which uses tactics such as exploration, missionary activities, and trade (Eidsvik, 2012). When colonialism is then viewed in this way as listed earlier, then Norway's

role in the colonial period becomes more apparent. Unlike other larger western colonial powers at the time, such as France, Spain, The United Kingdom, or even Denmark who ruled in Norway at the time; Norway has often presented itself not as a participant in the colonial rule (Eidsvik, 2012). However, as seen in chapter two, there are alternative interpretations. As we have discussed earlier in the project, Norway alongside its ruler at the time, Denmark participated largely and actively in the colonial system, participating in the slave trade, the ownership of sugar cane plantations, missionary work, and providing the ships and captains necessary for the transport of enslaved people and the goods they were subsequently traded for (Eidsvik, 2012). It can also be argued that the treatment of the indigenous Sami people on Norwegian soil was a form of colonialism, through the forced and often violent assimilation laws directed towards the Sami people, such as the ban on their language and religion (Skogvang, 2021).

When talking about the decolonization of education it is often a conversation directed towards those countries in the Global South who have been subject to colonial rule (W. D. Mignolo, 2011b). However, decolonization of education is the approach that wishes to step away from an education format that bears a strong Western-centric point of view (W. D. Mignolo, 2011b). W. Mignolo (2012) who is a major scholar of decolonization, refers to the view of the world and its history that is most often presented especially within the education system, is told through the Global North's point of view, in other words, the West.

The issue that often arises then with such a Western-centric point of view within education, risks being foreign to those who do not share the same experiences and history, hence decolonization of education (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011). Decolonization of education is not something that should be reserved explicitly for those countries belonging to the Global South. It is arguably an approach that should be applied to all areas of the Globe. Something we have seen in chapter two when the history of Norway's colonial past was discussed. This colonial past being tied to the missionary work that was conducted inside as well as outside the country. As well as other forms of colonization conducted equally abroad as on home soil (Sandset, 2019, p. 22).

A good example of the necessity for a decolonization of the Norwegian education system is seen in the same introductory paragraph to the core curriculum taken from the education act that was discussed in the section above. Where we see the mention of the fundamental values of Norwegian education, a quick mention of "different" religions who also share similar values, and the human rights (Opplæringsloven, 1998; Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Yet nowhere in this introductory section, the introduction that sets the tone for the whole core curriculum, is there mention of the Sami people. Throughout the rest of the national curriculum, mentions of the Sami people, and other national minorities are sprinkled in as is shown in the excerpts below. However, the way they are introduced into the text at different times, can be read as if they were introduced as an afterthought; "Sami cultural heritage is part of Norway's cultural heritage." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Also seen in the following quote; "The indigenous- people perspective is part of the pupils' education in democracy." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

The above examples are just two, one taken from the subsection titled *Identity and cultural diversity* and the second excerpt is taken from *Democracy and participation*. There is also at times a discussion surrounding whether the Sami people want a separate curriculum written for them by them, or if they wish to be included in the national curriculum. Within this project this was a debate that was not brought up, however an important angle to be aware of nonetheless.

However, it may be argued that the Sami people perhaps fall under the "different" religions category. However, in present day Norway the Sami who identify as belonging to a belief system belong mainly to the Christian or humanist belief system (Baune, 2007c). Now despite the Sami people being in many ways both Norwegian and Sami (or Swedish and Sami, depending where in Europe one is), it cannot be ignored that for centuries they were denied this duality, and were simply considered as racially "other" from the majority (Heith, 2012). Yet despite which approach to the conversation about the Sami people today, their joint role as natives and participants in Norway's history is still unquestionable (Baune, 2007c). Now as mentioned above, the introductory section of the core curriculum does not mention the Sami people, which perhaps can be interpreted as them being a part of the Norwegian cultural and national history.

Then at the beginning of chapter one of the core curriculum, after the introductory section detailing what should be the education's purpose, the last paragraph details what the content and values of the Sami school should encompass (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Despite this section detailing how Sami schools shall be built on Sami values, language, culture and so on, there is still a sentence which reminds the reader of the values; "The values in the objectives clause are also Sami values and apply in the Sami school" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

This means, that despite the sentence right before detailing how Sami schools shall be built on Sami values and culture, those who use the national curriculum must remember that those Sami values, are in fact Christian and humanist due to the violent assimilation process the Sami people were subject to (Baune, 2007c). The assimilation was in fact so brutal, that today it is extremely difficult to have and give exact numbers of how many Sami people in fact live in Norway (Baune, 2007c). Such aspects of the history and social aspects of the country must be kept in mind when reading the national curriculum, for though the mention of Sami culture and heritage as an important part of Norway today, so one must wonder, is it in fact the Sami culture, or rather another version of this Christian and humanist history? (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

It is perhaps a sense of confusion as a reader of the core curriculum, trying to decipher the stance of ethnic minorities in the schooling system. The first mention of the Sami is to talk about the Sami school as a separate entity from the "normal" schools, but still with the same base values as the "normal" schools (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). However, two sub-sections later, under the title of 'Identity and Cultural Diversity', we are told that the Sami cultural heritage is a part of Norway's cultural heritage;

"Sami cultural heritage is part of Norway's cultural heritage. Our shared cultural heritage has developed throughout history and must be carried forward by present and future generations." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

It seems that based off the core curriculum, the values are based on Christian and humanist belief systems. While the cultural heritage central to Norway seems to be both Sami and

Christian/humanist (Baune, 2007c). This is something that is also subject to interpretation depending on who is reading and analyzing the core curriculum, as we have discussed earlier when it comes to the Sami aspect of Norwegian culture and heritage (Baune, 2007c). However there seems to be a discrepancy between what the curriculum actually wants from those using the core curriculum in their everyday lifestyles. The way values, cultural heritage, national heritage, and historical heritage are all presented piece by piece creates a separation between the Christian and humanist values, the Sami heritage that is a building block of Norway's history, and the "others" who are the make-up of the cultural diverse society (Baune, 2007c). This bearing in mind, as we have discussed earlier, that some groups might be resistant to certain inclusions or exclusions, depending on one's personal opinions (Baune, 2007c)

When talking about decolonization of education as much in the Global South as the Global North (W. D. Mignolo, 2011b), it is with curriculums and core curriculums, where despite the mention of other native ethnic groups with equally long standing history in a country as the majority. Or with newer ethnic and cultural groups in the Global North, an education based on the majorities standpoint and values fails to be inclusive of all the histories that live and have lived within a country (Nes, 2018). However these histories, get ignored and erased in favor of common reference frameworks, which is often referred to as necessary for feeling belonging to the community and the historical context of said community (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). W. D. Mignolo (2011b) argues that this mentality of needing a common reference framework to successfully live and coexist amongst many different cultural and ethnic groups, is a colonial strategy where those in power, and hence often the majority, are the ones in possession of the values that have to be common for everyone (W. D. Mignolo, 2011b, p. xxvi) However decolonialization looks at differences not as something to be eliminated, but rather eliminate the colonial approach of looking at differences as clashes in values (W. D. Mignolo, 2011b).

5.3 Classroom Discourse

Discourse as we have seen can create a delicate balance between what is meant and what is interpreted. It is also an element that is subject to a changing meaning depending who uses it, how it is used, and in what context (Rogers, 2011). Discourse surrounding any and all subjects are often evolving and adapting (Rogers, 2011). At times, though, certain terminology has been identified as not being ideal or harmful for who it is being used for and hence changed (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). However, even after a change by "official" standards, the term has gained traction within the population, and becomes difficult to eliminate (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). Nonetheless it is important to be aware of term and terminology, and in the case of this project, especially in the context of classrooms.

Earlier in this project we talked about a term that was used as an official marker up until 2008, yet despite the change by the national statistics bureau, the word had gained traction in more colloquial contexts (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008). This term was second generation immigrant, used by Norway's official statistics bureau as a marker for those born in Norway to immigrant parents (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2008).

As we have seen thus far in the project discourse is not always necessarily simply what is said. Through an analysis of the discourse and the surrounding aspects of that discourse, there appears a lot of language which becomes implied through a critical analysis (Rogers, 2011). Let us use as an example the term that is often used in Norway, 'ethnic Norwegian'. This term is used to describe those who are considered "true" Norwegians, ethnically Norwegian, with heritage from Norway (Heith, 2012). In this context one could argue that the Sami people are in fact ethnically Norwegian as well, however this term is never used to describe someone belonging to the Sami peoples (Heith, 2012). 'Ethnic Norwegian' is a term that implies whiteness, it is a descriptor used to point out someone's skin tone without actually having to say it (Heith, 2012). Such terms, as ethnic Norwegian, first generation immigrant, second generation immigrant (though it is officially not a term anymore), talk about the ethnicity of the people it describes without actually saying anything about their physical features. The same can be said for what has been discussed earlier about the choice of words when it comes to

One of the criticism of this way of talking about ethnicity in Norway, or rather not talking about it, is highlighted by an arguably popular belief about how, "in Norway we do not see color" (Sandset, 2019, p. 22). Such belief often comes from the equality principle, which is a ruling concept in Norway and many other Nordic countries (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). The equality principle is used in any and all sectors, medical, educational, cultural. This is a concept that is based off of the idea of the ethnic homogeneity of these Nordic countries, however today it is a philosophy used to describe the philosophy behind the welfare state as social equality (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). It has been argued at times, that part of the issue some Nordic countries, and in this case Norway have with fully accepting a multicultural society, is due to this equality philosophy (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). For though the philosophy of equality is generally something used in social contexts, that everyone should have equal access to the welfare state, it is also a concept that seeps into a more cultural and ethnic aspect (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). The problem with this, however, as Seeberg (2003) states this equality principle, though noble, can have a tendency to backfire. When talking about the negative effects of this principle, Seeberg (2003) refers to it in the context of the classroom. Where by following such a principle conversations that highlight potential differences between classmates goes against such and equality approach, so educators have a tendency of avoiding these conversations (Seeberg, 2003).

Seeberg (2003) notes this avoidance of subjects surrounding ethnicity as being much greater in Norwegian schools compared to schools in the Netherlands. This avoidance can lead to speculations and assumptions (Seeberg, 2003). Seeberg (2003) talks about the importance of allowing there to be space for conversations to in this way ensure that stereotypes are not able to take hold within the community of the classroom. However, it is a difficult subject to navigate at times, depending on one's audience or one owns knowledge, which creates a lot of room on how to handle said conversations. There is generally no right way to handle such conversations, one as an educator, and as the person who knows their own classroom must decide on how to move forward with these conversations. It is however, important to note that often within these cases

that some ideas and stereotypes often arise surrounding certain knowledge and conversations about those "foreign cultures" through the way they are talked about, referred to, in other words the type of discourse used when talking about "the others" (Seeberg, 2003). This happens through the marking of language as a tool to highlight the differences and otherness (Tisdel, 2020). Something many are guilty of either consciously or subconsciously, for language can be used to help those the discourse is talking about or to strengthen the reasoning behind why a group or specific groups of people should be treated differently (Tisdel, 2020). This we can see from the excerpts above and throughout this chapter, where language highlighting the importance of the value of one belief system above the rest, not to mention the strong use of discourse that uses words such as "our". This as we have seen above, is a national curriculum that creates an "inside" and "outside" discourse.

It is especially important to be aware of discourse when you are someone who uses the national curriculum as an everyday tool and as a document that must be followed. For this new national curriculum refers often to the importance of dialogue, and learning to cooperate amongst classmates, to be able then to develop into active citizens in the democracy (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Learning and teaching happens nearly exclusively through some form of discourse (Dewey, 1997). Discourse is after all not only the spoken language, it is the written, the symbols, body language, the nuances in voice changes (Rogers, 2011). One must not forget either that with discourse the listener of any discourse is never listening as a blank canvas. They arrive to school with the influence of the life they have lived up until that point (Freire, 1970).

Discourse in the classroom as well as its nuances is something that is central to bringing awareness surrounding the new national curriculum. As educators a large part of the job is to interpret the national curriculum and then through that interpretation create a learning environment which is loyal to that national curriculum. However, this must be done with the same critical approach as is required by the curriculum to teach students to use. The awareness surrounding the curriculums discourse as well as historical background, is a tool which can

create a better understanding of the curriculum and in that way provide an education that is aware of its audience in equal measures to being aware of those in charge of the curriculum's content.

6. In what ways does the new national curriculum provide space for non-dominant identities to be represented in classroom curricular and pedagogical practices?

As we have discussed earlier in this thesis, conversations surrounding concepts of multiculturalism, and identity shaping can be complex and highly nuanced, depending on who is leading the conversation. Nonetheless, as we have seen, concepts of identity and multiculturalism are widely used within educational sectors. Such is the use of these earlier mentioned concepts within education, that the new national curriculum has subsections dedicated solely to these concepts. Subsection 1.2 has the title *Identity and Cultural Diversity* (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020), where the document covers what should be central when dealing with cultures and identities.

Now that we have discussed and seen through a critical discourse approach certain aspects of the new curriculum, now it is time to take on the second part of our thesis question. To see in what way the new national curriculum creates these spaces for identity and culture that pedagogically and as stated in LK20 are central to creating future societal participants (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

As the curriculum states, in a society that is growing in diversity, and where there is an increasing mix and meeting of cultures children must learn to live with and participate across cultures (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Within the same section of the national curriculum, it is made clear that the school is a place where identity shaping takes place and should therefore be respected and assisted (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

With earlier analyses surrounding the national curriculum under a more critical approach directed to the discourse aspect of the curriculum. This chapter will now focus on the ways in which the national curriculum creates the space for differing identities, national identities, and

multiculturalism within the national curriculum. This chapter will also look briefly at the questionnaires discussed earlier in chapter four, as an interesting reflection on how perhaps the subject of multiculturalism is discussed or not in a classroom.

6.1 Personal Identity or National Identities

As discussed earlier the concept of identity is complex and multifaceted (Blumer, 2004). Identity is as much something that happens within a person, yet simultaneously within the context of our surroundings (Blumer, 2004). Identity can also encompass several aspects of oneself, it can be the identity one has at school, or the identity expressed at home or amongst friends (Sand, 2009). As we have seen, children belonging to more than one cultural background have the ability to code shift, depending on their environment and who they are with (Gere, Buehler, Dallavis, & Haviland, 2009). Some perspectives document and argue that this seems to be a seamless transition (Gere et al., 2009), while others have examined how it can lead to a feeling of '*double loneliness*', depending on how those doing the switching experience to be received (Sand, 2009). *'Double loneliness'* as we have seen, is the experience of not receiving, or feeling like one does not receive or have understanding either at school or at home. Leading to a sense of loneliness due to a lack of understanding of students' experiences (Sand, 2009).

The new national curriculum, LK20, places teachers and schools in an important position of assisting and providing a safe space for students to develop and grow into their identities (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Simultaneously teachers and schools are responsible for creating a sense of national identity amongst the students (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). We see this expectation of creating said identities within students here in this exert taken from the subsection titled *Identity and Cultural Diversity*. This exert is taken directly from the Department of Education's official website, udir.no (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

"Insight into our history and culture is important for developing the identities of pupils and their belonging in society. The pupils shall learn about the values and traditions which contribute to uniting people in our country. Christian and humanist heritage and traditions are an important

part of Norway's collective cultural heritage and have played a vital role in the development of our democracy. Sami cultural heritage is part of Norway's cultural heritage. Our shared cultural heritage has developed throughout history and must be carried forward by present and future generations." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

This section of the new national curriculum presents and interesting question surrounding the expectation towards teachers and educators of the culture and identity they are expected to teach forward. Through this project, and previous analysis done within this project, the national curriculum, in addition to promoting "our" history and culture, seems to promoting a desire for a creation and maintenance of a nationalistic identity. This fostering of a nationalistic identity has been something that Norwegian education policies have been guilty of earlier (Hylland Eriksen, 1993). As we saw with the "making more Norwegian" of the Sami people and other Norwegian ethnic minorities (Skogvang, 2021). This fostering of a nationalistic identity has something the education system often has had responsibility for, as seen through the newest curriculum, as well as previous ones (Baune, 2007b). Especially prominent is the nationalizing of the ethnic minorities of Norway, who at the time were not considered "Norwegian" enough. This is reflected in this section amongst the mentions of factors that function as uniting factors within the education system and Norwegian society.

When reading political documents and published policies it is central to keep in mind who it is who has written the documents that dictate the values and standards expected to be expressed within education. Words and terms are often loaded with the narratives of those in power (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011). Such narratives, found within different governmental policies, create a critical view of potential approaches that those responsible for the policies may have towards different groups and sub-groups in society, or experiences in other words (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011). Therefore it becomes interesting to take a closer look at the new curriculum, and more specifically certain subsections, that deal directly with the narrative of culture and identity. For narratives are not something that are independent, much like identity, they are conversations that happen in relation with others, not in isolation of others (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011).

The conversation surrounding identity and cultural diversity in the new national curriculum, does not appear to create much of a space for the cultural diversity, the title implies. As we see in the quote above, this exert starts off by stating the importance of knowledge surrounding *"our"* history and culture, to develop an identity and a sense of community amongst students (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). The *"our"* from this exert is what is interesting to take a closer look at. As we have seen earlier Fairclough (2011), states that language and power are not mutually exclusive, but rather one and the same. Hence this *"our"* implies a reference to those in positions to write and edit major educational policies (Fairclough, 2011). As we discussed in the earlier chapter, such discourse implies there is a correct history and cultural heritage. Which plays into this idea of there being hierarchies within a society. Such as was discussed with the issue that can arise when using the term multiculturalism, it can be interpreted as within this multiculturalism, it is the minority cultures that must adapt to the majority (Tisdel, 2020). The majority who often times are the ones in positions of power. Therefore, one must question lines such as; "our shared cultural heritage has developed through history…" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2006), which can have an eliminating aspect to it towards anyone who does not share the same cultural history. In the same exert above, the mention of Norway having a Christian and Humanistic heritage and tradition that is central to Norway's values and uniting cultural reference (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Other religions and belief systems are mentioned, as existing and sharing some of the same values as Christianity and humanist;

"…such as respect for human dignity and nature, and on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights." (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

Sami culture is also mentioned in the exert above, but it placed into the paragraph in, together with the mention of other religions and belief systems, these mentions are read more as afterthoughts, and existing separately from the central belief systems (Woodside-Jiron, 2011).

It is important to point out here that this mention of Christianity and Humanistic belief systems as building blocks to Norway's present day society and democracy, is not exclusive to the national curriculum. The Education Act of Norway, the document which states by law the rights of anyone receiving an education in a Norwegian schooling system (Opplæringsloven, 1998). This document in section one, paragraph two, in other words the introduction to the Education Act states;

"Education and training must be based on fundamental values in Christian and humanist heritage and traditions, such as respect for human dignity and nature, on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights." (Opplæringsloven, 1998).

As we see in the statement above, the requirement of schools to ground the values of education in Christian and Humanist beliefs, is not only a curricular requirement, but rather a requirement by law. As seen also in the statement above, the paragraph does go on to reference this commonality of values amongst other belief systems. Nonetheless, it is difficult to ignore the statement, which by law in the Education Act, has all fundamental values within education based on Christian and Humanist values. In the earlier chapter we discussed this, however in this chapter it is important to look at in what ways these discourses can create space for these minorities within the classroom and educational setting.

It is true that both the Education Act and the national curriculum, go on to include in their statements the mention of other belief systems that share the fundamental values of Christianity and Humanism. What is interesting however, is the need to exclusively point out the Christian and Humanistic heritage of Norway. This is a tendency often seen in the Nordic countries, and their resistance to the reality of more than only the country, but also of their position within the globe, and as being a part of the transnational flow of people, both past and present (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012).

With these factors in mind, it becomes and interesting question within the national curriculum of identity, and the students' identity which is expected to flourish and develop under the guidance

and support of the educational system:. However, looking at the new national curriculum and what has been discussed above, it is difficult to not view this identity development, as only that identity building, but also perhaps as building a national identity.

National identity is not something exclusive to the Norwegian school system, it is something most countries seek to define and promote through their education and other cultural systems (Folkenborg, 2008). This is not to say that a nationalist identity is necessarily a negative or positive thing, it is simply put something that is a reality of being a part of a countries education system (Folkenborg, 2008).

The curriculum is in many ways set up to create and build a national identity amongst the students (Folkenborg, 2008). Something that as mentioned above, is not uncommon in most countries. What is interesting is within the subsection which includes the term *"cultural diversity"*, as we have seen in earlier chapters, it is in this subsection of the national curriculum, where the largest use of "our" in the language appears. In this subsection the reader is reminded of the importance of common cultural history and heritage, as well as a commonality to be able to reference to (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). The curriculum mentions the tensions that arise amongst those with differing opinions and values, and that said tension will always exist as seen in the excerpt bellow; *"There will always be tensions between different interests and views."* (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). The discourse where the mention of tensions always existing amongst those with differing views and interests is an interesting sentence at the beginning of the chapter titled the base values of education (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). This single sentence seems almost to set the mood for the whole curriculum. Coupled with the opening paragraph sited from the education act that was discussed in the previous chapter. They are short sentences, and disappear in the vastness of the size of the national curriculum. However, they are at the very beginning of the curriculum, they are the opening words placed in the chapter titled base values, which places them in a position to be looked at under a microscope, as is being done in this project.

As has been pointed out earlier in the project, identity in of itself is an extremely complex and multifaceted aspect of who we are to people, how they perceive us, and how we interact with our surroundings (Hammack, 2014). Identity is not something that develops independently from our surroundings, but rather as a result of and a reaction to our surroundings (Arnett, 2014). As a society we often talk about our identity, who we experience ourselves to be, how we believe others to perceive us and how others actually perceive us (Arnett, 2014). It is often talked about, in certain societies, the process of an identity crisis, that may experience in a lifetime, but especially in their teens (Arnett, 2014). Said identity crisis can come from many things, perhaps a clash in how we are perceived versus how we wish to be perceived, or perhaps the clash of our outer identities and the identity we experience as being our legitimate self (Arnett, 2014). The concept of identity is a tool used to categorize ourselves and our surroundings (Hammack, 2014). As well as a tool used by others to categorize the world surrounding them (Hammack, 2014).

If we view identity then, as Hammack (2014) refers to it, as a tool of categorization between sameness and difference, then what is its purpose in the school curriculum? The new national curriculum as well as its predecessor both use identity as something that must be nurtured and respected. Yet, as we have seen throughout the thesis the national curriculums seem to refer to identity as something that is conditioned by culture and a common reference framework. An example of this in the following sentence taken out of the new curriculum LK20;

“Common reference frameworks are important for each person's sense of belonging in society. This creates solidarity and connects each individual's identity to the greater community and to a historical context.” (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

This sentence is an example of identity being referred to as a cultural phenomenon in the national curriculums. It is true that identity is something that is influenced by culture, as well as personal and social experiences (Arnett, 2014). This is also an example on how identity is often seen as the link between the self and the exterior world (Hammack, 2014). Again, this is where we see the clearest example of this national identity somehow trumping the personal identity. In the sentence above, identity is not referred to as something that the students develop in a complex environment. Rather the identity of the students is something that must be anchored in something

tangible as the national history and culture. The connection between students and the national history and culture, is not mentioned as something that is important because it is the country that the students are growing up in. Having connections to these things is presented as vital for the pupils to be able to develop an identity. The issue with such explicit mentions of what is considered central to children's' identity development within the national curriculum, it is the basis of a national identity built off a "common framework" which would not apply for a certain percentage of the student population. Therefore it becomes a national identity that is only built on these common frameworks of Christianity and humanist belief systems, effectively othering and excluding the rest.

6.2 Multiculturalism and The New Curriculum

As has been discussed throughout the project, the national curriculum uses discourse to highlight the importance of historical and cultural heritage within education and identity development. It has also been discussed how the culture that is presented as central to the values of education is centered around Christianity and humanist belief systems. Not only are these belief systems presented as the core values of education, but also as the building blocks of Norway today and therefore has to be maintained and passed down to future generations through the education system and the classroom (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). The power of discourse within the curriculum has also been central to this project and will continue to be central. For as we have seen all of these elements have to be looked at in relation to each other to provide a critical discourse analysis that is as complete as possible.

Up to this point in the project, the conversation surrounding the national curriculum has focused on the details of the language and politics surrounding the national curriculum. Here the focus will be placed on the cultural aspect of the national curriculum. As has been discussed in chapter three, culture as a term is malleable and multifaceted (Pieterse, 2020). The malleability of the term culture is important to remember both in the context of this project, but also in educational

situation involving the term culture. The reason for this will be looked at closer in the following paragraphs.

Historically the discussion concerning national culture is treacherous territory, with a fraught history of oppression and marginalization (Pieterse, 2020). Culture, and especially national culture has often been used to exclude certain religious or ethnic groups of people from the power holding majority (Tisdel, 2020). Historically in Norway culture, and national culture especially, was in the 19th century created as a way to unite the majority, and marginalize those who did not fit into the changing definitions of culture (Pieterse, 2020). The problem with a specific view of what is considered the national culture, it alienates and sidelines anyone those who considers themselves Norwegian, but who do not share or identify with the historical and cultural heritage (Tisdel, 2020).

When analyzing the national curriculum in the context of multiculturalism and a multicultural society, something that present day Norway is and formally proclaims to embrace (Tisdel, 2020). Any sentence or paragraph within the new national curriculum, detailing culture becomes highly easy to scrutinize, especially under the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis. Looking at the text within the national curriculum, as we have done throughout the thesis with the lens of CDA, as the reader one cannot separate written, spoken, and the social discourse playing a part in the LK20. Each of the earlier listed aspects must be looked at as the parts of discourse, and must be seen as being the same and/or consequences of each other (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). Within this it is not possible to separate the policy and the authors of such documents as the LK20 from the critical discourse point of view (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). As we have discussed earlier, policies and curriculums are written by people with personal and political agendas, as well as a set of values that shines through in the discourse used in such policies as a national curriculum (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). This whether it is intended or not. As people we are incapable of maintaining a completely objective point of view, our own personal experiences and preferences always shine through (Bryman, 2012, p. 7). Policies, the policy authors and as a result the national curriculum cannot be seen as existing apart from any author or authors who played a

role in the curriculum's writing. The national curriculum does not only function as a distributor of the values and "culture" that the policy makers consider important, but rather functions as a mandate of these values (Woodside-Jiron, 2011).

Now when it comes to the discussion of identity and cultural diversity in equal parts within Norwegian schools and in the population as a whole, there are certain topics and discourse approaches that tend to appear more often than others. One such word is multiculturalism, naturally the term "culture" is used both alongside and simultaneously as multicultural (Hall, 2004). Multiculturalism and hence culture have in our present day become a central part of many political agendas, presented as central to their politics (Chin, 2017c). The term multiculturalism has a relatively recent history. It was a term coined in the 1980s, and grew into a commonly used word by the 1990s (Hall, 2004). Multiculturalism and/or multicultural were terms used originally to describe something, or someone who belonged to several cultures simultaneously (Hall, 2004). That is to say someone who had grown up with several cultures as a part of their identity (Hall, 2004). Though the term multiculturalism is often used to define individuals these days, it was also used to talk about several cultures living together (Chin, 2017c). One could argue that different cultures could be someone with a parent who grew up on the west coast of Norway and another who grew up in the North of Norway. This is true in many ways, as those with a connection to separate regions of the country have different elements to what is the make-up of their identity (Salole, 2020a). Generally speaking, however, the term multicultural is used more when referring to those who grow up with one or more ethnic heritages (Hall, 2004). Or grow up between two or more countries (Salole, 2020a). Though the term multicultural was in the beginning a word most commonly heard in academic, educational, and political circles. With the years it has become a characteristic to aspire to have attached to one's company's name, educational approach, political aspirations and other groups and such were a large number of peoples are involved (Chin, 2017c).

Multiculturalism in our present day, is a term generally used in many sectors of education, politics, and large companies to promote an ideal of many different cultures working alongside

each other (Chin, 2017c). Despite the generally positive connotations associated with the term, there have also appeared within the academic circles, those who have begun to notice a shift in the word and association of multiculturalism. The largest shift has been, as mentioned earlier, what is associated with the term and its significance. Such shifts in significance has been as mentioned above, where the term has grown to signify the majority culture as existing as the culture at the hierarchical top, while other cultures have to move around it (Tisdel, 2020). The term multiculturalism has also been criticized for othering those cultures within a multicultural society, that are not similar or alike to the majority culture (Tisdel, 2020). This has led to the word multicultural to at times not be as positive of a word as it was originally intended and used as (Chin, 2017a). Another criticism of the term, has been a feeling of the word having been hijacked by politicians, policy makers, and other large groups in positions of power (Chin, 2017a). This hijacking subsequently signifies the term and discourse of the word multicultural has shifted ownership to the majority population, it is important to highlight that this is one aspect of the debate of multiculturalism (Darder, 2011a). Due to this hijacking the discourse of the term has become a top down approach to the meaning. This is to say it has become a word that signifies the 'other' cultures living in a parallel fashion to the majority culture, rather than intermixed and together (Tisdel, 2020). This means that the multiple cultures living together, especially in larger cities, are within their own cultural bubble. So each culture lives in an isolated bubble, and rather than a cross-cultural style of multiculturalism, where each culture benefits from each other, the minority cultures live within the rules and regulations of the majority culture (Darder, 2011a). Despite this negative connotation within certain academic circles, it is important to highlight that the term multiculturalism is still generally seen as something positive, as well as something to strive towards in all areas of society (Seeberg, 2003). Multiculturalism is seen as a representation by many of what is desired within a society or educational circle, and that is many different backgrounds living and thriving together (Seeberg, 2003).

The term multicultural and its connection to the new national curriculum is important to highlight, both as a term often used within the context of the classroom and outside of it.

Norway, and Oslo especially has a growing multicultural society. In 2017 Statistisk sentralbyrå (2017) published an article detailing the growth of minority language students and kindergarteners within Oslo's city limits. Minority language students in this context are those children who at home speak another language than Norwegian (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). This means, that minority children's parents are immigrants themselves, or their parents again were the ones who emigrated, in other words, the non-ethnic Norwegian population (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). By 2016 16% of children in the kindergartens and daycares in Oslo were minority language speakers (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017). In 2019 the government and education department announced the publishing of a new and revised version of the national curriculum (Kunnskpasdepartementet, 2019).

The new national curriculum mentions the subject about cultural diversity and the growing diversity of Norway of a country. Despite the mention of cultural diversity, the way it is presented poses an interesting angle to the discourse of diversity in schools. The new national curriculum, despite its mentions of diversity, does not necessarily mention differences that may exist amongst people, it decides to focus on the similarities amongst people (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). This is not to say that highlighting similarities is not the appropriate approach, but it is rather the erasure of there being differences amongst people living in Norway that can become problematic. LK20 reminds the reader of the importance of common knowledge and historical heritage for students to be able to have a sense of belonging within society (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Diversity and the mention of diversity, should in theory be considered positive under Norway's presentation of itself as a multicultural and open society. Despite this the curriculum rather seems to avoid the subject of otherness and potential differences that exist amongst people in a society altogether. Words and phrases such as "our", "common", "unity/ing", "different", "cultural heritage", make their rounds throughout the core curriculum (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). These earlier mentioned phrases sets the tone and focus on a us versus them discourse, or an inside and outside of societal standards sort of discourse (Fairclough, 2011).

The tonality of phrases highlighting what is to be considered important when talking about cultural diversity and multiculturalism can at times be perceived as being slightly tone deaf. Norway as a society is not and has never been as homogenous, either culturally or religiously, as the curriculum and other historical sources present it, as we have seen in chapter two (Jensen & Loftsdottir, 2012). The national curriculum does at one point of the core curriculum recognize the five national minorities of Norway, the Jews, Kvens/Norwegian Finns, Forest Finns, Roma, and the Romani/Tater people. However, it is interesting to point out the way these national minorities are presented. In the core curriculum, when they mention these minorities, the LK20 states that these national minorities are recognized as thus due to "our international obligations" (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). This then brings up an interesting question. Does this mean, if it had not been because of the "international obligations", these national minorities would not be recognized? The wording here poses an interesting question, of those who have been responsible for the writing and editing of this newest national curriculum. For could these national minorities not simply be listed as exactly that, recognized national minorities. Rather than being listed because of the "international obligations" of recognizing these minorities as a part of Norway's cultural history and heritage? I pose the earlier questions as questions for exactly that reason. Through critical discourse analysis, one is taught to be aware of all aspects of the language (Rogers, 2011). For the make-up of the language is as much about the linguistic aspects itself, as those who are using that language, which then becomes discourse (Fairclough, 2011). History also plays a role in posing the earlier questions. Due to CDA it is also highlighted the historical context of language, and after learning the history of multiculturalism in Norway, as was discussed in chapter two, one becomes more aware of certain aspects of the discourse. The issue arises in large part in the way the national curriculum presents the "other" ethnic or religious cultures, that is not Christian or humanist based. The discourse of diversity in the curriculum creates a dichotomy of all cultural and religious diversities are included. However the "other" cultures are still presented as exactly that, as "other" from the majority culture, who happens to be the one in power, and happens to have been the one in charge of the new edition of the national curriculum (Lopez-Bonilla, 2011).

Multiculturalism, despite one own position and opinions on the word whether they are positive or negative, is still a broadly used term. Or perhaps multiculturalism is a complex term used to symbolize certain aspects one aligns oneself with, while other aspects do not necessarily represent what one wants. Despite one's own opinions on the term the reality that holds true in most places in the Global North, where multiculturalism represents many different cultural and historical backgrounds living together, whether it be mixed or separate. Interestingly, however, whenever the mention of these "others" it is most often in the context of the necessity of a common background. This focus on a common starting point is presented as how the students will acquire the knowledge on how to meet with cultures that are different to their own, as we have seen in excerpts from the curriculum above. The meeting of those who have different background from one self is something that is done throughout one's lifetime. How can such an approach hold up when students who amongst their own classmates are meeting people with different backgrounds as themselves? The way the national curriculum is worded, and the terminology it uses gives the impression that there exist no differences in the classroom only outside of it, creating a divide and an experience that says there are no differences in Norway and in the Norwegian classrooms.

Multiculturalism exists as much outside as inside of the classroom. Multiculturalism is much more prevalent in larger cities than in urban areas (Chin, 2017b). However, even in smaller rural areas children will meet those different than themselves, with other backgrounds and experiences. Perhaps someone has grown up in a household that adheres to another branch of Christianity than the majority, as an example. Therefore the lack of acknowledgement in the national curriculum for multiculturalism and cultural diversity does not seem to fit with the reality of society. A common reference framework is mentioned as necessary for a person to have a sense of belonging in society (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). This common reference framework is what, according to the national curriculum, will give room for diversity (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). What this common reference is never specified in the curriculum, however since the core values of education have mentioned Christianity, humanist belief system, and "our" cultural and historical history, it seems these are a part of these common

references. Rather, should students not learn to create and have room for diversity despite differences? This mention of common reference framework comes across more as a call back to the values that have to be the basis for all education formats within Norway. This basis being Christian and humanist. Earlier in the core curriculum it is mentioned how the difference between values and interests will always be cause for tension. The core curriculum tells the reader, that the need for a common framework is what will cause less tension within society, and in classrooms. So while the curriculum is acknowledging the variety in views, values, and lifestyles, it is also somehow trying to even the playing field among these views.

An issue with multiculturalism in Norway is the standard of equality that is a common thread in Norwegian society (Folkenborg, 2008). Some academics have criticized this philosophy of equality that is so central to Norway and its society, for being the reason Norway at times seems to struggle with adapting to multiculturalism (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). This criticism also stems from this equality philosophy being so prevalent, that it has affected the way we view society, in the sense that those who look and act different from us are hence not equal (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). The core curriculum is a strong example of this philosophy of equality bleeding into the subject of cultural diversity. Everyone, according to the core curriculum, must have the same frame of reference instead of acknowledging differences that exist in a multicultural society and learning to live and work together within the differences.

Multiculturalism, as we have seen is in itself a complex term. However, it is a word still widely used in education, political and academic circles, and therefore a term where the connotation within this thesis is a positive one. It is important to have a critical standpoint when analyzing policies that are such a central part of the educational system of a country. The national curriculum similarly to other policies, is more than merely a distributor of the values that are being placed as the most central by the policy makers. The core values that are to be taught in schools, can and often are a direct instruction on the values that the same policy makers deem to be the center of learning (Woodside-Jiron, 2011).

6.3 Intercultural and Multicultural Pedagogy

It is important to point out the choice throughout this project of when the effects of certain things have on the pupils, it is often referred to their social and academic success. Though this focuses on analyzing the new curriculum in relation to education, it is important to remember the role education plays in the lives of children, and therefore, it became important for the thesis to highlight both the academic and social importance equally, and not separately.

To be able to provide space for the non-dominant identities in a classroom, certain pedagogical approaches can be necessary. The main focus within such pedagogy, is a focus on pedagogy that is inclusive a sensitive to those who are "different" from the majority (Gere et al., 2009). Pedagogy is the science of teaching, it is about knowing how to teach in the best way to the abilities of those being taught, and how to be as sensitive to the educational or cultural needs of those being taught (Gere et al., 2009). This mean, that though there are certain things that are considered pedagogical and un-pedagogical, if one as a teacher has a technique that one knows works for their students, then that is the one. This of course, as mentioned earlier, within the parameters of what is considered pedagogical. Therefore, when talking about the pedagogy needed for a multicultural classroom, it is rather more about the pedagogy that will help one's students to be a part of a multicultural and diverse society (Gere et al., 2009). One such approach is intercultural pedagogy which is a brand of pedagogy, which has a growing role in the conversation covering the expanding diversity in classrooms, and in the larger society (Gere et al., 2009). The pedagogy in all of this plays a role when analyzing the national curriculum. The national curriculum is placing quite clear guidelines, as we have seen earlier in the project, on the approach that should be taken within an educational situation.

Intercultural education, has an approach that is all about trying to empathize and understand a culture that is different to the one that oneself identifies with or has grown up with (McAlinden, 2018). Intercultural education takes the focus away from the differences, and rather attempts to create empathy despite and through differences (McAlinden, 2018). The national curriculum

generally seems to fail within the intercultural approach, through its highlight of the necessity of a common framework that is based in large part on one belief system. This unity that a common reference framework is aiming to achieve is to not only unite those within the classrooms but also the citizens that the students within the classroom will become, as we have seen in earlier excerpts. The national curriculum, and its core curriculum have always as a general goa to educate the future participants of the society we live in, which perhaps is the reason for the constant reminders of the building block of the democracy of today. Interestingly, however, in the curriculums attempt to highlight the background of Norway, that is supposed to be the cultural and historical heritage that unites the country, it rather serves to do exactly the opposite. It is indeed a pedagogical approach, but the intercultural aspect of it is lost in this repetitive mention of the single uniting historical heritage of Norway. This focus within the educational system on Norway's Christian and humanistic history and cultural heritage, erases any other ethnic or cultural group with long standing ties an roots to Norway. While at the same time eliminating the possibility of this same cultural diversity existing today in Norway, and if it does, it has to match up with the "common" historical heritage, creating little space for an intercultural approach (McAlinden, 2018).

Intercultural pedagogy encapsulates more than acknowledging those who are different from oneself (McAlinden, 2018). It is also about acknowledging what is happening around oneself, and the origin and history of oneself (Gere et al., 2009). As an example, Norway as a country similarly to many European countries has a history surrounding the colonial period of Europe. Though Norway has always been seen and treated as a periphery part of Europe, due to its many years of being under the rule of Denmark and later Sweden (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). Denmark and Sweden themselves within the European context were generally considered smaller periphery kingdoms, compared to the larger super-powers of the time as was France, Spain, and England (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). Therefore Norway became a periphery country within other periphery countries, seen as a small less influential part of the colonial history of Europe today. Despite this status as a periphery country, Norway historically nonetheless played a role in the perpetuation and maintenance of views and language used surrounding the subject

of the "others" that were being colonized at the time (Eidsvik, 2012). This perpetuation happened through literature, as well as participating in the colonization and slave trade via emigrating to the colonies, and providing the ships and captains for the transportation of goods and slaves (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012).

This history is undeniable, and having played such a central role in the slave trade and hence in the perpetuation of stories and discourse surrounding these "others", the language today can and sometimes will be a reflection of this time (Eidsvik, 2012). Hence, intercultural pedagogy, an approach that not only asks the user to have empathy for others despite differences, but also asks for one's own awareness surrounding a subject. When using intercultural pedagogy one is asking the user, as we have seen, to be empathetic and aware of where discourse comes from and how it affects the users. In many ways this awareness falls under the empathy that intercultural education calls for.

When employing intercultural pedagogy, one is doing the exact opposite of what the core national curriculum is asking one to do, in many ways. The core curriculum wants educators to find similarities, or teach students about similarities that exist amongst them. Then through these similarities educate in how to work together within the society that they will be a part of. However, intercultural education is asking teachers and students to work together despite differences. It is an approach that asks educators to be critical to themselves, as well as being critical to their surroundings, and as a consequence teach students to be critical (Gere et al., 2009). As in all circles of academia, there will be those who are more critical to an approach, and those who are more in agreement to an approach. Either way, intercultural pedagogy has become something recognized at a level that many large global companies have intercultural communication courses for their employees, or for teachers. It is even possible to have a degree in intercultural communication (McAlinden, 2018).

In a way, intercultural education is about creating the space for everyone to experience being included and being seen as important despite of or in spite of cultural-, historical-, religious-

heritage. This is also something that can stretch beyond these earlier mentioned aspects, it is about treating with empathy anyone who is "different" from the majority (McAlinden, 2018). Education and the classroom are the perfect spaces to create an arena to learn about each other, and learn to live amongst the differences and still being a part of a collective society.

Intercultural or multicultural pedagogy are in many ways each side to the same coin. However, intercultural pedagogy promotes an approach that is much more about the understanding and empathy between those who are different (McAlinden, 2018). While multicultural, can as we have seen, suggest not necessarily trying to understand each other despite differences, but rather to simply live side by side without having to intermingle (Chin, 2017b). As mentioned earlier however, this view of multiculturalism is not shared by everyone. Multiculturalism is still in large part seen as something positive. The positive view of multiculturalism is shared within this project, however intercultural pedagogy encompasses an approach that is much more desirable as the end goal. That end goal, is as we have discussed above, is for students and eventually people in society to interact and acknowledge despite cultural, historical, ethnic differences. It has been said earlier in the project, that by following a more intercultural approach to teaching within the classrooms, one would be in many ways going against what the national curriculum dictates. This in part due to the curriculum's mandate to teach all students about the common history and culture that they share. The core curriculum also places a mandate on this similarity to create a national identity that will later translate into participation within the democracy and society. As we have discussed however, such a mandate is unrealistic for many reasons, but one of the largest being, such vast similarities simply do not exist within a society. Even if everyone in a classroom has ties to Norway five generations back in time. Even then, there will be differences. Therefore, rather than attempting to create a classroom culture based on everyone being equal and the same, children should be taught that despite any difference that may exist, everyone is an important part of that society. Hence intercultural pedagogy.

The focus on pedagogy and intercultural pedagogy in this sub-chapter helps as a reminder that this project, though focusing on the national curriculum, the LK20 is a document that is relevant

within the classroom. Especially with the focus of this chapter being paced on the space created for minorities within the classroom. Therefore, the discussion of pedagogy, becomes a more practical way of trying to apply the content and thematic analysis that has been done throughout this project.

6.4 Visibility, Recognition, and "The Talk"

Pedagogy is the science of teaching which mixes many different sciences to create the best way to teach to the different needs of one's students (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006). Either the need of the student is to feel seen and recognized within their own cultures and identities (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006). Through culturally sensitive one can strive to create a space that is culturally diverse and receptive, by combining several approaches (Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006). A space where one is acknowledged, and through that acknowledgment learning. In this sub-chapter we will discuss visibility, recognition, and conversations within the classroom. And in what ways these elements withing pedagogy can make a difference for those pupils who fall outside of the dominant identities and/or cultures.

The national curriculum, LK20, states that one of the expected tasks of a teacher is to assist in the development of the students' identities (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). If we focus on the subsection of LK20 covering identity and cultural diversity, which has been the main focus of this thesis thus far, the mention of the development of identity, is something to be developed in unison with *"our"* cultural heritage (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). The question being posed here then, becomes if the individuals' identity is to be developed within the classroom and based off of the cultural heritage referred to as *"our"*, it then becomes implied that the basis of this growth should happen within a Christian and Humanistic point of view. So where does the diversity have space to be visible in the classroom?

Visibility within pedagogy is a central aspect of being able to give and receive a good education . The aspect of making a student feel visible and experience visibility within the classroom creates

a sense of safety for the student to be able to develop themselves to the best of their abilities (Gere et al., 2009). Therefore, with visibility being seen and acknowledged as such a central aspect within pedagogy, it is interesting to see in what ways the new national curriculum applies visibility as a central aspect to being able to provide a good education within Norway.

Within pedagogy, a strong factor to provide solid support within any teaching situation is visibility (Amarel & Bolger, 2007). When we are talking about visibility, it is referring to the students within a classroom, and oneself as a teacher successfully giving those students a sense being seen and heard despite differences to the teacher of their surroundings (Gere et al., 2009). Central in pedagogical theory, is the belief that any student that experiences a sense of being understood, empathized with, and simply be seen by the teacher, learn better and are generally more engaged in their own education (Amarel & Bolger, 2007).

Through visibility one can build a sense of understanding that is mutual and allows the student to feel like they are themselves an important part of their own education (Amarel & Bolger, 2007). Visibility has also been proven to create pathways to a more open dialogue between the student and the teacher, thus creating an opportunity to be on the forefront of a student's well-being (Amarel & Bolger, 2007). Visibility is the strongest tool a teacher can have to ensure the experience of a safe environment for the students, as well as a more open dialogue into employing a more interculturally aware education for the students (Gere et al., 2009).

Visibility can also be the way in which we teach about certain subjects, especially in a diverse classroom. Within a diverse classroom, the importance of covering subject matters that allow students to feel seen and as an important part of their education is highly important for their education (Gere et al., 2009). The importance of including educational material, that includes the diversity of the classroom, is important when in a diverse classroom but equally important in a more homogenous group of students, to bring awareness to the diversity within their society (Gere et al., 2009).

Within pedagogy, there are many approaches to acquiring visibility in and for the classroom. Visibility is the ability of a teacher to give the feeling and experience of being seen and understood in the context of the classroom (Amarel & Bolger, 2007). When a student feels seen in a classroom situation their ability to learn and retain knowledge, had been shown to improve considerably (Amarel & Bolger, 2007).

Visibility itself is something that can take many forms, Freire (1970) described it as the acknowledgment and respect of children and students' experiences that they have had both before arriving in the educational system, and the experiences lived outside of the educational system. These experiences that already exist within a student's life, that helps define and determine who they are in life, play then a central role in how the students learn, and how they perceive their own acquisition of knowledge (Freire, 1970).

Based on the articles and academic work that has been discussed earlier in this project, it becomes then a debate if visibility is possible when one part of the curriculum states that the "cultural" angle that plays the most significant role in the educational system of Norway, especially when discussing diversity and identity, is in fact the Christian and Humanistic angle, that leaves little space for those cultures and ethnicities that differ from these two earlier mentioned core values.

Visibility and intercultural approaches are in many ways one and the same (Bennett, 2011). Both approaches focus on the empathy needed to understand and "see" students in an educational situation. As we have talked about, intercultural education, is an approach that focuses on empathizing with those cultures that are different to oneself, yet at the same time maintaining one own's culture (McAlinden, 2018). Visibility, is also an approach that does not demand for you to change what is important to yourself, but empathize with those you see, and thus give them the experience of understanding.

When talking about recognition, as we have done earlier, it is not only in the context of classroom relations. Rather recognition is something that should be applied to students, but also to one's own relationship with the curriculum. It takes recognition to read, acknowledge, and be critical about what the curriculum is demanding, and what the subjects are teaching the children. Recognition does not only apply to the students, but also to the curriculums that dictate the values that are seen as central for the teachers to teach and ensure the students learn and take with them onwards. Through recognition of the discourse in the national curriculum it becomes easier to read a curriculum in a critical manner (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). Recognition of the power of discourse to naturalize the way we see and analyze a text is central to educators and learners becoming less critical of the policies being published (Woodside-Jiron, 2011). A reason to recognize the reasoning behind being critical is for example the view of Nordic exceptionalism. Nordic exceptionalism as a theory, as we have seen, allows to understand the nuances behind why certain conversations seemingly are not had within schools and at times in Norwegian society (Seeberg, 2003). Nordic exceptionalism might also provide a clearer idea to the discussion as to why the educational system in Norway seems to struggle with the conversation surrounding diversity, ethnicity, and inclusivity (Seeberg, 2003). This especially considering a new curriculum was recently published. An ideal moment to perhaps bring in nuances to the voices being expressed within the curriculum as well as how certain ideals are expressed. Yet, as is the case with must government documents and policies, those in positions of power are those who decide the language of the documents (Fairclough, 2011). Something we have seen throughout this project.

As was discussed in the literature review chapter, a common framework can in fact create a sense of belonging in society or rather an estrangement to the general society, depending on how certain subjects are approached. When students do not feel seen or understood by their education, to use a generalizing word, they will feel excluded (Nordahl & Dobson, 2009). And if there is not understanding or discourse happening between the home and school, then the child will struggle with double loneliness and will not develop the individual identity the national curriculum is referencing to (Nordahl & Dobson, 2009).

Interestingly in LK20, the value of a common framework is repeated several times throughout the subsection, but especially in the sentences above. According to the national curriculum, a common framework will give room for diversity, but as we see in Nordahl and Dobson (2009), a common framework actually does the opposite. It isolates the home from the school, if the values are not shared, and it isolates the student from the school and its home. Diversity in all areas creates room for diversity, intercultural understanding creates room for diversity. Through an intercultural pedagogy students learn to live with and accept differences, despite of a lack of a common framework. Empathy creates solidarity, not similarity.

It is relevant to not only talk about the identity of the pupils, but also of the country that writes and creates the national curriculums. The identity of Norway specifically, in the case of the new national curriculum especially when talking about the subsection *'Identity and Cultural Diversity'*, is the self-narrative that Norway presents not only to the world but to itself. Which is a history devoid of involvement in the colonial politics of the past (Eidsvik, 2012). By presenting itself as a country who has not participated in something as complex and, often times damaging, as colonialism, Norway has been able to create an image for itself as the neutral entity, and humanitarian power in the global scene (Eidsvik, 2012). Another point to be made about colonialism in Norway, and the history of these two, is the sometimes narrow description of what colonialism was and could be. Colonialism was not only about the colonies and the institutions of these (Eidsvik, 2012). Colonialism in periphery European countries like Norway, was not necessarily their active involvement, but rather their promotion of the colonial ideals as much at home as in the colonial countries (Eidsvik, 2012). One example of colonialism that Norway participated in, as a country who generally presents a narrative of not having been part of the colonial era (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012), was Norway being the country with the largest exportation of missionaries, especially to the African continent (Weihe Wallin, 2021).

Recognizing one owns part in a history, that is generally seen as quite complicated, and a large contributor to issues that affect many countries and people still today, is recognizing oneself as

not existing outside of the scrutiny that is placed on many other Global North countries (Seeberg, 2003).

In a classroom, as an educator, the amount of children one meets on a daily basis can become quite overwhelming, and many teachers have often expressed a concern on not being able to provide the amount they feel is necessary to each individual pupil (Skrefsrud, 2015). Such a feeling of not providing the attention one feels a student deserves and in some cases has a right to, can become quite overwhelming for teachers, making it thus more complicated to provide the visibility that is necessary for a good learning experience (Skrefsrud, 2015).

Conversations are an important built up to be able to create good communication within the classroom, as well as an important teaching tool (Nes, 2018). These conversations can cover any and all subjects, whether it is to talk about how a student is doing academically, or perhaps to gage a better understanding of the students social life within the community that is a classroom and school. Conversations are just as important to have on a group level as on an individual level (Nes, 2018). A conversation can also happen in a written format, in reality as long as one finds a way to communicate as comfortably as possible with the other person, there is no reason for it to have to happen solely vocally (Dasli, 2011). In any situation where there is an exchange of dialogue, whether it be orally or written, makes no difference. The important thing is that there is an openness for discussion (Dasli, 2011). Having talks with a whole classroom about subjects big and small opens up for a culture where subjects are not taboo, but rather open to be discussed and to learn more about (Seeberg, 2003). The importance of classroom conversations is also seen especially after a tragedy, either within the local community or in a larger setting.

It was interesting to look at the aspect of conversations within a classroom within the questionnaire that was given out to two middle school classrooms in a school outside of Oslo. The goal with those questionnaires was to discover a consistency in the answers that could be used to analyze in depth. Rather the answers did not reveal anything major, rather it showed that giving a group or pre-teens a questionnaire before recess is a bad idea. They were told by the

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teacher as well that they could leave as soon as they were done. As mentioned earlier, the questionnaires did not reveal anything, an interesting trend however, was the large majority in the classrooms not knowing what the term "multiculturalism" means. It ended with me having to give a description of the term to both classrooms, which resulted in my description ending up on their questionnaires after the question, "when you hear the term multicultural, what does it mean to you?". It was interesting to see the lack of interest in this term, and what it could mean for them.

As discussed earlier, open dialogue opens for openness within a classroom. As a teacher one has the opportunity to gage the students' academic levels, personal struggles, and group dynamics (Sand, 2009). Another large advantage of making and taking time to have one on one or group conversations in creating an environment where students can feel seen and visible (Amarel & Bolger, 2007). This visibility is of course both on an academic level as well as emotional (Amarel & Bolger, 2007). Having open conversations in the classroom about several subjects, such as sexual orientation, gender identity, and cultural backgrounds, as mentioned before creates less of a taboo around the subject. It has also been observed that through open dialogue and conversations within the classroom, it leads to less of a divide amongst the students (Seeberg, 2003). That is to say that through conversations students become more open to mix and engage much more with those who are "different" to oneself (Seeberg, 2003). It is as Blumer (2004) referencing Mead once said, that good education is a conversation. This is also seen expressed by Freire (1970), who reminds the reader and those involved in pedagogy, the already existing experiences of learners. Those experiences that cannot be looked passed for they are a part of what makes a student themselves. What happens in a classroom is an exchange, between the teacher and the students, an exchange of experiences and learning (Freire, 1970). Conversations help to acknowledge the students in both who they are and how they wish to express themselves. Since no student arrives to a classroom as an empty vessel, they are someone with experiences and opinions that make up the person (Freire, 1970). Then to get to know this person the best way possible one has to begin a dialogue (Freire, 1970).

In a PhD decertation from 2003, the author interviewed high school students and teachers about their experiences surrounding the division or sense of community of a classroom based on the differing ethnicities within the classroom (Seeberg, 2003). The study expressed a trend amongst those Norwegian students and teachers where conversations specifically surrounding the subject of ethnicity was avoided. Compared to the high school from the Netherlands, which was the other country the dissertation focused on (Seeberg, 2003). Interestingly, within the dissertation, Norway seemed to struggle more with the conversation surrounding ethnicity and "differences" than the Netherlands did (Seeberg, 2003). The dissertation showed within the openness of the Netherlands to talk about ethnicities, there was a sense of openness within the classroom to be able to ask questions and dialogue around the subject. There was also a larger amount of lively but well organized debates. All of these factors created a more unified classroom culture in the school in the Netherlands used in the PhD, compared to the one used within Norway (Seeberg, 2003).

Seeberg (2003) goes on to talk about how the lack of classroom conversations, specifically surrounding the subject of ethnicity, can lead to certain fall outs within the society. It is later discussed that this lack of dialogue could be a reason as to why there can at times seem to be a larger divide and a larger amounts of cliques within the Norwegian classroom (Seeberg, 2003). Another aspect that is problematized in Seeberg (2003) dissertation is how Norway has often described itself as a society and a people that does not see color. The statement of "we/I do not see color" has been problematized by others due to the erasing of experiences it can cause (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). This statement in many ways denies the existence of other ethnicities, it is simultaneously refusing to acknowledge that people are different and that people might suffer discrimination and such due to their "color" (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). "I do not see color" is a statement that though it can bear good intentions it is a phrase that ends up expressing the opposite of what it actually trying to express (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). However, such a statement rather highlights the avoidance of the subject of ethnicity and culture that Norwegians are often criticized for. Disagreements and differences will never disappear

through ignoring, but rather through conversations and acknowledgement of the difference that exists amongst people.

Conversations surrounding culture and ethnicity, as discussed earlier in the thesis, can be vague and complicated to have. Many teachers might experience those conversations as difficult territory and/or dangerous subjects to get into. It also becomes a subject that is dependent upon the opinion of each individual teacher who might lead such a conversation. For what does culture even mean with it being such a vague term that can mean a plethora of different things. Though culture is a term that has acquired a rather large foothold in both the language of teachers and of those in positions of power, it is a term that might bend somewhat depending on the context it is being used in (Pieterse, 2020). Despite the vagueness of the term however, it is still important to discuss and analyze within classroom setting and together with students. It is a term especially important to discuss due to the growing use of it through terms such as *"multicultural"*, *"intercultural"*, and *"cross-cultural"* (Salole, 2020a). Such terms are used often and with growing regularity, especially in the Oslo school system, where the diversity of students is growing. With the growing diversity of Oslo classrooms these terms are becoming more and more regular, despite this however, it was interesting to see the results from the questionnaires where the students were not even familiar with the term multicultural. This despite these terms often being deemed as desirable descriptors to be applied to schools and educational institutions (Chin, 2017c). Either students are aware of meanings or not, or teachers are applying these terms to their everyday use. The idea is rather not so much about how the terminology is applied to these diverse schools, but rather what approaches are being taken to actually ensure that a learning institution is culturally diverse. For placing a specific term onto an institution does not make automatically make it become the word one wishes to attach to it. These terms become relevant descriptors when what happens in the classrooms is in accordance to these terms and words. It is important to be aware of what conversations are being had and how the teacher relates to the pupils, and how the pupils relate to one another (Gere et al., 2009). Despite these conversations being considered such central parts of learning and living with those different from ourselves, the national curriculum does not expect them to be the basis of education. The

curriculum, LK20 states in its subsection discussion diversity and identity, the importance of teaching and instructing on the history, culture, and values and finding the common thread amongst these things and each other (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). However, the conversations about what makes us different is never mentioned as a part of the education.

Within the pedagogical academic circles, the importance of having good and open conversations to promote learning, is a recognized tool that is seen as central in good learning practices (Gullikstad & Kristensen, 2021). Despite conversations being a well-recognized form of learning, it is not mentioned as a central aspect to learning about diversity and identity. Interestingly, according to the data collected by Seeberg (2003), Norwegian schools preform considerably worse than Dutch schools when it comes to using conversations and open discussions as a teaching method. The importance of conversations in the classroom are not only central to promote an open dialogue and through that a better understanding of each other and others, but it is also a key tool in building good relations amongst the students (Gere et al., 2009).

Relation building is also an important factor to be able to develop an intercultural form of education in a classroom (McAlinden, 2018). Relations are built through conversations and an empathetic approach to those who are different to oneself, and in the case of this project (McAlinden, 2018). As we have been discussing throughout the project, each aspect that is a part of the buildup of what makes for good intercultural relations is more than just having a similar historical and cultural background (McAlinden, 2018).

This identity Norway has, or rather, lack of an identity as a colonizer plays then a role in how the curriculum and other factors discussed earlier in this thesis, when talking about identity and diversity in the classroom play out. Identity, as mentioned earlier in the thesis, is not something that happens internally and separate from the surrounding community and society (Arnett, 2014). Therefore, when there is a conversation, in the curriculum on how to be a part of the development of students identities, it has to be seen as a part of the society these identities will be developed in, and in effect the identity of the country and society itself.

How is the identity of the country, in this case Norway, relevant to the identity development that is expected to happen in the Norwegian classroom, which according to the national curriculum, is Christian and Humanistic at its core? As mentioned earlier in the thesis, there are many things to be considered when the topic of identity comes up. Identity, as many developmental processes, does not happen in a vacuum from the rest of the world (Arnett, 2014). It is something that happens within a social context, and as a reflection of the surroundings and society of those developing an identity (Arnett, 2014). So the identity of Norway, both locally and globally as a peace loving and relatively fair country, presently, but also in the past, since it is presented that Norway did not play a part in the colonial period and slave trade (Eidsvik, 2012).

Norway, though it sees itself as a country that does not see color, it is important to acknowledge certain historical and present day social aspects that are a part of the makeup of a country. Though a noble ideology to claim to not see color, an ideology that seeks to equalize the society, it is also inaccurate and harmful in its own way. Through grandiose claims of not seeing color, it also becomes an erasure of those different to the majority, as well as the history which is a part of the country (Sandset, 2019). By denying the existence of difference in skin colors, one is also denying the institutionalized racism that affects the lives of those suffering by it. Recognition is not mutually exclusive from visibility. These two terms, and the way they are used in this project go definitely hand in hand, in trying to paint a clearer picture on perhaps what is lacking and on what can be improved within the growing international and multicultural community,

The national curriculum, states clearly in its introductory section about cultural diversity and identity, the importance of Norway as a democracy built on, both past and present, on the Christian and Humanistic values and ethics (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). Placing these two value approaches at the center of the national curriculum, creates a hierarchy of values and belief systems, in a society where not everyone shares those belief systems. Rather than create space for those who are not a part of the majority, the new national curriculum seems to narrowing the space.

This introduction to the cultural diversity of Norway starts out by stating Christian and human belief systems as the core values. Which after the history that has been analyzed in this project, there should be a much more clear space for minorities within classrooms and the educational system. For as we have seen, minorities are not something new to Norway. Though presented as thus, Norway has never been a historically homogenous country.

Now, another aspect that can make supporting a student through visibility more directly, is the flip side of the intercultural educational approach. Intercultural studies and experiments within the academic field, have seen that as a general rule, human beings relate easier and quicker to those who are perceived as being equal or the same to oneself (McAlinden, 2018). The appeal to sameness, is not being pointed out here as being negative of positive, but rather the way the human brain works (Arnett, 2014). Human beings like to categorize, and often times, those traits that are the same to one another, is the brain's way of organizing and understanding our surroundings (Arnett, 2014). Perhaps due to this tendency of the brain to find appeal in that that we see as being the same to ourselves, it is easier to practice visibility with those students who are perceived to being more similar to oneself and who meet the "requirements" of what the national curriculum lists as the central aspect of Norwegian culture.

Yet how does a history that few are aware of, play a role in the identity of a country, and subsequently those who receive an education in said country? Something that does not get talked about does not cease to exist, and much less cease to have an effect (Seeberg, 2003). We see the effects of this, especially within the study of Nordic exceptionalism. When talking about Nordic exceptionalism, it is often theorized and discussed that one of the reasons for this feeling of not having to participate in certain conversations, especially those surrounding racism, is the Nordics lack of participation in the colonial era (Loftsdottir & Jensen, 2012). This history, is however not an accurate look at the role the Nordic countries and Norway specifically had on the colonial era (Eidsvik, 2012). This selective history, and selective remembrance of the level of participation in the colonial era and as a consequence the slave trade, creates a very narrow opportunity to be

able to have a conversation surrounding the history of involvement. Thus leading to a narrowing of the space created within a classroom for those students who fall under the category of minorities. Within this analysis of the new national curriculum, it does not read as being a document that is creating space for those with a minority background to ground themselves within the "common history and cultural heritage.

7. Conclusion

At the very end of this project, I will attempt to gather all the data presented and analyzed throughout this thesis. Through the conclusion I hope to provide a clear image of what it is this project was attempting to present, and the points that were the goal when this project was started on.

7.1 The Importance of the Classroom

The classroom, globally is a platform for learning and socializing, where for many if and when they have access to learning, spend their formative years there (Nordahl & Dobson, 2009). The importance of the classroom as a tool for society to reach and nurture the future citizens they wish to have as a part of their society is undeniable and globally accepted (Darder, 2011b). If this were not true, then otherwise the political climates would not have so much vested interest in what is being taught in schools and how (Darder, 2011b).

The undeniable power of a classroom as a tool for learning and living, creates a perfect place to do exactly that, live and learn, and learn to live with those who are different that ourselves (McAlinden, 2018). Throughout this project and the analysis of the new national curriculum, LK20, the focus became the lack of discourse that opens for conversations about diversity, and spaces for that diversity. Rather it is a curriculum that desperately scrambles for a historical and core value approach that focuses on the common cultural and historical heritage, that is common for all learners. A cultural and historical heritage, that as we have seen steadily throughout this thesis, is in fact not shared by the country as a whole.

The new national curriculum attempts to bring back an ideology of a societal homogenous, that as we have seen, never existed and never was true (Hylland Eriksen, 1993, p. 20). The curriculum rather than creating a space for identities and cultural diversity to flourish, creates a space where one cultural heritage sits as the standard within a culturally diverse society. Leaving those who fall under the category of "others" to assimilate or integrate (Folkenborg, 2008).

Throughout this project and the subsequent analysis of the national curriculum, there have been conversations surrounding discourse, history, present day social trends, and in what way these aspects can create space for minorities within the classroom. As we have seen throughout the project discourse plays a large role in being able to create the diversity within a classroom that is a growing reality, as we have seen through the number of Norway's national statistics bureau. The national curriculum, rather than using a unifying discourse, creates a discourse of "our" versus the rest, successfully othering all of those outside of the "our".

As seen through Fairclough (2011), curriculums and governmental policies must be treated as a reflection of both the politics and the social climate that they are written in. All of these earlier mentioned aspects cannot be ignored if we are to create classroom cultures that creates space for all walks of life. For a national curriculum, as we have seen throughout the project, is never simply a national curriculum. It is a document that must be seen through the historical, social, and critical content and discourse analysis. To gauge a more in depth understanding of the curriculum, and the place those considered minorities have in this central educational document.

7.2 Reflections Surrounding Own Methods in this Project

From the very beginning the ideal for this project was to be able to go through an observation of two classrooms in Oslo, and how the teachers as well as the students experienced the conversation surrounding cultural diversity. However, as has been covered earlier due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this was not possible, leading to a thematic and content based analysis.

The questionnaires were done in an attempt to have some data taken directly from students learning in a diverse classroom. However, the dialogue between the school and myself was choppy, due to on and off lockdowns and homeschool as a result of the pandemic. The results gathered from those questionnaires, as discussed above, were probably given out to the pupils and a time when they were most interested in going out to recess. Despite this, it was interesting

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to realize how few of the students were aware of or knew of the term and concept of multiculturalism.

There are many things that can be said on the results of this project, however it would have been ideal to be able to go more in depth into one aspect. At the beginning of this project the size of it seemed to leave space for so much, however towards the end there was a lack of length to be able to write as in depth as could have been necessary. It could be argued that certain aspects of the project could have been left out. However, all the aspects felt important to be able to truly create an understanding of the national curriculum, its discourse, the social aspects, and the history of a multicultural society past and present.

7.3 From Here to There

This project was written with the intent to create an awareness surrounding the narratives that as a society we are a part of. Whether those narratives are inherited through the history, or through the discourse of a national curriculum. This project hopes to create in users of the national curriculum, and others as well, a critical approach to the document. To be aware of certain trends in the discourse, as well as in histories that are for several reasons, not always a part of the conversation. The objective was, as has already been said awareness. Then through awareness a desire to create change in the discourse that is the makeup of the educational system. On a personal level, the amount of knowledge acquired and learned by writing this thesis has given me personally, a better understanding of the way discourse is rarely only one thing, it is a make-up of various aspects (Fairclough, 2011).

Ideally this project has also garnered an interest in questioning and looking at curriculums and other political documents in a more critical light. As well as an interest for a history that perhaps not many are aware of, that can, as we have seen, potentially have an effect on the socio-political world of today.

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Attachments

Students and Guardians Consent Form

By reading this form, both guardians and students are agreeing to participate in the answering of a questionnaire written by Iza A. Wachter in relation to her master thesis project via OsloMet University within the International Education and Development program.

Through this master thesis program, and the questionnaire, Iza A. Wachter is hoping to gain a clearer understanding on how students today relate to subjects related to the growing multicultural society within Norway, but especially in Oslo and the surrounding areas.

The student is to be 100% anonymized, no features that can be traced back to the student or […] School will be in the final version of the thesis.

This questionnaire is being done with the known consent of [...] School's Principal [...] and the teacher [....].

If anyone were to have any questions, then they are more than welcome to contact me; Iza A. Wachter (email: izawask@gmail.com), or my advisor at OsloMet University Tom Griffiths (email: tom.g.griffiths@oslomet.no).

To send in your answers if you wish to participate in the questionnaire, then you simply send an email to Iza A. Wachter (as referenced above) with the answers, «YES guardian and student consent to participating in this questionnaire" or "NO guardian and student do not wish to participate in this questionnaire".

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,

Iza A. Wachter

Questionnaire for students

Please answer as complete and thorough as possible. You can write your answers on a separate sheet of paper to give yourself more space. Just remember to write the question number next to the answer.

Questionnaire for students:

1. When you hear the word «multicultural», what does it mean to you?

2. Would you use the word «multicultural» to refer to your everyday life?

3. What does it mean to you to live in a diverse and multicultural society today, and what would you like it to be like in the future? (Please answer in as much detail an in depth as possible).

Thank you for your participation!