FACULTY OF ARTS AND EDUCATION

MASTER'S THESIS

Programme of study: Master in Literacy Studies	Autumn, 2010 Open
Author: Josephine Ifeyinwa Mathisen	..... (Author's signature)
Person with academic responsibility: Supervisor: David Wagner	
Thesis title: Migration and Literacy: A Study of Somali women in Oslo	
Keywords: migration literacy events destination language acquisition acculturation	No. of pages: 104 + appendices/other: 11 Stavanger, 23rd of November 2010

Abstract

At present, the demand and the necessity for immigrants to acquire Norwegian language skills is being highlighted and emphasized throughout various forums in Norwegian society. But what is noticeably absent in all of these discussions is an awareness of the challenges and dilemmas experienced by adults throughout the process of language acquisition. The principle aim of this study is to assess the factors that influence literacy acquisition in the Norwegian language amongst Somali women. In addition, a number of related aims – such as describing the literacy events of the subjects in the Norwegian social setting – have been taken into consideration, in order to provide a more detailed and thorough understanding of the importance of acquiring destination language skills. The other aim of this study, which focuses on the acculturation experience, will investigate the challenges faced by both of the parties involved in this process: the subjects and the society in which they are resettling – Norway. This research is predominantly qualitative in nature, in order to allow for a comprehensive and authentic means of exploring the aims of this study. The findings of the study are based on interviews with six Somali women who reside in Oslo.

The thesis aims to outline the impact of migration conditions upon the language learning process. By examining the concept of literacy, this study draws attention to the relationship between literacy and language, as well as reviewing and analyzing theories in the field of adult literacy and learning. The study also provides a description of the group to be studied, focusing on the development of written Somali and literacy acquisition in Somalia, while outlining the living conditions of the Somali population in Norway. This thesis provides an assessment of previous studies on factors influencing immigrants' language acquisition in the destination country. In addition, the thesis applies the concepts of acculturation and integration when considering the dynamics of migration.

The results of the investigation carried out found individual motivation to be an important factor amongst the group of women who were studied. It found that the motivation to learn the language was closely connected to personal goals. The study found that education acquired in Norway, prior knowledge of the English language and of written Somali, and the circumstances during the period of arrival, were all influential factors. It was found that the literacy events of those subjects who had children varied from those who did not have children, both in and outside the home. Similarly, it found that the work domains could influence and contribute to the language learning process.

Table of contents

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank my supervisor, David Wagner whose watchful eyes and comments, I found useful throughout the writing process. I would also like to thank the women for sharing their opinions and experiences with me. Finally, thanks to my parents and siblings for their encouragement and support, and to my son, Elliot Chinonso for his cooperation.

1. Introduction

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) reports that almost 200 million people live outside the country in which they were born.[1] The consequence of this is the development of heterogeneous societies, characterized by a range of cultural and linguistic differences that necessitate change, both on the part of the receiving society and on the part of immigrant groups. For the immigrant, these changes involve adapting to a new way of life, as well as mastering the language of the receiving country. The destination countries, on the other hand, are required to provide language courses for new settlers, in addition to information courses about their own cultural history and societal norms. Though this might seem like a straightforward process, reports and trends emerging from Norway suggest that there are significant differences between different immigrant groups relating to the ways in which they acquire literacy skills and integrate themselves in the receiving society (Daugstad and Sandnes 2008).

In the study of migration, destination country language skills have been linked to employment opportunities, education and greater participation in society (Hayfron 2001; Buttaro 2004). Some scholars have developed a model that helps to explain the benefits of destination language skills (Chiswick and Miller 2001). According to them, this model,

> is based on the assumption that language skills are a form of investment in human capital. Investments in language skills may be made before or after immigration and those skills affect the choice of destination'
>
> Chiswick and Miller (1994a) cited in Chiswick and Miller (2001)

This implies that acquiring skills in the destination language is an investment that yields returns, regardless of where that investment is made. The language skills of the destination country are known to be beneficial when they are acquired before migration (van-Tubergen and Kalmijn 2009). This study is concerned with the processes involved in the acquisition of language skills *after* migration, especially in the case of adults. The reason for this focus is that studies in the field of language learning have shown that for adults, the process of acquiring literacy skills is particularly complex, especially in comparison with younger learners (Tusting et al 2003).

[1] http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/lang/en

The language skill of immigrants has become an increasingly important issue, emerging in the form of discussions and debates within various forms of mass media in Norway. For example, *Aftenposten*, a Norwegian newspaper, has published a series of articles on the topic of immigrants and language learning. The former acting work minister, Rigmor Aasrud, in an interview with *Aftenposten*, emphasized the importance of having good Norwegian skills for immigrants arriving in Norway:

> "Acquiring useful Norwegian skill is a good investment in order to cope in the job market, but having good language skills is important for participation both in the job market and society as a whole." (my translation)

(Aftenposten 06.12.2009)

The message conveyed in her words suggests that language skills will lead to increased participation in all sectors of the Norwegian society. In another article, a student at the Norwegian language center described the challenges she faces in her daily life as a result of not possessing adequate Norwegian skills:

> "I become nervous because I cannot speak Norwegian. There is this feeling of helplessness when I go to the shop. I rely on others for my appointment with the doctor." (my translation)

(Aftenposten 07.09.2008)

It is important to mention here that my interest in this topic arose after I read these articles. As an immigrant in Norway, these issues involve me directly.

1.1 The present study

The present study focuses on the concept of literacy and adaptation for Somali women in Oslo, Norway. Because of the emphasis on their location, this study will take an ecological approach towards understanding the meaning of literacy and change for the subjects in this thesis. An ecological approach, according to Barton (2007: 49) 'is about the dynamic interaction of the two, how people fit into the environment, how they form it and are formed by it.' This study deals both with the ways in which the subjects are shaped by the society, and the ways in which the society is shaped by the presence of the subjects in this study.

1.2 The main goal of the study

The goal of this thesis is to observe and analyze situations in Norwegian society in which the subjects require Norwegian literacy skills to function. It will attempt to illustrate the literacy requirements of Norwegian society, and the ways in which the subjects understand the topic of Norwegian language and learning based on their familiarity with the field. The study will also inquire into the adaptation methods employed by these women upon their arrival in Norway. Accordingly, this study may be divided into three interconnected sections:

(1) A description of the Norwegian literacy events of Somali women;

(2) An investigation into how Somali women perceive factors that influence literacy acquisition in Norwegian;

(3) An exploration of the acculturation experience of these women.

The first two sections of this study deal with literacy. According to the Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary, literacy is, in its simplest sense, the ability to read and write. In a broader sense, it means the knowledge of a particular subject or area and the ability to participate and function effectively in society.

Among scholars, there is an ongoing debate about what should be characterized as 'literacy'. This study will, however, take as its starting point the definition of literacy that is linked to the New Literacy Studies (NLS). NLS is made up of scholars across a range of different disciplines who are concerned with observing situations in peoples' everyday lives where reading and writing is of particular significance (Street 2000; Barton 2007; Holme 2004). The New London Group (NLG), mentioned in Street (2000), is another group that has developed the concept of 'multi-literacies', which differs from the concept of 'multiple literacies'. The former is connected to the knowledge of the modes or channels associated with literacy; for example, digital literacy. The concept of 'multiple literacies' conveys the notion of the existence of the concept of 'literacy' in different contexts and cultures. Street, a pioneer of the concept of multiple literacies, has argued that the concept does not encompass the field of language studies because it does not consider the reading and writing that occurs in the mode or channel, but instead focuses upon *competence* in using that mode or channel (Street 2000). Due to the ongoing debate within the field, this study will take two different approaches to understanding literacy. The first concerns language ability, whilst the second

will focus on the functional ability resulting from the acquisition of language skills – i.e. to the ability to use reading and writing skills in today's society.

1.3 Methods

In order to gain an understanding of the perceptions of the women involved in this study, a qualitative study, comprising of interviews, was an appropriate method for the collecting of data. Interviews were carried out from May to July, 2010. A total of seven women in Oslo were interviewed. These women were contacted in both formal and informal settings, including Norwegian language classes, coffee shops and underground transport stations, and interviews were conducted at the same location, with the exception of those approached in the underground station. The interview questions were based on the findings of previous studies looking into the different factors which influence language proficiency, including: language, gender, level of education, duration of stay and motivation. These factors can be grouped into two categories: pre-migration skills (age at time of migration, level of education, mother-tongue and language exposure in the home country) and post- migration skills (language exposure in the destination country, duration of stay and motivation).

1.4 Outline of the thesis

Chapter 2 deals with literacy and consists of a consideration of various perspectives of literacy and how it affects the individual and society. This section concludes by establishing a framework of the relationship between language and literacy and adult literacy and learning. Because of the relationship between language and literacy, it is necessary to classify the languages used in this study. The linguistic systems used in this study are Norwegian and Somali, both of which originate from one source – the Latin orthography. However, it is important to state that the Somali language is the product of an indigenous oral culture, which only recently became a literate culture. Chapter 3 includes a brief presentation on Somalia, its language and literacy history, and finally, the reports and findings of the Somali population in Norway. Chapter 4 discusses the migration process and how it affects migrants and the receiving countries. This section is related to the field of psycho-cultural studies. The terms of focus are here are 'acculturation' and 'integration'. Acculturation deals with the process of being born in one culture and adapting to living in another. Integration is a process that usually takes place after acculturation. It involves the positive adaptation methods of individuals or groups living in a cultural setting that is not theirs (Berry 1997). The two cultures in this study are Somali – the culture of the origin country – and Norwegian – the

culture of the destination country. This chapter will also include an overview from previous studies on the factors influencing destination language literacy acquisition. Chapter 5 describes the methods used in this study. It presents the women involved in the study alongside the procedures used to collect the data. Chapter 6 consists of the findings and discussions of this study, and Chapter 7 concludes the thesis.

2. Literacy

The first recorded use of 'literacy' as a word was found in a dictionary in 1924. The adjective 'illiterate' and the noun 'illiteracy' both derive from the word 'literacy'. It appears that both words are older than 'literacy': 'illiterate' dates back to 1775 and 'illiteracy' to 1839. These findings suggest that 'literacy' is a relatively new word (Barton 2007:19). According to Venezky (1990:72) literacy represents "a collection of abilities within which specific ability zones[2] can be designated for practical ends". He classifies the ability zones into lower levels and higher levels. The lower-level ability zone indicates a limited literacy skill that is not sufficient to function in today's society because it is one that heavily relies on print. The higher-level ability zone indicates a literacy ability that is sufficient to partake in the given society. Venezky adds that the higher-level ability includes 'reading, writing, numeracy and specific document processing skills. As mentioned earlier, because the concept of literacy is relevant to the present thesis, it is important to clarify the followings questions: What does literacy mean? How is literacy acquired? What is literacy used for?

The definition of literacy is constantly changing. Judging by its definition in classical times, where *litteratus*, the word from which literacy is derived, originally meant 'one who could read Latin', there is no doubt that this meaning is questionable today. Another example of literacy requirement is that the level of literacy that was needed in the industrialized age is somewhat different from contemporary demands, owing to the fact that societies at that time relied on industrial and agricultural occupations, which did not generally require reading or writing skills. These examples demonstrate that literacy is not a fixed concept (CERI, 1992, cited in Roman 2004). The evolving meaning of literacy over the decades has caused some scholars to maintain the assertion that it is a socially constructed term (Venezky 1990; Roman 2004; Barton 2007). This implies that the definition of literacy is determined by the conditions present in any given society at any particularly time. According to Venezky (1990:10), literacy requirements vary according to 'different regions, different social strata and different involvement in the society.' Because of this view, literacy can be extended to include *biliteracy or multiple literacies*, *vernacular literacies*, *local literacies*, *indigenous literacies*,

[2] 'this zone represents levels of literacy abilities that are required for full participation as an equal member of a specific society' Venezky (1990:73)

and *everyday literacies*, terms which indicate that there are various literacies relating to different social contexts and identities (Hornberger 2000).

Literacy development is influenced by both societal and individual factors. For example, in the study of children emergent literacy, Wells (1985) found that the Indian girl Rosie is unable to recollect the word 'elephant' in the classroom because of her altered worldview. Interestingly, she is able to remember that 'elephant' is something that is associated with a festival celebration in her culture, but cannot remember the word itself. In another example, Edwards et al (2000) suggest that literacy acquisition is linked to an individual's worldview. They use three examples to illustrate this connection. The first shows that emergent literacy development in the family is effected by worldviews such as the religious practises in fundamentalist Christian and British Muslim families, where reading and writing is centred on religious topics. The effect of the mismatch between the worldview and literacy practised in the home and school literacy, can be seen in the example of the Chinese boy, Tony, who is caught between two contrasting worldviews. The Chinese repeat and memorize letters (logographs) before learning how to read and write, which is a different method of learning how to read and write than that used in British schools. Another example is related to the perceptions of literacy in the society; this is seen between the Kwe´yol community in the Eastern Caribbean island of St. Lucia and the second and third generation Kwe´yol communities in the UK. In the Kwe´yol community of St. Lucia, literacy in English is an important skill that leads to greater personal and social development, whereas Kwe´yols in the UK, because they are already educated in British schools, strive to acquire literacy in their native language as a symbol of their cultural identity.

The function and purpose of literacy in different contexts has caused some forms of literacy to be more highly valued than others (Barton 2007: 38). For example, in multicultural societies, and from a linguistic point of view, the meaning of illiteracy will change, depending on the language of the society. This can be illustrated in a situation where minority speakers are regarded as illiterate simply because they are not literate in the language of the majority. Venezky (1990:13) contests the labelling of non-native speakers of English, literate in their own language, as illiterate. In a study on the home literacy support service provided by eighteen Bangladeshi women in England, Blackledge (2000) argue that concepts such as literacy and illiteracy demonstrate the power relationship between dominant and minority languages. The dominant language in this study was English, whilst the minority languages

were Bengali and Sylheti. The women were labelled illiterate because 'they could speak no English or their spoken English was not very good'. The situation of the Kwe´yols in the UK is different; this group have acquired literacy in the dominant language through education in British schools, but have developed an interest in Kwe´yol, a minority literacy, because it connects them to their heritage. Unlike the Bangladeshi women, they are not labelled as illiterate because of the different social context. Barton (2007:59) points out that in the history of language use in Europe, dominant languages, such as Latin, ignored other vernacular languages. Today, the same can also be said of the English language. The context of literacy, when considered from a different point of view, may provide a different result. In Blackledge's example, literacy in Bengali and Sylheti will be valued in Bangladesh because it is the literacy of the majority. However, the changes in the lives of these families have contributed to a shift; they go from being a member of a majority group in Bangladesh to being part of a minority group in England. The context – living in England – makes English more valued than their indigenous language.

As mentioned earlier, another term relating to literacy is 'illiteracy'. 'Illiteracy' has a negative connotation. According to a number of UNESCO surveys, there are almost one billion illiterate people in the world, the majority of whom are in developing countries. These surveys also reveal that a particularly high number of women in developing countries are illiterate (Verhoeven 1994). Nevertheless, the meaning of 'illiteracy', like 'literacy', is determined by factors within different societies. Verhoeven (1994) suggests that the standard of literacy in industrialized societies has increased over the years, thereby giving rise to a different set of illiterates. Gurnah's (2000) work with the Yemeni community in Sheffield illustrates the effect that social change can have on literacy demands. Following the closure of the industrial and steel plants in Sheffield, unskilled Yemeni workers lost their jobs. They could not seek employment in other sectors because they were not literate in English. To sum up the influence of societal changes on literacy, Barton (2007:50) points out that "some social changes increase literacy demands, some reduce literacy demands". Citing Gurnah's work as an example, Barton point will imply that previously, the job situation in Sheffield did not require literacy demands, but after these changes took place, a new kind of literacy was required. The changes required the Yemeni men to participate in literacy programmes in their community.

2.1 Literacy events

Literacy practices and literacy events are closely related in meaning but have a different focus because they are terms developed by scholars from different fields. The term 'literacy events' originates from the field of language studies, specifically sociolinguistics – the study of language in various social contexts. This looks at literacy events in relation to speech acts (Hornberger 2000; Barton 2007). This study is interested in literacy events in the Norwegian language.

According to Hornberger (2000) the 'analysis of literacy events, then involves describing the range of ways in which people "do" literacy, in terms of participants, settings, topic, language varieties, purposes, norms, genres, and the like.' Another explanation is provided by Heath (1982a:93), cited in Street (2000); here, the term 'literacy event' is defined as 'any occasion in which a piece of writing is integral to the nature of the participants' interactions and their interpretative process.' In Barton's (2007:37) analysis of literacy activities the phrase 'regular repeated activities' is added to the definition of literacy events. In other words, literacy events involve any situation or context in people's everyday lives where reading and writing is crucial; this event can occur regularly or follow the same pattern.

Furthermore, Street goes on to say that the concept of literacy events is helpful for researchers because it enables them to focus on a 'particular situation, 'observe an event that involves reading and writing' and 'draw out its characteristics', e.g. checking timetables, reading magazines and reading road signs. Examples of literacy events in people's daily lives are presented in Barton's (2007:36) Lancaster study, where one man quickly negotiated between three literacy events: discussing local newspaper articles, planning his shopping list and writing telephone messages for his son. Another example can be seen in Heath (1983), cited in Edwards et al (2000); the literacy events in the Tracton family included reading religious bedtime stories, talking about the morals in the stories and singing nursery rhymes. One woman in Blackledge's (2000) study said that she read Bengali stories to her children and taught them Arabic and Bengali on Saturdays and Sundays.

It is generally agreed that literacy events are influenced by different social contexts or domains, and by our roles in society (Street 2000; Roman 2004; Barton 2007). Different social contexts, such as the act of writing academic essays, taking lesson notes in class and reading for examinations, are associated with the context of school literacy. Literacy events are also practiced in people's workplaces and homes. In the workplace, literacy events may

include writing patient journals for workers in the health sectors and taking menu orders and/or booking rooms for workers in the tourism and restaurant businesses. Literacy events in the home may include writing emails or sending letters and cards to friends, paying bills via the internet and following recipes from cookbooks. A practical example of how literacy events are determined and transferred from one context to another is found in Edwards et al (2000) study. For instance, among the Kwe´yols in the UK who were students in a second language class offering Kwe´yol language, one student said "[my workmates] always come around to look at the different booklets I read and are always asking me questions about the language". This comment illustrated that this student was engaged in two kinds of literacy event: literacy in the work place and school or home literacy (depending on where he/she reads for school). Furthermore, this example also illustrates that different literacy events are inevitably intertwined because both can occur in the same context.

Secondly, in relation to social identity, gender roles may influence the way in which literacy is used in the home. In their study, Barton and Padmore (1991) observed that women kept in touch with family and friends by writing letters and remembering Christmas, birthdays and anniversaries. The literacy events of men included keeping track of payments, paying bills and carrying out repairs, which required the reading of instructions (cited in Barton 2007:43). In general, gender roles are known to affect what people do with literacy in different domains of society. For instance, in Britain, most literature students at the universities are females and most secretarial jobs are done by women. Women read more magazines than newspapers and when women read newspapers, they read different sections to those which men tend to read (Barton 2007:65).

2.2 Literacy and language

Language is of course a key word in defining literacy. The definition of 'literacy' as the ability to read and write inevitably connotes the use of language and generates a number of questions: literacy in what language, literacy in whose language and how are reading and writing skills used in different contexts or domains? These questions illustrate that language is an extremely important aspect in the study of literacy.

There are similarities between the fields of language studies and literacy studies. As mentioned above, literacy events are related to the field of sociolinguistics, an area of

language studies. However, there are other similarities between these two fields. In language, the different form of written and spoken language in various contexts is known as 'discourse'. In speech, the various ways language is used is referred to as 'registers' and, in writing, different literary forms are known as 'genres'. Discourses can be studied in further detail to find language features and to reveal more of its context and usage. According to Barton (2007:76) 'literacy involves studying both text and the practices surrounding the text.' Furthermore, he suggest that the way texts are used in various contexts affects literacy practices, e.g. reading for pleasure or reading to acquire general or specific information (Barton 2007:84). Here, there is a clear relationship between the domains of literacy and the language of discourse – both link language use to different social circles.

The language and literacy situation of a person or group may be subject to change when they migrate to another country. In the target country, immigrants may be required to learn a new language, if it is a language they do not already speak. In so doing, they become bi-literate or bi-lingual in their own language and in the language of the target country. According to Holme (2004: 89), the principle of *language rights* – that people have the right to use their own language regardless of the language situation – is parallel to the right to freedom of speech. He adds that there are differences between the ways in which language rights are applied in different societies; on the one hand, it is acceptable for people to retain their own language and acquire literacy in that language whilst residing in the host country, but on the other hand, people lose their language right when they migrate. The argument *for* this language loss is to ensure that immigrants, like the native citizens of the target country, are capable of taking part in the various social contexts that require literacy skill within that country.

It is evident that immigrants will use two or more languages in the host country, thereby making them bilingual or multilingual speakers, depending on individual factors. When this happens, the languages will be used in different contexts and for different purposes. Verhoeven (1994) suggests that the language of the host country will be used in interacting with citizens, whilst their native language will be used when communicating with fellow nationals.

2.3 Adult literacy and learning

Children learn about the world and acquire literacy skills in different ways; they learn by storytelling (talk around text), scaffolding (provided by parents or older siblings) and through their participation in elaborate or restricted codes (the various ways children are encouraged to speak about a topic). Unlike children, who require guidance from mentors, adults are thought to be responsible for their own learning, making them independent learners.

A great number of studies in the fields of psychology and education have described the many ways in which adults learn and acquire literacy skills. Two of the most prominent theories are socio-cultural theory and situated cognition, originating in the field of psychology. Socio-cultural theory, a field in which Vygosky is a notable scholar, suggests that social interaction is a pivotal factor in learning. This form of learning encourages a good range of mental activity that includes thinking, memorization and a degree of attentiveness. Here, the parties involved in the social interaction can also act as a guide for the learner in solving problems. There is, therefore, a difference between the way a problem is solved by the learner alone and when the learner is interacting with others. This process is reflected in Vygosky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development[3]. The second theory situated cognition deals with learning in real contextual environments rather than in abstract places. For example, school learning is considered to be abstract because it does not create a realistic situation for learners to acquire general knowledge other than that which is required at school. Real situations, on the other hand, provide learners with knowledge that they require in their daily lives when solving the problems they encounter in the various contexts in which they may find themselves (Tusting et al 2003; Holme 2004; Barton 2007).

The theories of andragogy and self-directed learning originate from the field of education. Knowles (1973; 1998), cited in Tusting et al (2003:22), was the first to convey the theory of andragogy[4]; he claimed that pedagogy as a method of teaching is appropriate for children, whilst andragogy is appropriate for adults. The reason for this is that adults enter the learning process with a reason to learn, which is their driving force; they have more experience than children and they learn at a different stage in their lives. To a large extent,

[3] " A term devised by Vygotsky to describe the maximum amount of cognitive development or learning of which an individual is capable at any one time when assisted by other agents, such as teachers, teaching institution or caregivers" (Holme 2004:248).

[4] The theory of andragogy is derived from the field of psychotherapy, humanistic psychology, developmental psychology on other field in the social sciences. It concerned with the "the art and science of helping adults learn – with conscious recognition of the adulthood of adult learners" Burge (1988).

adult learning is ‘problem-centred’ not ‘subject-centred’. Knowles later suggested that pedagogy could, however, be applicable to the adult learner when teaching a new subject.

Adults are individually responsible for their own learning. This process falls under the concept of self-directed learning. According to Tusting et al (2003:29) ‘self directed learning implies we should remember that learners have their own motivation for engaging in provision, and are capable of [...] engaging in self-directed autonomous learning.’ They use their own learning history and ability to adapt to various settings. Smith (1987), cited in Tusting et al (2003:29) has suggested a number of features that distinguish adult learners from children: adults make the choice to learn, thereby devoting their time and effort to the learning process. They also have varied life experiences, which they build on and use when acquiring new knowledge. Different stages in the lives of adults cause them to acquire new knowledge and adults have the ability to learn on their own; they have their own history of learning, which they can apply to the learning process.

Often, the motivation to acquire literacy skills is necessitated by changes in the society or changes in people’s lives. For instance, adults may choose to acquire literacy skills for personal reasons, which require or build upon their ability to read and write. To illustrate this, the division of countries into developing and developed countries, shows that economically and developmentally, some countries are ahead of others. The consequence of this situation is in turn reflected on the kind of literacy demand that is necessary to function in these countries. This also applies in situations where people migrate to another country. Adults may feel they need to acquire new language skills when they move to a different country if it is not a language they already speak.

Furthermore, adults are motivated to learn a new language when it is required in order for them to be able to participate in all sectors of their new society. However, they can also be driven by personal goals. Chall (1990) categorises adult literacy needs into three groups: civic, occupational and personal. Civic literacy needs are required to become a functional citizen in a society; they are needs required in people’s daily lives and in transacting with other sectors of the society, e.g. reading newspapers and reading forms and instructions. Occupational literacy needs include the literacy of specific occupational practices: how much reading and the level of reading one is expected to have. Chall argues that the different types of reading materials available in different workplaces, shows that reading abilities vary

according to people's occupation levels. Personal literacy needs include the literacy required to achieve personal goals or needs, such as reading medicine and food labels and reading books. Similarly, Mikulecky (1978) et al, cited in Mikulecky (1990) in their study of 500 adults, listed, in hierarchical order, the reasons why adults read:

1. To keep up with what is going on
2. For relaxation and personal enjoyment
3. To find out how to get something done
4. To study for personal and occupational advancement
5. To discuss with friends what has been read.

2.4 Summary

The definition of literacy is variable and inconsistent, owing to changing societal conditions at various points in time. Illiteracy is similarly determined by factors in the society. Literacy can be extended to include the reading and writing that occurs in distinct contexts. However, its acquisition is influenced by both individual factors and social factors. The use and importance of literacy in some domains has caused some forms of literacy to be more valued in society.

In the context of everyday life, we use reading and writing skills in different manners in different social circles: the work place, the school and the home (to mention but a few). The way we practice literacy is influenced by our gender. In the home, men and women use literacy in different ways.

Language is a means through which people communicate. Language is pivotal in literacy studies. In the field of sociolinguistics, an area of language studies, there is a connection between language and literacy. The issue of language and literacy is a crucial aspect in relation to migration.

Adults are self-directed learners because they have reasons for learning. They are, to a large extent, responsible for their own learning. Adult learning is problem centred, usually taking place in a realistic context.

3. Somalia

On the map of the continent, the Somalia region resembles a rhinoceros horn – for this reason, it is commonly referred to as the Horn of Africa. Demographically, ethnic Somalis make up 85% of the population (nomads or semi-nomads) .The state religion in Somalia is Islam. Somalis are identified socially by their membership in a clan, which is linked to their patriarchal lineage. As an Islamic country, Somalia is guided by Islamic doctrines, which stipulate defined male and female roles. Isrealite et al (1999) describe Somali women as subordinate to their men; they have domestic roles that include childcare and caring for their husbands and extended family members.

3.1 Language situation in Somalia

The Somali language belongs to the Afro-Asiatic and Eastern Cushitic language family. This makes it related to other languages found in neighbouring African countries, in Ethiopia and in Eritrea. According to Warsame (2001), during the colonial period Somalia was linguistically divided: in the northern region, English was the lingua franca whilst Italian was used in the southern region. However, Laitin (1977:4) points out that both Swahili and French were also used in Somalia. After independence in 1960, English, Arabic and Italian became official languages, because the indigenous Somali language was at that time known to have no written form. The language situation in the country took a different turn under the military governance of Siad Barre who was chosen by the Supreme Revolutionary Council (SRC)[5].

However, before the military era, the desire to have one official language had previously given rise to various controversial debates and conflicts. This began when scholars attempted to write down the Somali language using various written forms, such as the use of Arabic script in Somali poems. This choice was favoured because most Somali people are Muslims, and are thus familiar with the Arabic script. Another example is the use of Latin orthography in primary schools, a programme that was run by the British, which led to protests in some cities. Following these attempts, Somalis began advocating the use of a unique script that expressed the Somali worldview. It was during this period that a Somali nationalist, Osman Yusuf Kenadid, developed an indigenous script known as "*Cisamaaniya*",

[5] When the army over threw the democratic regime in 1969, Siad Barre was selected as the president.

or *Far Soomaali* ("Somali writing"). Because the Cismaaniya script was an indigenous script, many felt it could adequately represent the Somali culture and worldview (Warsame 2001).

The language situation in Somalia became a highly political issue. The previous (democratic) government started working on developing a written Somali script; they appointed two committees to examine scripts that would be appropriate for written Somali. The first committee, in 1961, suggested that the Latin alphabet was suitable for the written Somali language. The second committee, in 1966, consisted of UNESCO sponsored linguists who expressed no preference for any particular script. However, they found that the choice of an indigenous script would pose problems.

It was during the military regime that a solution to the language problem in Somalia was found. Their method has been described as forceful because the new committee of 1971(appointed by the military) was asked to write Somali grammar and text books and to gather words for the creation of a Somali language dictionary (Laitin 1977 cited in Warsame 2001). The unusual introduction of what is known today as the written Somali language is best described in Warsame's words:

> "on the third anniversary of their coup d'etat, in the midst of the celebration and to the surprise of even the members of the commission, the results of the government's decision did indeed come from the sky. As everybody was taking his position in order to secure a clear vision on the parade, a helicopter flew low and dropped multicolour leaflets. This was neither Arabic, nor Italian, nor English. This was Somali and the leaflets were written in Latin script. The Latin script had been adopted as a script for the Somali language"
>
> Warsame (2001)

3.2 Latin alphabets

Studies in human language development have indicated that speakers of alphabetic languages have phonemic awareness. This phonemic awareness encourages an understanding of the alphabetic principle (Høien and Lundberg 2000; Tarone and Bigelow 2005). Alphabetic principle simply implies that speakers are able to identify phoneme-grapheme correspondence or phonemic awareness (ability to identify sounds in their written form) and grapheme-phonemic correspondence (ability to identify written words in their spoken form). For

example, the word /pen/ comprises of three phonemes /p/ /e/ and /n/ both in written and spoken forms[6].

Above all the stages involved in reading development[7], the alphabetic –phonemic stage is an essential stage, because the reader recognizes the relationship between the letters and sounds of the alphabet. This stage proffers speakers with an advantage when reading in an unknown language, according to Høien and Lundberg (2000:29) "the beauty of this stage is that it allows readers to pronounce words they have not seen before". However in spelling, this stage does not provide any leverage because of the difference between speech and the written forms i.e. discrepancies in pronunciation and phonological representation between long and short vowels. Høien and Lundberg (2000:58) suggest that this irregularity "… is why writing is never a straightforward process of simply encoding what you hear. And it is one of the main reasons that writing, unlike talking, has to be taught and learned".

Although not directly related to the Latin alphabet, Read et al (1986) cited in Tarone and Bigelow (2005) studied the effect of non alphabetic and alphabetic script on two Chinese groups belonging to the same social class. The notable distinction between these groups was the contrasting scripts at which literacy was acquired i.e. in Chinese characters contrary to Chinese alphabetic script. The first group acquired literacy in only Chinese characters, whilst the second acquired literacy in both the Chinese characters and the Chinese alphabetic script. However, the authors have pointed out that this difference stems from varying historical periods rather than social or individual factors. Their results showed that alphabetic literate adults scored higher than non alphabetic literate adults in tasks that involved the addition and deletion of consonants occurring at word initial positions in words and nonwords. These findings have made the authors to state that the ability to divide a word into various segments occurs as a result of literacy in an alphabetic script.

The findings of Read et al (1986) study illustrate that the alphabetic principle is a basic foundation when learning languages that employ alphabetic script. The Latin alphabetic script is the focus of this study, because it is employed in both Norwegian and Somali language, but with exceptions to the existence of some peculiar alphabets in both languages[8]. Another dimension in this thesis will be to explore the influence of Somali language in the acquisition

[6] There could be a deviation in the example above especially when realizing diphthongs or triphthongs .
[7] The reading stages include: pseudo-reading, logographic-visual, alphabetic-phonemic and orthographic – morphemic (Høien and Lundberg 2000:25)
[8] In the Norwegian language this exception include: å, æ and ø

of Norwegian language. Although this is not included in the research questions, it is probable that the alphabetic principle theory is relevant to learning situation investigated in this thesis.

3.3 Literacy in Somalia

The consequences of having a written language changed the concept of literacy in Somalia. In the education sector, locally administered schools were opened because they fostered the spread of the new script, whilst foreign schools were closed down. Thus, the literacy events in schools that once relied on foreign scripts were replaced by the written Somali language. This replacement came as a result of the principle of somalisation, which included the use of the Somali language in teaching, promoting the culture and tradition of the Somali people. The total number of schools in the country increased following the introduction of the Somali script. In 1976, a law ensuring that Somali children between the ages of 6 and 14 had access to free primary school education was passed; because of this law, the number of primary schools and teachers increased significantly.

Another goal of the Somali government was to embark on a mass literacy project that would spread Somali literacy to all its citizens. The government divided the literacy program into two groups: urban and rural. Warsame (2001) points out that the purpose of this literacy project was to eradicate adult illiteracy. It reached almost 500,000 people, who later became literate. The implication of this project on the urban population is summarized perceptively by Warsame (2001): 'People were not given the freedom to choose between literacy and illiteracy. There was only one choice; that of literacy.' An illustrative example of the implications of this literacy project is depicted in the experience of the workers in the public services. They were given three chances to pass examinations which tested their skills in written Somali; if they failed, they would lose their jobs. In rural areas, the organisers of the literacy projects were faced with a number of challenges; because of the large population in these areas, illiteracy levels were higher, there were problems recruiting teachers, and the lack of organisation led to communication and transportation problems.

This extraordinary literacy project was the first of its kind; schools closed for a year in order for teachers to be deployed to the rural areas and the teachers lived and travelled with the nomads and hunters. The project, therefore, also had implications for the nomads and their cattle. Warsame (2001) adds that '[t]o encourage all nomads, who came to the wells or pools to attend the literacy classes, water was given to the cattle of those people who already attended daily literacy classes.' This mass literacy program earned Somalia UNESCO's

international literacy prize in 1975. Though the government attributes the increase in adult literacy levels from 5% to 80% to this project, experts have suggested that it actually accounted for a 60% increase (Warsame 2001).

Overall, the intentions of the government to eliminate adult illiteracy were successful, to some extent. But in spite of its success, the literacy project was terminated due to a combination of factors (political conflicts, lack of resources, social and economic problems) and the achievements of the government were short lived. However, the prevailing political situation in the country has caused many Somalis to live in diaspora.

3.4 Somalis living in Norway

Somalis are one of the largest groups of immigrants in Norway. In 2008, there were 22,000 Somalis in Norway. The majority of Somalis are known to have entered the country as refugees. It is believed that the Somalis arrived at various different times. Reports show that many came in the late '70s and '80s as political asylum seekers, and the number increased following the Civil war in the '90s. In addition, studies have shown that those who entered the country during the earlier period were better educated than those who arrived later (Arbeids- og Inkluderingsdepartementet, 2009).

Somalis have been represented in various surveys conducted by Statistics Norway. In 2008, there were a total of 15,500 Somalis with refugee backgrounds. An employment survey taken across selected countries of immigrants that are represented in Norway showed that 36% of Somalis were registered as employed in 2008. This number accounted for 45% men and 25% women. 78% of Somalis received *kontantstøtte*[9] for children aged 1-3 in 2006 (www.ssb.no). It is suggested that the reason for the low participation of this group in the job sector was a combination of the high number of children in most families, the low level of education they had received in their home country, and their dependence on welfare support. By contrast, recent experience with Somalis in Hammerfest[10] has shown that the participation of Somalis in the Norwegian job sector varies according to the municipality.

[9] Cash benefits given to parents whose children do not attend the kindergarten.
[10] Hammerfest is a city in the northern region of Norway. According to the representatives from Hammerfest, there is need for unskilled workers in the municipality (Arbeids -og Inkluderingsdepartements, 2009)

3.5 Summary

Somali was an oral culture that became literate after the introduction of the Latin alphabet by the military regime. Arabic is used for religious purposes and the Somali language is now a lingua franca. Somalia embarked on an enormous literacy programme to spread written Somali to all parts of the country. Somalis make up one of the largest immigrant groups in Norway.

4. Migration concepts and practices

One of the effects of globalization is increased migration. Due to the various means of transportation that are now available, people can travel to other countries within a short period of time. People move away from their home countries for personal, economic and social reasons; some seek a better life, while others are forced to move because of war or oppression in their home countries. To cope with the rising number of immigrants, the receiving countries have started to invest in issues concerning migration and integration, both on an international and national scale. The method of tackling problems related to migration was a topic at the International Conference in Bonn in November 2007. At the conference, the participating countries shared their experience and knowledge with each other (Duke and Hinzen, 2007).

Studies in the field of migration have provided explanations for the psychological and sociological implications of the migration process on the individual/group before and after migration. The process of migration is identical for all immigrants, irrespective of the reason for migrating (Sluzki, 1979; Berry, 1997; Knoll and Hinzen, 2007). For some, especially refugees, feelings of confusion may arise as a result of the unplanned move to the destination country. Others may benefit from pre-migration conditions, particularly personal and social factors such as age and language ability (Hayfron, 2001; Chiswick and Miller, 2001), education and globalization (Van Turbergen and Kilmijn 2009). In addition, immigrants' language skills are affected by contextual factors existing in the destination society. This includes the nature of policies directed at immigrants.

4.1 Acculturation

According to Redfield, Linton and Herskovits (1936: 149), cited in Berry (1997) 'acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups.' Though other terms such as *assimilation*, *bicultural* and *interculturation* have been used instead of acculturation, Berry (1997) has clearly distinguished it as 'the general processes and outcomes (both cultural and psychological) of intercultural contact.'

In regard to the learning of languages, Schumann (1986) defines acculturation as the 'social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language (TL) group.' He further categorizes acculturation into two types:

> In type one acculturation, the learner is socially integrated with the TL group and, as a result, develops sufficient contacts with TL speakers to enable him to acquire TL. In addition he is psychologically open to the TL such that input to which he is exposed becomes intake. Type two acculturation has all the characteristics of type one, but in this case the learner regards the TL speakers as a reference group whose life style and values he consciously or unconsciously desires to adopt.
>
> Schumann (1986)

However, he adds that both types of acculturation are influential in SLA (Second Language Acquisition) of the TL. The immigrants in this study are involved in the second language learning of Norwegian, which is the target language.

Acculturation is a change in the *behaviour* and *attitudes* of the individuals or groups who are affected by this process. Their behaviour and attitude is determined by their desire to assimilate themselves within the receiving country. People involved in acculturation can be driven by '*cultural maintenance* and *contact participation'*, which are associated with several acculturation strategies, namely: *assimilation, integration, marginalization* and *separation* Berry (1997). The scope of this study is restricted to integration strategy because it is the goal of many countries affected by migration.

4.2 Integration

The integration process is brought on by migration and vice versa (Knoll and Hinzen 2007). Integration is practiced when one's cultural particularity is maintained while simultaneously participating in the larger society as a whole. A '*mutual accommodation'* by both parties concerned is required for its success. This principle simply means that both parties (immigrants and the receiving countries) must be open to the possibility of change. What is more is that the destination country's *history* will indicate whether there is an open attitude towards issues concerning immigration and *'pluralism'*; some countries are built on migration, some support migration policies, while others are against migration. According to Murphy (1965)

> societies supportive of cultural pluralism (that is, with a positive multicultural ideology) provide a more positive settlement context for two reasons: they are likely to enforce social

> change (assimilation) or exclusion (segregation or marginalisation) on immigrants: and they are more likely to provide social support both from institutions of the larger society (e.g. culturally sensitive health care, and multicultural curricula in schools), and from the continuing and evolving ethno cultural communities that usually make up pluralistic societies
>
> (Murphy 1965, cited in Berry 1997)

One way to promote integration in the receiving country is by providing immigrants with language training programs, which encourage equal participation in the society. This objective has been the goal of countries that have experienced a surge in immigration. Knoll and Hinzen (2007) cite the assimilation and integration experiences of USA and Canada. Canada opted for an integration policy that allowed immigrants to retain their language, culture and religion, which explains the use of both English and French as national languages. The USA, on the other hand, adopted an assimilation policy with the goal of encouraging immigrants to adapt to the language and cultural norms of the receiving society. Similarly, on the home front, both Norway and Sweden have integration policies, but the Norwegian policy is said to have some elements of assimilation, whereas Swedish policy is completely integrationist because of its liberal attitude to other cultures (Westin 1999 cited in Vitra, Sam and Westin 2004). Although full participation of all members of the society has been the aim of most countries affected by migration, certain developments imply that it has failed. Knoll and Hinzen (2007) point out that the language assimilation policy implemented in the USA has not been completely successful because of the significant presence of Latino speakers in California and Florida. Furthermore, the situation in France has shown that 'linguistic integration will not lead to peaceful integration'.

4.3 Norway

According to Murphy's suggestion Norway is supportive of cultural pluralism because it has commenced programs directed at immigrants and has adjusted policies to accommodate its vision of a plural society. For example, the Norwegian Introduction Act of 2004 focused on the rights of new immigrants to participate in introduction programmes. In 2005, the right and obligation to attend 250 hours of Norwegian language training and 50 hours of social studies was included in the Introduction Act (Arbeids- og Inkluderingsdepartementet, 2009).

Immigrants between the ages of 16 and 55 are obliged to attend Norwegian language classes. A residents or work permit is required by those who attend these classes. The type of permit granted determines the language training offered; some immigrants are expected to pay tuition fees whilst for others it is free. This section will focus on language training programs for asylum seekers and refugees.

From September 2007, it was possible for asylum seekers at the reception camps to receive 250 hours of language training. In 2009, this offer excluded asylum seekers who fall under the Dublin convention[11]. Asylum seekers who are granted permission to stay in Norway are then relocated to a municipality. Here, they are enrolled under the introduction program scheme, a scheme that applies only to refugees and their newly arrived family members. This program includes language courses and professional training that qualifies them for a monthly income. Nevertheless, this economic incentive entails two-year full-time participation in the language program. Hagelund (2005) points out that 'the economic structure is designed to encourage participation, and illustrates clearly that immigrants have both rights *and* obligations'. The purpose is to expose refugees to both language training and work training. According to NAV, cited in iFACTS (2009) 'the introduction programme is aimed at providing basic skills in Norwegian, a basic insight into Norwegian society, and preparing participants for participation in the labour force.' In addition, it enables participants to learn new words in real contextual environments, unlike the artificial setting of the classroom.

The program is designed to fit learners' pre-migration backgrounds and educational qualifications. The Norwegian language training program is divided into three levels: *level 1* for learners without education in their home country, *level 2* for learners with some education and who are familiar with writing and *level 3* for learners who have already obtained a higher educational qualification in their home country. Students attending the language program are tested to assess their language skills. Norskprøve 1, 2 and 3 is used to test both written and spoken skills. Norskprøve 2 and 3 is required for students who want to further their education at the elementary or secondary school level or to acquire vocational competence.

[11] The Dublin convention means that 'a person seeking protection cannot decide which country is to process his\her application. Processing an application for protection is the responsibility of the first safe country that the asylum seeker comes to[…] http://www.udi.no/Norwegian-Directorate-of-Immigration/Central-topics/Protection/Asylum-seekers-and-refugees/Cooperation-under-the-Dublin-Convention/

4.4 Factors that influence language learning in the destination country

This section deals with results from previous studies looking at the factors that influence destination country language skills, and the benefits that accrue from literacy in the immigrant's new country. Scholars have divided these factors into different categories, such as: pre-migration and post migration factors (Espenshade and Fu 1997); factors prior to acculturation and after acculturation (Berry 1997), LANG equation, an equation for exposure, efficiency, economic incentives, wealth (Chiswick and Miller 2001) and independent, dependent and contextual factors (van-Turbergen and Kalmijn 2009). This section will give a brief introduction of the aforementioned studies. However, this study will focus primarily on the following individual factors: language, gender, motivation, age at migration, level of education and reason for migrating.

About the studies in this section

The following studies have been chosen because they are related and relevant to the present study. van-Turbergen and Kalmijn (2009) used US census data to study the language skills of immigrants 20 years after they migrated. By collecting data from three census periods, they were able to monitor the language skills of immigrants upon arrival and over time in the destination country. They argue that immigrant language skills may be classified into two categories: *entry level* and *language acquisition*. Buttaro (2004) studied the adjustment of adult Hispanic females who were learning English and living in America. She studied their adjustments in three areas: educational, cultural and linguistic. Hayfron's (2001) study examined the influence of language proficiency on the income of Third World immigrant men in Norway. In addition, it studied the group to find out how they have acquired language skills. Chiswick and Miller (2001) examined the language proficiency of male immigrants in Canada. They developed a model of destination language acquisition based on the economic theory of human capital that views language as an investment. They also investigated how the country of origin influences language proficiency in the host country. Espenshade and Fu (1997) studied the ways in which non-native speakers acquire language proficiency in a target language. It was proficiency in the English language that was studied.

4.4.1 Language

It is generally agreed by scholars that language is an important asset for immigrants, because it can increase their earnings while decreasing the cost incurred by employers who have immigrant workers[12]. Although Norwegian language skills did not influence the earnings of the group studied by Hayfron (2001), it was shown to be the reason they got employed in the first place. But how do immigrants acquire destination country language skills?

van-Turbergen and Kalmijn (2009) have distinguished between the language skills of immigrants; when immigrants arrive, they have *entry level* skills and after a continued stay in the destination country they have *language acquisition*. Immigrants have their native language, though they may be expected to speak an international language when they arrive. Even so, the language(s) they speak often depends on their exposure to the language(s) in question. Therefore, it is common for immigrants from former British and French colonies to speak French and English (Chiswick and Miller 200I). The language skills of immigrants are known to improve after a considerable length of stay in the destination country. van-Turbergen and Kalmijn (2009) found that language proficiency started developing within the first two years of the immigrant's arrival, and increased over time. However, it was found that immigrants' reading proficiency was significantly influenced by the length of stay in the destination country (Hayfron 2001).

There are also other underlying reasons within the language factor that are known to contribute to or impede immigrants' language skills. Language training is a factor that positively influences language learning. The results of the Hayfron study (2001) showed that among the other variables tested (having a Norwegian partner, age at time of migration and fluency in English), language training was one of the most important factors. Interestingly, Chiswick and Miller (2001) suggest that it is most likely for immigrants to make profitable investments earlier than language investments when both are not tied together. That is to say, job investment will be chosen instead of language investment when the two are not interdependent.

Another contributory factor is when immigrants share the same linguistic history or language with the receiving country. This factor is documented in Hayfron's (1997) study, which found that immigrants with a knowledge of the English language developed better

[12] What is meant here is the cost that could arise from the use of translators.

writing and speaking proficiency in Norwegian. This is because both languages belong to the same Germanic language family. One the other hand, immigrants who spoke Urdu or Spanish had minimal proficiency in Norwegian. Similarly, in van-Turbergen and Kalmijn's (2009) study, immigrants speaking a language similar to the English language showed improvement in language proficiency in the target language, but not at the entry level. But, over the years, the German immigrants developed better English language skills than the Chinese and Mexican immigrants. Oddly enough, the result in Espenshade and Fu (1997) indicated that Arabic-speaking immigrants had higher English proficiency than immigrants with English as a lingua franca in the home countries.

When immigrants have already been exposed to the destination language before migrating, investment in language skills is not required. However, after migration, language skills are acquired from exposure. For example, globalization, according to van-Turbergen and Kalmijn (2009) is the reason why English language skills are acquired before migration. After migration, participation in the society (in the job sector) increases language proficiency. Immigrants who worked in the home were not proficient in English and, in addition, the type of occupation influenced the language skills of immigrants who worked outside the home (Espenshade and Fu 1997). Language exposure is affected by the duration of stay in the destination country (Hayfron, 2001; van-Turbergen and Kalmijn, 2009; Chiswick and Miller, 2001).

The localization of groups of immigrants from the same country in one area impedes destination country language learning because there is limited or no contact with native speakers. Schumann (1986) refers to this process as enclosure. According to van-Turbergen and Kalmijn (2009), when enclosure occurs there is less exposure to the target language and no motivation to learn the language. Though enclosure may provide ethnic support, it can also be an obstacle in the integration process. For instance, in Marger (2006), language skills in the English language were a significant factor that influenced social integration and language learning, not the ethnic support provided by enclosure.

4.4.2 Gender

According to Eckert and McConnell – Ginet (1992: 484), cited in Menhard –Warwick (2009), 'gender is constructed in an array of social practices within communities, practices that in many cases connect to personal attributes and to power relations but that do so in varied, subtle, and changing ways'. The social norms in various cultures ascribe different roles to

gender. In the migration process, the discrepancy between gender roles becomes apparent and may prompt conflicting demands. Morokvasic (1983) pointed out that earlier literatures on immigrant women in the '60s and '70s portrayed them as 'dependants, migrants' wives or mothers, unproductive, illiterate, isolated, secluded from the outside world and bearers of many children' (cited in Martin – Jones 2000: 150). This previous notion of immigrant women indicated that the receiving societies had other expectations of them.

Because of the disparities that can exist between the cultures of the origin and receiving countries, the migration process often leads to a transformation or a development of new identities for those affected by it (Menhard – Warwick 2009; Martin –Jones 2000). An example of this is reported in the Martin-Jones (2000:149) study of Gujarati women in Leicester. The study revealed that these women, prior to migrating, were faced with problems relating to the cultural expectations associated with gender in choosing career pathways. Firouzaben, one of the women in the study, found out that 'women and girls were confined to the home', 'girls were expected to focus on acquiring good housekeeping skills' and shelling peas was considered to be better than reading. The other woman, Shobhanaben, recalled her grandmother saying that a musical career was not proper for girls. She was granted the opportunity to attend secondary school after the village elders had deliberated on the issue, in spite of her grandmother's fears of it ruining her marriage prospects. In the UK, they took on new identities and became enterprising women. Firouzaben found a job in the local community college, and is now the founder of a Gujarati women's group in Leicester. Shobhanaben became a head teacher in a Gujarati school and produces bilingual material for use in teaching. It is important to mention that these women did not abandon Gujarati cultural traditions but shaped their lives to accommodate both cultures.

In relation to language, and according to van-Tubergen and Kalmijn (2009), earlier studies have shown that the majority of immigrant women are 'double disadvantaged' in the migration context. Women normally enter the destination country based on family reunification, unlike the men, who emigrate for economic reasons, and who may therefore have invested in acquiring the target language before migrating. This is why men are more prepared for the process, often arriving with better language skills, and therefore able to learn the language quicker than the women. They do acknowledge, however, that there may be a group variation of this language experience. The result of their census study is in accordance with previous studies since it showed gender differences in entry level English language

abilities. Men had some entry level skill upon arrival and, over time, acquired the language better than women.

4.4.3 Motivation

Motivation is the incentive or reason for doing something (www.wiktionary.org). It is believed that immigrants have two motivational attitudes: *reactive* (motivated by negative factors) and *proactive* (motivated by positive factors) (Richmond (1993) cited, in Berry (1997)). For example, the women in Martin- Jones (2000: 149) study were proactively motivated; they were not restricted or inhibited by the move to Leicester, but instead enrolled in educational training programs in the receiving country, which later enabled them to qualify for work.

With respect to second language acquisition (SLA), Gardner and Lambert (1972), cited in Schumann (1986) categorize motivation in second language learning into two categories: *integrative* and *instrumental motivation*.

> An integratively-oriented learner wants to learn the second language in order to meet with, talk to, find out about and, perhaps, become like speakers of the target language whom he both values and admires. An instrumentally-oriented learner is one who has little interest in the people who speak the target language, but wants to learn the language for more utilitarian reasons, such as getting ahead and in his occupation or gaining recognition from his own membership group.
>
> Gardner and Lambert, 1972 cited in Schumann (1986)

The instrumental function of SLA on employment can be seen in Hayfron's study (2001), which showed that Third world immigrant men required Norwegian language skills to get jobs. In the same vein, the participants in Buttaro's (2004) study observed that learning English increased their chance of getting a better job or job training, something that influenced their decision to participate in the language training program. Moreover, the participants also showed that they had integrative motives by reporting that the time spent with 'Americans helped them understand culture and English language.'

It has been suggested that immigrants who own homes, have relatives or are naturalized citizens in the destination country will be motivated to invest more in language acquisition (Espenshade and Fu 1997).

4.4.4 Age at migration

In the early stages of life, the acculturation process is, as a rule, less complicated, whereas it is the opposite when it happens later in life. The reason for this is that cultural norms, when learnt at an early age, are not sufficient to pose a problem in acculturation due to minimal *shedding* of the culture of the origin country. At an older age, acculturation is likely to be risky owing to the developed patterns in the way of life of the origin country that requires shedding in the destination country (Berry 1997).

Age at the time of migration is also a significant factor in destination language acquisition. For example, the speaking proficiency of individuals who emigrated at the age of ten or less was better than those who were twenty and above (Espenshade and Fu 1997; van-Turbergen and Kilmijn 2009). Nevertheless, age at the time of migration does not influence writing skills because it is a complex process dissimilar from speaking skills, which are dependent on exposure in the target language (Hayfron 2001).

4.4.5 Level of education

According to Berry (1997) education is a *personal resource* that helps individuals in assessing and solving problems. It is linked with other resources (income, occupational status and the support network) and it provides exposure to the language and practices of the receiving society. Upon arrival in the receiving country, more highly educated immigrants have better language skills than those who arrive with low or without educational qualifications. But education acquired in the destination country contributes greatly to language proficiency in the destination country (Espenshade and Fu 1997).

4.4.6 Reason for migrating

Migrant status can influence patterns in the language acquisition of the receiving society. According to Chiswick and Miller (2001), economic immigrants are better learners in destination language acquisition than refugees and free movers, because for them the migration process is planned. Their findings suggest ‘refugees to be less likely than economic immigrants to speak one of the official languages’, which is attributed to ‘less favourable selectivity, less planning for the move, or a lesser commitment to the destination (efficiency

effects)' . However, the distinction between voluntary and involuntary immigrants is subject to change when the length of stay in the destination country is taken into consideration. Immigrants from *politically suppressed* countries had poor language skill at entry level, but with time, they too showed the same language acquisition skills (van-Turbergen and Kalmijn 2009).

4.5 Summary

Acculturation and Integration are issues that concern both the immigrants and their host countries and these issues are tackled in various ways. The immigrants may opt for an attitude that will preserve their own culture, or fully partake in the culture of the host country. The host country will respond to immigration by modifying some of its policies and institutions to suit newcomers. In order to encourage equal participation, the host country offers language-training programmes to immigrants.

All the studies mentioned in this section were chosen due to their relevance to the present study. Except for Berry's (1997), all the studies mentioned deal with language acquisition in the destination country.

5. Methods

In order to achieve an informative and holistic perspective, a qualitative approach was chosen because of its explorative and open-ended nature. An explorative study is one in which 'not much has been written about the topic or population to be studied, and the researcher seeks to listen to participants and build an understanding based on their ideas' (Creswell 2003:30).

This study is centred upon three interconnected research questions, examining the following topics:

1. The perceptions of a group of Somali women concerning factors that influence literacy acquisition in Norwegian;
2. The Norwegian literacy events experienced by these women;
3. The acculturation experiences of these women.

The Somali population group was chosen because the Somali language was written down for the first time in 1971, meaning that literacy is a relatively new concept for the majority of the Somali population. It is also a language that uses Latin orthography.[13] Another reason for choosing this immigrant group is that there are significant differences between the Somali and Norwegian cultures. Somalis also represent one of the largest immigrant groups in Norway, and their position in the media as a '*difficult group to integrate*'[14] makes them an interesting and important group to study.

The decision to study women and not men was made because of my assumption that women would be more approachable, due to my own female identity. As previously mentioned, I am an immigrant in Norway; this implies that I, in the same way as the women in this study, have also been involved in the acquisition of Norwegian literacy during my first years in Norway. For this reason, I was aware of the possibility that my understanding and/or interpretation of the data collected might be biased. However, I have remained neutral in my interpretation of my findings by using a Norwegian *peer debriefer*[15] to review the study.

[13] The Norwegian language uses the same writing system.
[14] Arbeids -og Inkluderingsdepartmentet (2009)
[15] 'A person who reviews and ask questions about the qualitative study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher' (Creswell 2003: 196).

5.1 The informants

The participants involved in this study consisted of seven Somali women in the age range of 22 to 32. Three came to Norway as minor asylum seekers and two came to reunite with their husbands[16]. Due to the number of women involved, it will be most practical to refer to them as 1, 2, 3 and so on, instead of giving them fictive names.

Woman 1 was contacted through the language training centre. She has lived in Norway for a year and half. She speaks Arabic and Somali. She came to Norway to reunite with her husband. She does not have any children. She lived in (withheld) for four years before moving to Norway. She is part of the introduction programme and spends three days a week at work practice and attends the language training courses five times a week. She has taken Norwegian Tests 1 and 2.

Woman 2 was also contacted at the language training centre. She has lived in Norway for eight years. She speaks Arabic and English. She does not have children. She is divorced. She previously worked as a foster mum. She lived in a small commune before finally moving to Oslo. She took part in the introduction programme. Under this programme, she worked at an old people's home and in a kindergarten.

Woman 3 was contacted at an underground station. She has lived in Norway for five years. She speaks Arabic and Somali. She reads and writes Arabic because she attended an Arabic school. She cannot write Somali but can speak it. She is divorced and has three children. She has never taken part in the introduction programme due to a number of personal reasons, such as becoming pregnant and having to take full responsibility for childcare as a single mum.

Woman 4 was contacted at the test centre for immigrants who wish to study in Norway. She has been residing in Norway for ten years. She arrived as a minor asylum seeker before the introduction programme scheme had been established. She speaks English, Somali, Norwegian and a little Arabic (she attributes her knowledge of Arabic to the Koran, and can read and write it but cannot speak it). She lived for a while in (witheld) before moving to Norway. She stayed in the refugee camp for a period of time before she moved to Oslo to stay with her aunt. She worked in a kindergarten for two years. She participated in two programmes organised by NAV aimed at helping jobseekers find work. She is married and has two children.

[16] It is unknown how the remaining two came to Norway.

Woman 5 was approached in a shopping mall. She has lived in Norway for four and a half years. She came as a minor refugee. She used to live in a small commune of 10,000 people before moving to Oslo recently. She speaks Somali, English and Norwegian. She learnt English in a private school in Somalia. She has received formal education in Norwegian.

Woman 6 was contacted at the test centre. She has been residing in Norway for seven years. She speaks English, Somali and Norwegian. She lived for a period in (withheld) before relocating to Norway. She stayed in a refugee camp in another city when she came to Norway. She attended primary school in (withheld). She moved to Oslo three years ago, and since then has had three jobs and participated in a course arranged by NAV for job seekers hoping to work in customer services.

Woman 7 was contacted at the language training centre. She has lived in Norway for four years. She moved to Oslo last year. She speaks Somali, English, Italian and Arabic. She worked as a cleaner during the summer. She said that she was attending the language programme because it was suggested to her by NAV.

5.2 Method of collecting data

The data for the study was collected between May and July. Data collection consisted of face-to-face interviews that lasted from 32 to 70 minutes. The interviews were audio taped and later transcribed. The interviews were conducted in two locations: the language training centres where the informants attended classes, and in coffee shops in the city. I started the interviews by introducing myself and explaining my occupation as a student, before informing the women about the topics that I wanted to discuss. Those who participated were assured that the information they provided would be presented anonymously.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007: 103) in a qualitative study an 'interview is used to gather descriptive data in the subjects' own words so that the researcher can develop insights on how subjects interpret some pieces of the world.' An interview guide was used during most of the interviews. Although the questions later changed in order to focus directly on the research questions, the main structure was not affected. There were two different styles of interview questions used in this study. The interviews began with direct questions, intended to find out more about the background of the informants. This style gradually changed and became more open, allowing for a relatively unstructured style that focused on the research

questions. These unstructured questions made it possible to probe the respondents, based on the answers they provided on topics or issues that were of interest to the study.

The interview guide was not used in all of the interviews. This was because, by the time the question was reached, some of the women had already responded to this issue through other discussions earlier in the interview process. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007: 105), this irregularity reflects the flexible nature of interviews. On the interview guide, the following questions were used to find out more about the literacy events of the informants:

- What did you do to help yourself learn to read, write and speak Norwegian?
- Where and when does the need to write Norwegian arise?
- Where and when does the need to read Norwegian arise?

The following questions were used to find out about the informants' opinions on the various factors influencing literacy skills in Norwegian. Because some of the informants were currently taking part in the introduction programme, or knew people who had participated, the following questions were asked:

- Can you please describe the importance of language training and work training when learning Norwegian?
- Tell me – is having a job influential when acquiring Norwegian skills?

The question about language training was used because it was an important factor for the group that was involved in Hayfron's study[17]. In the same study, having a Norwegian partner was used as a variable, to ascertain whether it influenced literacy acquisition in Norwegian. As a result of this, the following question was asked:

- Is having a Norwegian partner important when acquiring Norwegian skills?

Finally, in order to find out what the informants considered to be the most effective method of acquiring Norwegian literacy, and to assess their acculturation experiences, the following questions were asked:

- To you, what is the most important factor influencing the acquisition of Norwegian literacy skills?

[17] Hayfron studied the influence of Norwegian language proficiency on the income of third world immigrant men.

- Is it easier to learn the Norwegian language if you speak Somali?[18]
- What is it like being a Somali in Norway?
- How is the Norwegian culture different from the Somali culture?

As stated earlier, the interviews did not always follow this sequence exactly. When conducting the interviews, two techniques (probe and cumulative) were used to encourage informants to elaborate on their answers. The following is an example of the way in which the probing technique was used: when an informant replied "I used Norwegian to fill in forms", this led to another question: what kind of forms were they and where did you fill them in? The cumulative method was used when a piece of information gathered during one interview was used as a point of reference when interviewing another respondent.

5.3 Research problems

Several research problems were encountered when collecting the data for this study. The most critical of these problems was, unsurprisingly, the language barrier. However, before interviewing the informants, a small test was performed to check whether they understood the questions. In spite of this approach, it became evident that this was not an effective way to check the level of comprehension, and as the interview progressed, it became clear that one respondent did not fully understand the questions she was being asked. This was during an interview that lasted for 11 minutes. It is for this reason that I have chosen to exclude the responses of one informant. This means that the findings of this study will be based on the responses of six informants.

It was necessary for two languages to be used during the interview process. Interviews were carried out in either Norwegian or English, and in two of the interviews a combination of both languages was used. The language was simplified when it became necessary to ensure that the informants clearly understood the questions. The language problem would have been averted with the use of a Somali translator, but the possible influence of the translator on the respondents' answers made this an unfavourable option. Despite the language problems that were faced, it is important to mention that this issue did not affect the results of the interview, due to my use of the member-checking strategy (see footnote).[19]

[18] I used a list containing the Norwegian and Somali alphabets to probe around this question (see appendix).
[19] 'Member-checking is used to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final report or specific description or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel they are accurate' (Creswell 2003:196)

The other problem that was observed during the interview process was the attitude of reluctance in some of the women who were approached for the study. Some women expressed an unwillingness to participate because they thought that I was a NAV official or a journalist. However, it was observed that this trend was predominant among the older women who were contacted for the study, who perhaps had more complicated reasons for their suspicion. Nevertheless, a number of the women who were contacted showed an eagerness to participate, even though only seven of them stayed until the end of the interview.

The aim of the study was to interview women from other areas of society, alongside those who were attending the language courses, in other to obtain a broader perspective. But as it turned out, the women who were contacted outside the language course had were taking part in the same course or another course. It is important to understand that the limited range of women interviewed may have influenced the reliability of this study.

5.4 Validity of the Research

In order to ensure the accuracy of this study, primary and secondary data relating to information about the group, as well as literature sources relating to the field of study, have been used to validate the findings. In addition, the findings in this study which either correspond with or deviate from previous findings in this field will be taken into account.

The member-checking strategy was used to verify the accuracy of the findings. The strategy was used in the following way: some interview questions were repeated as a means of checking that the informants had understood the questions. The answers that had been provided by informants were also repeated to ensure that it was their intended response. The strategy was used while the interview progressed, especially when there was need for clarity. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007: 104), this method is a way of asking for clarity from the informants. The possibility must also be taken into account that the informants' answers may have been misinterpreted or misunderstood by me.

6. Findings

The first research question in this paper focuses on the Norwegian literacy events encountered by the informants. It provides a description of the purposes and applications of reading and/or writing skills. Due to the fact that the informants are adult refugees, their literacy needs in the society into which they are resettling must be analysed, in order to understand the difference between the literacy levels and requirements in their home country, and the level that is required in Norway. It is hoped that this analysis will contribute to the knowledge that is required by adult educators who specialise in teaching second language skills. It will also produce information and data that will provide assistance in identifying the connection between literacy needs and literacy events, which would be highly beneficial when planning programmes aimed at resettling migrants. In addition, the results of this survey will offer detailed descriptions of the literacy events experienced by the informants, both in and outside the home.

6.1 Research question one: Describe the Norwegian literacy events of Somali women

6.1.1 Reading Activity

The informants involved in this study reported that they could and did read Norwegian, although there were significant differences in what they read and why they read. Reading newspapers was one literacy event that occurred frequently among a number of the participants. These participants regularly read national and local newspapers, in both printed and online editions. One woman answered,

> "I read Aftenposten newspaper, just sections that I find interesting [...] I spend three hours on the internet daily […] and I read V.G and Klartale newspapers."

However, it was clear that the choice of newspaper was, inevitably, determined by individual reading abilities. This is seen in the response of one woman, who pointed out the variety of language levels among the various newspapers, citing this as a decisive factor:

> "I read Klartale on the internet because the language is easier".

The women questioned said that they read Norwegian texts that they encountered in various different contexts. Their reading included the reading of Norwegian subtitles on

television, and the reading of commercial advertisements outside the home. The women also indicated that they had specific reasons for reading, such as gathering information about the public transport system, and other personal motives. According to one woman,

> "When I come across things pasted on the wall I read them. I read everything pasted out of curiosity. I find job announcements interesting because I would love to work when my daughter is older."

One woman with children reported that she read to her children in Norwegian using picture books that she borrowed from the library.

6.1.2 Writing Activity

The informants reported that they wrote Norwegian in various different settings: at home, during language training courses and at work. One woman said that the only time she would write Norwegian at home was when she had been given a home assignment in her language training class. Another woman said that she writes her shopping list in Norwegian, because all of the food labels in the supermarkets are written in Norwegian. There were also reports of Norwegian being written in the work place. According to one woman,

> "I send e-mails to my colleagues at work when I don't have the opportunity to talk to them in person."

Another woman said that at her former place of work, she had written things in Norwegian when she had been required to take orders from suppliers.

Many of the women said that they would write their job application letters in Norwegian, but that they needed assistance with the writing, because their Norwegian was not yet good enough. One woman with children said that she often wrote to the employees at the day-care centre that her children attended, in order to complain about something or to inform the centre about an issue concerning her children.

6.1.3 Reading and Writing

This study showed that there were similarities in the ways in which the women combined both reading and writing skills for their own learning purposes. Many of the women said that they

would use both conventional and online dictionaries to look up unfamiliar words when reading and writing. The informants reported using the following bilingual dictionaries: Somali/Norwegian, Arabic/Norwegian and English/Norwegian. One woman explained how much the writing process was slowed down when using a dictionary:

> "When I write […] I use the dictionary and it takes up to an hour to produce a very short text."

The women indicated that they were learning on their own in order to improve and expand their Norwegian vocabulary. Many women used a notebook in which they would collect new words that they came across when reading.

There were a number of occasions where the informants said that they used both their reading and writing skills in their daily lives, in order to achieve various goals. Examples of these processes included applying for bank loans, applying for Norwegian citizenship, renting apartments and booking appointments with the dentist or doctor.

Those informants with children reported that they were required to read and write Norwegian when filling in forms to secure a place at the kindergarten for their children, or in circumstances when their children required special support. According to one woman,

> "Because I have a sick daughter, I have to read and fill forms in order for her to get the help she is entitled to."

6.1.4 Literacy events in other languages

Although the focus of this study is on Norwegian literacy events, it is important to mention that the study revealed that the women also engaged in literacy events in other languages. For example, one woman said that in addition to Norwegian newspapers, she also read Arabic and Somali newspapers on the internet. All of the informants said that they communicated in Somali with Somali friends and relatives, and Arabic when communicating with friends who are literate in Arabic. English and Norwegian were both used by the women to communicate with friends who could not speak either Somali or Arabic. Interestingly, the study also revealed that although some of the women could speak and read Somali, only very few could write it.

6.1.5 Purpose of Learning Norwegian

The women in this study were asked to specify their reasons for learning Norwegian. One woman explicitly related the development of her language skills to the context of living in Norway. She said,

> "As long as I live in Norway, I need Norwegian skills. It is important to be able to read and write Norwegian if you live here. When you go to the shop, to the doctor […] these are places where it is important to have Norwegian skills."

Another woman similarly summarised her reasons by saying that she felt she needed to acquire Norwegian literacy in order to be able to work and to become a part of the Norwegian society. A number of the women interviewed said that they were learning Norwegian because they did not want to rely on the help of translators when there was a need to communicate in Norwegian. One woman explained the satisfaction and confidence that resulted from being able to communicate in Norwegian. She used a specific example to illustrate this sense of achievement:

> "I speak to my legal officer without using a translator. I feel so proud of myself when they ask me if I want a translator and I say no."

A number of the informants said that they were learning Norwegian in order to be able to enter into further education in Norway. All of these women indicated that their goal was to become qualified as a professional within the healthcare sector, either as nurses, nursing assistants or bioengineers. Those informants with children said that their primary motive for learning Norwegian was connected to their children's future in Norway. One woman said:

> "I am learning Norwegian because I live here. I have kids who will grow up here. It is therefore important to understand them. At school meetings, I want my children to be proud of their mum […] that she understands what the teacher says."

6.1.6 Other ways of acquiring the language

The findings of this study showed that many women made use of the social networks and services available in their local community as a way of acquiring and improving their Norwegian skills. One woman said that her Norwegian acquaintances would tell her when she said something incorrectly. There was also one report of help being received from people within the ethnic network; this woman said,

> "I have good friends (not Norwegians) but Somalis who are brought up here or came here as children. My Somali friends have helped me learn Norwegian. They correct my speech and grammatical errors. I write down difficult letters and they teach me how to pronounce them."

Another woman explained how she had continued to acquire language skills after she had stopped attending the language training course:

> "I am a stay at home mum. I started the language class in 2006 and I later stopped because I had a baby. I attended the open day-care where I learnt Norwegian from speaking to other mums. They also offered Norwegian classes every Tuesday there."

One informant indicated that she had learnt Norwegian by herself. She would write short texts in Norwegian, which she would then give to someone who worked at the refugee camp to correct.

6.1.7 Interpretation of data

The ways in which the informants in this study utilise reading and writing skills in Norway is influenced by the significant changes taking place in their lives. Before arriving in Norway, these women may have heard of the country but never really had the chance to learn or use the Norwegian language. While in Norway, they will frequently find themselves in situations where Norwegian literacy skills are required to interact and participate in different spheres of the society. The complexities of their situation are captured in Venezky's (1990:10) statement that literacy requirements vary according to 'different regions, different social strata and different involvement in the society'.

Given the migrant status of these women, their definition of literacy in Norwegian society includes Norwegian literacy skills, as well as literacy in their mother tongue. However, the responses of the informants indicated a strong awareness that Norwegian

literacy is necessary in Norway because it is required to procure jobs, to be allowed to study and for overall affiliation within the society. The women's responses accorded with previous studies on immigrant language skills (Chiswick and Miller 2001, Hayfron 2001). The current situation in Norway has influenced the way the informants now define their own literacy; whereas previously, literacy was related to Somali, Arabic or English, their change in location means that to be classified as literate, they must also add Norwegian to this list.

Due to the high concentration of immigrants in Oslo, there are many inhabitants who do not speak Norwegian as a first language. This implies that every immigrant is either bilingual or multilingual, depending on the individual background. As cited, the *principle of language rights* (see 2.3) permits the women in this study to use Somali in the Norwegian context. Nevertheless, literacy in Norwegian is of great importance for these women because it leads to increased social participation and contributes to their inclusion within the society.

This study found that the languages spoken by the informants had various functions. For instance, the languages in this study were used in different situations and settings: at home (Somali), for religious purposes (Arabic) and in communication with ethnic Somali speakers (Somali). Norwegian is only used to communicate with Norwegian speakers and in those areas in which it is deemed essential in the society (Verhoeven 1994). As one woman said, *"I speak Somali at home. There is no one to speak Norwegian with at home. I speak Norwegian with my Norwegian acquaintances, who are neighbours."*

The women participating in this study have lived in Norway for between two and ten years. As a result of this limited duration, it was not expected that any of them had yet achieved native speaker language competence. An important factor in this is the fact that most of the women said that they did not use Norwegian frequently enough; they would use mostly Somali at home, and Arabic with friends of other nationalities who were literate in the language. One woman said that the only time she had spoken or written Norwegian was at the language training course. In contrast to this, one woman with children indicated the regular use of Norwegian at home. She said that she read Norwegian books to her children and spoke *"litt norsk"* (little Norwegian) because of them. For the majority of women in this study, however, Somali and Arabic, and *not* Norwegian, are the dominant languages.

Studies in the field of language acquisition frequently emphasise the importance of exposure to the relevant language. Based on this crucial factor, if increased exposure to

Norwegian, both at home and outside the home environment, is known to influence the acquisition of Norwegian skills, the women in this study would be considered minimally exposed to the target language.[20] Consequently, they may be regarded as illiterate, because their Norwegian skills are not sufficient to pursue personal goals such as studying or working in Norway. Considered in this way, the definitions of literacy and illiteracy would be characterised by the condition of living in Norway, i.e. literate in whose language or illiterate in which language? In the next section, Chall's (1990) classification of adult literacy needs will be divided into three groups: civic, occupational and personal (see 2.4). These categories will be used to describe and analyse the literacy events encountered by the informants' in this study. This approach was chosen due to the fact that this study focuses on adults.

Civic literacy needs

Civic literacy needs are those literacy needs that are required to become a functional citizen in a particular society. These needs include the use of reading and writing skills in people's daily lives for both personal use and interpersonal transactions within different sectors of the society (Chall 1990). This may be understood to imply that there is a widely accepted expectation within these societies that citizens[21] should possess adequate literacy skills to carry out procedures and formalities that concern an individual's civic obligations. As a result of these implicit expectations, the women in this study read Norwegian newspapers, television subtitles and advertisements in order to become part of Norwegian society, Furthermore, when required to transact in other sectors of society, the following needs surfaced: the need to fill in forms at the bank or when renting apartments, written communication when arranging an appointment with the doctor, filling in forms when applying for Norwegian citizenship and the need to write application letters for jobs.

Because of the fact that these women originally belonged to another society, with its own customs, prior to migrating, it is possible that they would have been used to following very different procedures, and may not have been required to have good reading or writing skills to meet their civic literacy needs. One informant's description of the literacy situation in Somalia confirmed the suspected failure of the government's literacy campaign (see 3.3). She

[20] It could be argued that watching TV programmes in the target language is another form of exposure. But what is meant her is the exposure that is gained through interaction.
[21] Surveys have revealed that not all citizens have or are able to use literacy skills

also pointed out the importance of gender when considering the literacy of the Somali population. According to her *"a lot of people speak Somali but very few can write it* […] *most women cannot read and write Somali, but men do"*. For this woman, it is probable that she had once relied on friends and relatives to keep abreast of any news and information that affected her. It is also likely that she may have borrowed money from other sources within her social network which would not have required the procedure of filling in loan forms. In the case of healthcare, it may have been the duty of the health official to fill in appointment forms. If this woman had previously applied these or other means to meet her civic needs, it would be appropriate to say that moving to Norway, a different society in so many ways, significantly increased her literacy needs (Barton 2007). It is therefore not surprising that the response of another of the women also focused upon the fact that living in Norway demands certain literacy skills, in a way that she was probably not used to. According to this woman, "*as long as I live in Norway* […] *it is important to read, speak and write Norwegian"*. Due to their change in location and culture, it is likely that the way these women once fulfilled their civic literacy needs has undergone considerable changes. A possible explanation for this could be that reading and writing skills are pivotal in the Norwegian society, to the extent that one would be unable to perform their civic literacy needs without them.

The findings of the study showed that the informants required literacy skills at various times when transacting within different sectors of society. After migrating to Norway, it is possible that the change in the marital status of one participant from married to divorced required her to perform the civil literacy requirements of filling in forms at the bank and when renting an apartment[22]. It may have been the case that she previously met this literacy need with her husband (i.e. filling in forms together). Another stage of life that is likely to lead to a change in literacy needs is motherhood. The study showed that the civic literacy needs of informants with children varied significantly from those without children. These mothers explained that they had been through various application processes to secure day-care and social benefits for their children. One mother also said that she read to her children and wrote letters to the day-care centre concerning her children's welfare. The literacy needs and events of children are generally related to their school which is why their experiences of civic literacy needs would be limited at this stage. Moreover, because adult lives consist of so many different stages, they will have gained significant experience of literacy needs. In

[22] She was the only one out of all the informants who told of this literacy need.

addition, the literacy events they engage in tend to be carried out for a purpose, either in order to satisfy fundamental requirements or to fulfil their obligations as parents.

In this study, it became evident that the arena in which the literacy events took place influenced the use of reading and writing skills. For instance, the reading of subtitles on television programmes, online newspapers and children's picture books, all took place in the home arena. It is likely that filling in a doctor's appointment form, a rental form or a loan forms occurred outside the home arena. However, there were reports which indicated that the arenas for literacy events often interconnected and overlapped. For example, according to one woman who attended the language training course outside the home, the writing of Norwegian at home was necessary in order to complete the home assignments she was given on the language course. Such an example indicates that literacy events initiated in one context can easily be transferred to another, thereby connecting the two. Although there are no indications in this study that the women were in the habit of transferring their reading events from one arena to another, it is important to remember that the reading of newspapers (physical or online) could take place both at home and outside the home. Due to the fact that the participants of this study speak two or more languages, it is interesting and useful to map out the arenas in which the target language (Norwegian) is used. This helps to provide an understanding of the role and function of the Norwegian language for these women. It is clearly evident that the demand for Norwegian language and literacy increased in their transactions outside the home, apart from for those with children, who reported that they occasionally read Norwegian to them at home. Although these literacy events were carried out in order to fulfill the civic literacy needs of the informants, it is important to note that engaging in these literacy events also provided a means of continuing their learning of the language, and were therefore valuable on two levels.

According to Isrealite et al (1999), the domestic role of Somali women includes childcare. Several reports in this study indicated that gender roles influenced the literacy events of the participants, especially those with children. One woman said that she read and filled in forms in order for her children to be admitted to the day-care centre. Another woman said that she read books to her children, and her Norwegian writing usually centred on issues concerning her children's well being at the day-care centre. There were also examples that were not related to childcare, and one woman said that she wrote her shopping lists in

Norwegian. As indicated above, it is much more likely for adults to encounter real situations in their daily lives that require the use of reading and writing, than it is for children.

Occupational literacy needs

The women participating in this study were faced with a range of literacy needs in the workplace. The summary of the women's work history showed that only two of them had been employed and were currently working in a job that was not part of the work experience offered by the introduction programme scheme. Because only two of the women had full-time jobs, the work experience schemes undertaken by the other women will be considered as jobs, owing to the fact that the literacy needs and literacy events encountered in the work arena are the focus of this section. It is important to mention that the jobs offered by the introduction scheme are a typical example of situated cognition, encouraging learning to take place in real-life settings.

The findings of the survey indicated that there were discrepancies in the ways that reading and writing skills were used by different participants in the workplace. For example, one woman who had previously worked in a hotel kitchen said that she wrote and placed orders to food suppliers in Norwegian. The same woman, who had another job working as a cashier, said that during the summer she exchanged currencies for tourists. Another woman who worked as a chambermaid under the introduction scheme had to read and tick off a list of tasks. One informant who worked in a day-care centre said that she read to the children.

Chall (1990) notes that people's literacy needs vary according to their occupational domain. The occupational literacy needs of the women mentioned above included purchasing more items for the kitchen, exchanging currencies for customers (tourists), keeping hotel rooms clean for guests and providing an effective learning environment for children. While all of the jobs carried out by the women in this study required literacy skills, the degrees of reading and writing that were needed and carried out varied significantly. For example, it is obvious that the woman who took and wrote orders was required to write substantially more than the chambermaid. Although numeracy skills (using numbers i.e. in arithmetic) are not the focus of this study, the literacy needs of the informant who took orders and also worked as a cashier included numeracy skills, which is worth noting.

Another determining factor that can significantly influence the activities, terminologies or expressions (discourses, see 2.3) encountered and practised at the work place is the occupational level. In relation to work activities, occupational practices influence the ways in which literacy skills are used (Barton 2007:76). The job activities experienced by the participants used as examples in this study can be classified as follows: the activity of counting items in the kitchen storage unit and sending order lists to the suppliers would be a typical occupational practice for the woman who worked in the kitchen. Similarly, the most typical and regular activity of the cashier would involve entering numbers in to the till, and either adding or subtracting the numbers. The chambermaid would work with a list of the rooms that need to be cleaned, along with a list of any specific items in the rooms that need to be cleaned; she must tick the items when she has cleaned them, before submitting the list at the end of the day. When analysed, it becomes apparent that all these activities required some knowledge of the language, to a greater or lesser extent, either in order to understand something written, or to produce a written text.

It is common to find that some words or expressions are used more frequently in some occupations than in others; it is therefore possible for employees to benefit from language exposure at the work place. A study by Espenshade and Fu (1997) found a positive relationship between an immigrant's occupation and his or her language skills, but did not specify how exposure was facilitated.

However, when considering the spoken aspect, it is probable that the expressions "that will be 200kr" and "have a nice day" are more likely to be used by cashiers than chambermaids, while the question "Do you need clean towels?" would be used by chambermaids, not cashiers. However, the report in this study indicated that the chambermaid[23] did not in fact use this question or any other question. The description she gave of her work situation explained why: *"at my work training in the hotel, I don't learn Norwegian, I just use my body, and I can't learn Norwegian like that because I am alone the whole day. I can't talk to the floor."* This indicates that only the job needs of some women required them to speak Norwegian and thus provided them with language exposure in the workplace; this was not the case for the chambermaid who had no interaction with guests or co-workers. Although it may have seemed to the chambermaid that no language learning was taking place in her workplace, like all of the other participants in this study, she was still

[23] This job was part of the work training offered by the introduction programme.

being exposed to the language to some extent. What distinguishes the kind of language exposure she encountered from that of other participants is that it took the form of the written word. This exposure would have taken place when she was reading the room list or any other information on the wall. As a result of this limited exposure, she would have started to become familiar with words or phrases used specifically in this arena. It is possible that if this woman had been exposed to the language at home or within her social network, her comment on her work situation may have been different. Because she was only used to speaking or writing Norwegian at her language classes, it is not surprising that the minimal exposure she was faced with at the hotel seemed influential beyond obvious proportions.

Personal literacy needs

Personal literacy needs are required to achieve personal goals or needs (Chall 1990). The needs of the women in this study can be categorised into the following areas: the need to study, the need to work, the need to improve language skills and the need to communicate with children. However, there were examples in this study that inferred that civic and personal literacy needs could overlap, such as when acquiring a bank loan or renting an apartment. Although these things focused upon a transaction in a specific sector, they also involved personal goals – the need to borrow money and to find a place to stay.

The need for further education in Norway was identical for a number of the informants involved in this study. Many of them said that it was for this reason that they had begun and were still (at the time the study was conducted) attending the language course. According to Tusting et al (2003: 22), most adults have specific reason for wanting to learn, and this reason becomes their driving, motivating force when they enter the learning process. Although it was not directly recorded, it is likely that this characteristic applies to the informants in this study, because their need for education was directly linked to their desire to work in the health sector as nurses, nursing assistants and bio-engineers (all of the women interviewed said they wanted a job in this field). One woman said "*I want to be a nurse. I want to help people* [...] *I want to earn money"*, a statement that clearly signals that she is driven by individual goals. It is also possible that her change of situation and the fact that she now resides in Norway was partly responsible for the direction that her ambitions had taken. Another woman said, *"I think it will be easier to get a job after my education. I cannot go to the university, but I am thinking of taking a certificate as a nurse assistant or children and youth worker".* It could be

that moving to Norway has also shaped this woman's ambitions, and unlike the former example, she would be prepared to settle for a license as nursing assistant or youth worker rather than obtaining a university degree. Nevertheless, it is probable that the phase of life in which she is in has formed her preference.

The findings in this study suggest that literacy needs often extend beyond personal needs, and will frequently include the needs of other members of a person's family. For example, apart from their individual goals of studying and working, the additional needs of two of the women questioned were closely related to their roles as mothers, so that this too served as a significant driving force. As one of these women said: *"I want to study. I want to be a good role model for my daughter that is why I don't want to sit at home. I want my daughter to say that her mother is something".* It is likely that a significant factor behind her longing to work and study in Norway is linked with her longing to be a role model for her child.

The data shows that the informants have observed and understood that a solid grasp of Norwegian is required to either study or work in Norway. It also reveals that the women were using additional means to help them learn the language. As adult learners, employing these supplementary learning strategies is formed by their personal motives, and corresponds with the theory of self-directed learning that points out that adult learners are qualified to and capable of controlling their own learning (see 2.4). A typical example of the ways in which this self-directed learning is put into practice was made apparent when the women talked about their use of dictionaries when reading or writing for personal reasons or as part of their take-home assignments from the language courses. The findings illustrated that this learning method had two functions: looking up new words and enriching the participants' vocabularies. One woman explained the processes she used: *"I write the meaning of every new word I come across; I have a small book that I use to collect these new words. Then, I check these words in the dictionary* [...] *I use Norwegian/ English and Norwegian/Somali dictionaries".* Studies in language and literacy have often studied the benefits of reading upon language mastery. It is likely that the informants have presumed that reading will help them to learn new words and thus influence language acquisition. It is also possible that the teachers at the language centres would have recommended this method to the informants.

Two women described how they had used the language skills of people within their social network to aid them in the learning process. One woman said that her Somali friends assisted her when she was learning the language by correcting her grammar and pronunciation. Another woman described the help she had received when attempting to learn the language in her own time; she explained that texts she had written were corrected by a worker at the refugee camp where she lived. The roles played by both the Somali friends and the worker at the refugee camp are outlined in Vygosky's 'zone of proximal development', which emphasises the importance of mentors to guide and assist in the learning process (see 2.4). The mentors in the example above offered considerable assistance to the women in the learning process, even though this help was received outside of the language centre.

The personal literacy needs and aspirations of these women surfaced when they were required to negotiate with others in their surroundings. The aspiration of one woman was to be able to communicate without using a translator; she said, *"I speak to my legal officer without using a translator. I feel so proud of myself when they ask me if I want a translator and I say no".* The needs of two other women related to the practical use of reading and writing skills. One woman said that she wrote her shopping list in Norwegian in order to remember what she wanted to buy, because all of the food labels in the supermarkets are written in Norwegian. Another woman who wanted to gather information about jobs said *"I read everything pasted out of curiosity. I find job announcements interesting because I would like to work when my daughter is older".* In order to get a job, one woman said that she was required to write job application letters and that she received assistance when doing so.

Moving to Norway is, of course, the primary reason for these women to acquire Norwegian skills. Another factor is the personal goals and ambitions of adults, which are usually influenced by changes in their lives. The changes in the lives of two women who took part in this study placed some demands on them and caused them to look for other ways to pursue their goals. The change for one of these women occurred after giving birth to her baby; she said that although she had started with the language training she soon had to stop because of her newborn baby. However, by attending the free day-care centre in her neighbourhood, which offered language training once a week, she was able to learn the language through interaction with other mothers. The change in the life of the other woman happened as a result of her child's health; according to her *' I had to stop working because of my epileptic daughter. But when she became older, I decided to apply for jobs but it was difficult to find a*

job this time around. So I registered with NAV and started a job courses for unemployed which lasted for four months."

All of these literacy events were required as a result of the civic, occupational and personal literacy needs of the women in Norwegian society.

6.2 Research question two: How Somali women perceive factors that influence literacy acquisition in Norwegian.

The second research question in this paper focuses on factors that influence the obtainment of Norwegian literacy skills, drawing on results from previous studies on destination language acquisition as a foundation. This area of research will begin by establishing a context for discussion, before presenting the findings of previous studies that are similar to or differ from the findings of this thesis. The findings will supplement an already existing awareness concerning the relationship between individual and/or environmental factors and language learning.

6.2.1 Social interaction

The women involved in this study generally perceived the most crucial occasions of language exposure to arise in the context of either social interaction or language training classes. According to the findings of this study, there were various social arenas and situations, both inside and outside the home, which facilitated and encouraged language interaction.

The respondents agreed that interaction with Norwegian speakers significantly influenced literacy acquisition. They pointed out that having Norwegian friends, neighbours or colleagues, influenced their language learning. One woman provided a description of how these relationships would affect her language choices:

> "I would try to explain in Norwegian instead of using other languages if I had Norwegian friends."

Some informants in this study maintained that having a Norwegian partner contributed most extensively to the language learning process. Two respondents offered examples to support this, by referring to fellow students in their language classes who were married to Norwegians. For instance, one of the women said that it is,

> "…easier to learn when one is married to a Norwegian. Two women from (withheld) in my class learnt very quickly because they are married to Norwegians. I speak Somali with my husband not Norwegian, so you see how important it is."

Another respondent identified having a Norwegian partner as a way of opening the doors for further social interaction with other Norwegian speakers, such as their partner's family. Nevertheless, there were other respondents who did not agree with this fact. According to one woman, having a Norwegian partner is only effective during the language learning process if there is not the option of speaking another language to each other. For example, if both were able to speak English, they would be more likely to fall back on this. As mentioned earlier, the ethnic social network can provide the same effect as having a partner who speaks Norwegian, and one respondent said that she had received a lot of help with the language from her Somali friends who had progressed further.

All of the women in this study agreed that the work experience opportunities offered as part of the introduction programme fostered language acquisition. This experience was similar for the women who were employed outside the scheme. The response of one woman included a reference to those job settings that are most conducive to language acquisition:

> "Job practice in the SFO[24], kindergarten and hospital is better to learn Norwegian"

The response of another informant confirmed this link between exposure to the language in the workplace and the speed of learning the language. One woman said,

> "My work experience helped me because I work with children in the kindergarten and SFO. The children were honest with me; they tell me "we don't say that". They correct you at once and it sticks."

One woman claimed that because there was no social interaction at the hotel where she worked, it was not a suitable workplace for encouraging language acquisition. Another woman acknowledged that the work experience programme was an opportunity for enabling the use of the language outside of the training classes.

6.2.2 Language training

All of the informants agreed that attending the language training courses was an important stage in the language acquisition process. However, their responses showed that they had diverging opinions about the usefulness of the language training. Several respondents said that the language training course was effective as a way of helping them to acquire and develop their writing skills, because they were able to learn about grammar, and the way in which

[24] After school activities

sentences are formed. The responses of some women suggested that in addition to the focus on writing skills, there should be more emphasis on acquiring speaking abilities. As one woman said,

> "Language training helps you to learn how to write but it doesn't help you speak well that is why working and having a Norwegian partner is better."

Although social interaction appeared to be an important factor in this study, one woman made a clear distinction between the type of language exposure that is achieved through social interaction and that which is acquired through the language training course. She said,

> "If you don't go to the language course you learn gatespråks.[25] At school you learn how to write and speak. I learnt Norwegian on the street. You don't know what is right; you speak to everyone the same way while it is different language when you speak to elders, friends, your boss at work. You learn the difference at school."

Another woman had a different opinion on the effectiveness of the language training course:

> "I think it is important to learn the spoken language in the first years. One should have a place where one can just talk talk talk. You don't learn much Norwegian by attending the language class during this period because you cannot speak –not even a complete sentence, but you can identify things and name them."

The women in this study expressed their opinions on the best ways of learning the language. The different methods recommended by the women included speaking to people, reading newspapers, attending language classes and writing compositions and asking someone to check them. The results indicated that the women had used or were continuing to use some of these methods to acquire the language. One woman had a slightly different view and suggested the following:

> "...work with people for one year and then later start with the language course to learn how to write because by then you know how to speak even though it is not correct. You learn how to write correctly at the language class and then you become conscious of your language when you speak. If you learn a wrong spoken sentence, you won't speak it for long after learning the rules".

[25] Colloquial language or slang

This view was rejected by another of the women, for whom it was more important to acquire an extensive vocabulary. This was a point that she emphasised when describing her own learning process:

> "I started reading and when I became confident that I had enough words then it was fine to speak, instead of being unable to express myself because I lack the words to do so."

6.2.3 The influence of other languages

The women often discussed the relationship between the languages involved in this study. The differences and similarities between Norwegian and Somali were examined by the respondents. The women confirmed that some similarity exists because of the use of Latin script in written Somali, but they also pointed out that there were exceptions that affected their learning. One respondent explained the nature of some of these differences:

> "The alphabets may be similar but the pronunciations are way different. /p/, /f/ and /v/ are difficult for us to pronounce because we don't have these in Somali […] In Somali we write the same way we speak. It is an easy language. I learnt it in just six months. First you learn the consonants and the vowels later and you just write the way you speak."

Another woman said,

> "When I pronounce [Norwegian] it is difficult – sometimes people don't really understand what I am talking about."

However, there was one indication that literacy in Somali was beneficial when learning Norwegian, and that being able to read and write Somali offered a significant advantage. As one woman's account confirmed,

> "My husband learnt Norwegian very fast because he could write Somali. We started the language course together but he understood better than I did when he had to read."

Another woman, however, did not agree that Somali literacy was advantageous, and attributed the ease with which she learnt Norwegian to her prior knowledge of English:

"For me, it has been it has easier to learn Norwegian because I speak English."

The accounts given by the women also showed that they occasionally 'code-mixed' – i.e. they used two or three languages simultaneously; either a mixture of Somali and Norwegian or Somali, English and Norwegian. As one woman said,

> "I mix Somali and Norwegian. I am afraid to forget my language because I mix words from both languages."

The reports of another woman offered a description of the problems associated with code mixing when a word in one language means something completely different in another:

> "I was speaking to my mum one day and I said *takk* (thank you in Norwegian) but it means go away in Somali."

6.2.4 Motivation

For the women involved in this study, it was the need for independence and a sense of personal achievement that influenced their motivation to acquire Norwegian language skills. The desire to have the opportunity to enter into education and work in Norway was the same for all of the women. Two women clearly stated their reasons for learning the language. One of them said,

"I want to help myself without relying on people to translate for me. I want to work and study."

The other said,

> "I learnt the language because I wanted to work and be a part of the society I live in. When you can express yourself it is very nice but if you cannot you'll need a third person, a translator."

6.2.5 Gender influence

The findings of the study suggested that gender roles were a significant factor in the acquisition of the target language. Some women spoke specifically about the ways in which their position as a woman influenced their literacy abilities and language investment in Norway. One woman said,

> "My ex-husband refused to let me start the language training class. This was one of the reasons why I left him."

Another woman said that the domestic chores she was expected to carry out at home could hinder language investment to the extent that she barely had any time to engage in other activities:

> "The men don't help around the house, they are used to this way of life from Somalia and they continue with it. In Norway the woman needs help because she is here alone."

In relation to the issue of gender and literacy, one woman description showed that the literacy context in Somalia, which is linked to higher literacy levels among men, also had consequences when acquiring the target language.

> "People say it is a bit easier to learn Norwegian when you know how to write Somali […] most women cannot read and write Somali but men do."

6.2.6 Reason for migrating

There are a number of reasons for believing that an immigrant's refugee status can have both positive and negative effects on their commitment to Norway, and this was often apparent in the goals and ambitions of the individual informants. The response of one woman suggested that there may be a general belief that is held by most Somalis that they will one day be able to return to their country:

> "[…] People from Somalia think this is just a temporary place"

Another woman drew on her own experiences to shed more light on the frequency of this belief and the attitude to which it leads:

> "[F]our years ago I was not interested in the language and couldn't understand much. But today I understand a lot […] many of us won't work and learn the language."

The study also collected evidence which indicated that the period of arrival in Norway could be a significant factor affecting people's willingness to learn. One woman made this distinction in her response:

> "I know some who came in (withheld) who cannot speak Norwegian; they need people to interpret the whole time. But those who came after (withheld) are more determined; lots of them have jobs or are already studying."

6.2.7 Education

The responses of the informants showed that only four out of the seven had any form of educational qualifications from Somalia or abroad. Those women who already had qualifications still wanted to study in Norway. A possible explanation for this was suggested by one woman's response:

> "It is possible that Somalis who came in the 70's […] were educated and still had documents showing their educational qualification so it is easy for them to get jobs. Those who came later lost their documents during the war."

6.2.8 Age

The ages of the women at the time of settlement in Norway varied; the oldest was twenty-four and the youngest was fifteen. Two of the women, who were below the age of 18 when they first arrived, said that they had attended a Norwegian primary school in the previous communes in which they resided.

6.2.9 Norwegian literacy ability

The women participating in the study had resided in Norway for between two and ten years. Even though all of the women said that they could read, write and speak Norwegian, their individual accounts showed that they felt differently about their own literacy skills. For instance, some of them said that they felt confident in their speaking abilities. One woman pointed out that she would not have been able to participate in this study if it were not for the fact that she could speak Norwegian. Another woman claimed that she could tell how long a person had resided in Norway based on the way they spoke the language. One woman explained that her relatively high speaking ability had led to some confusion:

> "When I went to register at the language course, the lady there placed me in a higher class after speaking to me, only to realize later that I was supposed to be in a lower class."

The women's responses indicated that some of them found reading the most difficult thing to learn, while others only experienced difficulties when learning to write. Judging from the responses there was no clear indication that the number of years spent in Norway directly influenced or determined the women's reading and writing abilities. One of the women, who had lived in Norway for ten years, said that she still received help when writing job application letters, because according to her, she could only write the way she speaks, which was not appropriate when writing formal letters. She also said,

> "When I write I forget to write /t/ or some other alphabets sometimes."

Despite her lack of confidence when writing Norwegian, this woman clearly had a high level reading ability, which was extremely useful in her daily life, and allowed her to fulfill her literacy needs. She said that she was required to read information that was expected to be read by all of the employees at her workplace, as well as having to read and fill in forms concerning her daughter. This level of competence was not necessarily the result of the length of time she had lived in Norway, and there were indications that another woman involved in the study, who had lived in Norway for less than five years, had achieved the same literacy level. This woman said that part of her self-directed learning method was to read, which helped her acquire a more varied and extensive vocabulary. She read both books and "*things pasted on the wall*". Like the other woman, she also said that she received help with her writing. Another of the women said that in addition to reading adverts and information about the transport system, she made a conscious decision about what material she wanted to read, and intentionally chose to read a newspaper that was written in a simple language. Similarly, when she had to write, she found the writing process to be cumbersome because of the amount of time she used. She also admitted that she had problems with writing, and needed assistance. It is evident from all of these examples that reading and writing abilities do not necessarily correspond.

6.2.10 Interpretation of data

Chiswick and Miller's (2001) study on destination language skills focused on the acquisition of English and French in Canada, while van-Turbergen and Kalimjn's study (2009) focused on the acquisition of English in the USA. The most relevant study for this thesis is Hayfron's study (2001), which focused specifically on the acquisition of Norwegian in Norway, and its

results will be used as a means of comparison when analysing the findings of this thesis. It is important to note, however, that the findings of the aforementioned studies may not resemble the findings in Hayfron's study or in this thesis, because English and French are recognised international languages, which may somewhat affect the learning and use of these languages globally. It is not unreasonable to say that the first contact with the Norwegian language for the subjects of this study would most likely have happened upon their arrival in Norway.[26] It is therefore possible to rule out the question of *entry-level* language skills, which would have been taken into consideration for the subjects of van-Turbergen and Kalmijn's study, for example.

Language training

The findings of this study indicated that the informants all agreed that organised language training is important in the acquisition of the Norwegian language. This is consistent with Hayfron's study, which showed that language training significantly influenced the language proficiency of immigrants. There seemed to be a general consensus among the respondents in this study that language training particularly influenced their writing skills; one informant explicitly said that "*language training helps you learn how to write*". The reasons for this may be understood from a cognitive perspective; according to Hayfron, the task of writing demands a high level of mental coordination and logic, and this is what makes the acquisition of writing proficiency distinct from that of reading and speaking. For this reason, the results of his study showed that the subject's age at the time of migration did not influence their writing abilities. It is likely that the women in this study were referring to this cognitive aspect of the learning process when they said that they learnt about the way that sentences are formed in their language class. The findings also revealed an awareness of the different means of acquiring the language. One woman said, *"I learnt Norwegian on the street. You don't know what is right* [...] *it is different when you speak to elders, friends and boss at work"*. This comment highlighted the fact that language training classes provide formal education and knowledge of the language. What could be drawn from these accounts is that language training courses offered the informants an understanding of the differences that exist between spoken and written Norwegian.

[26] There are exceptions to this situation; over the years, students from neighboring European countries have studied the language at university level. Immigrant workers have also been known to take basic language courses before migrating. The status of the group in this study in Norway is the reason for this assumption.

It is unclear from the results of Hayfron's study how soon immigrants should start their language training upon arrival in Norway. van-Turbergen and Kalimjn's study postulates that language learning is most effective during an immigrant's first two years in the destination country. The findings from this study, however, indicated that starting the language training after a certain period of time had been spent in Norway (up to one year) would be more beneficial, rather than expecting the immigrant's to attend classes during their first year in the country. One woman's response offered an insight into this situation, when she said *"I think it is important to learn the spoken language in the first years* […] *because you cannot even speak a complete sentence, but you can only identify things and name them."* What could be inferred from this response is that the language learning process should follow a sequence: first, familiarity with the spoken language, which should be followed later on by more formal language training. The purpose of the former stage is to acquire words and basic expressions in the language, while the latter stage is intended to equip learners with an understanding of the formal, grammatical rules of the language. Although Hayfron's study did not seek to directly examine this effect, it is likely that the results of his study reflected on it, because he found that age at the time of migration and the number of years that had passed since migrating, influenced speaking proficiency but not writing proficiency. It is probable that immigrants who have lived in Norway for a longer period of time could be unconsciously exposed to the language and may find themselves using Norwegian expression, even though they have not mastered the intricacies of the written language. Perhaps it is for this reason that the woman referred to above believed so strongly that the acquisition of speaking skills should precede the acquisition of writing skills. The first year of the language learning phase usually comprises of recognising and identifying items in the target language, and this is not a sufficient level of learning to be able to write.

Language relationship

Hayfron's study found that there was a link between the English language and the Norwegian language. This relationship had a positive impact on the subjects involved in his study, and he found that those immigrants who could speak English acquired reading and writing proficiency in Norwegian better than those who could not speak English. Hayfron attributed this to the fact that both languages belong to the same Germanic language family, and therefore have the same grammatical structures and technical vocabularies. Similarly, van-

Turbergen and Kalmijn's study found that there was more improvement in the English language skills of the German immigrants than those of the Chinese and Mexican immigrants after a period of time spent in the USA. The findings of the present study also support this correlation. One woman, who could speak English, attested to the fact that learning Norwegian was made much easier as a result of her ability to speak English.

Although the relationship between English and Norwegian has been accounted for in this study, it is not of great relevance to the participants, most of whom could not speak English. There was, however, one account which suggested a correspondence between literacy in Somali and the acquisition of literacy in Norwegian. One woman claimed that her husband *"learnt Norwegian very fast because he could write Somali"*. This finding does not seem to resemble those of either Hayfron or van-Turbergen and Kalimjn. However, there are possible interpretations for this claim. Although Somali is linguistically classified as an Afro-Asiatic and Eastern Cushitic language, it employs the Latin orthography in its written form, which makes it similar to both English and Norwegian. It is therefore probable that literate Somalis transferred their knowledge of the Latin alphabet when learning Norwegian. Furthermore, the role of Somali men in Somali society, may have involved exposure to the English language. However, it is unclear from the results of this study how this is applied in the learning process.

Even though these languages employ the same orthography, the findings revealed numerous discrepancies when it came to pronunciation, as well as the non-existence of the following consonants in written Somali: /p/, /f/, /v/ and /z/. The consequences of these differences could significantly affect the process of language acquisition. For instance, it is possible that traces of Somali phonemes were present in the speech of one woman, and she said that she found Norwegian *"difficult to pronounce, sometimes people don't really understand what I am talking about.*" The report showed that one woman code-mixed between Somali and Norwegian, while another woman code-mixed between all three languages: Somali, Norwegian and English. The findings also indicated that the Somali language has a more straightforward orthography. As one woman said, *"I learnt Somali in just 6 months* […] *you just write the way you speak"*. The same woman said that she needed help when she wanted to write because she was only able to write the way she speaks.

Language exposure

The results of this study clearly showed that language exposure through socialising with native speakers significantly influenced the acquisition of Norwegian skills, and all of the informants were keen to emphasise the effectiveness of this method. The exposure that was reported in this study was the result of interaction with native speakers through different relationships (friends, neighbours and partners) and in various settings (in the home and outside the home). As previously mentioned, the question of having entry level language skills was not applicable to the group studied, and language exposure was attained only after arrival in Norway, by attending the language training course and participating in the society.[27]

The informants either participated themselves or had relatives who participated in the introduction programme. This scheme (see 4.3) incorporates both channels of gaining exposure in the target language. For adult learners, learning is problem-centred and should take place in real situations, as reflected in the theory of situated cognition. It is for this reason that the work training and experience offered by the scheme is considered to be a form of exposure. This study indicated that some of the respondents benefited from the language exposure that they encountered during their work experience, and confirmed that they had found this helpful. The findings also found that specific work training arenas are more effective than others. This finding is consistent with the results of Espenshade and Fu's study (1997), which found that the type of job that immigrants had in their resettling country was crucial in helping them acquire language skills. One woman who participated in this study clearly stated that "*job practice in the SFO, kindergarten and hospital"* was particularly helpful. There was one account that included a practical example of the kind of language assistance that could be gained in the work arena: "*the children were honest with me; they tell me 'we don't say that'"*, the woman said. The role of the children in this example is represented in Vygosky's zone of proximal development.

In the home, the findings showed that nearly all of the women in this study agreed that having a Norwegian partner positively influenced the acquisition of Norwegian language skills. Interestingly, this was not considered to be a significant factor in Hayfron's study. By contrast, in this study, two of the women gave examples from their language training classes, which they used to confirm the importance of this factor. The explanation for this finding may

[27] The previous section indicated that informants with children were exposed to the language in a different manner.

be linked to the fact that Norwegian is not a dominant language for the informants in this study; this is probably the primary reason for positing that having a Norwegian partner will influence their Norwegian skills. Nonetheless, one informant raised an interesting point that may affect the advantages of this factor. According to her, having a Norwegian partner is only influential when both parties do not speak the same language. If this were the case, it is possible that both parties would revert to a common language in order to reduce communication problems. When the opposite is the case, there will be increased pressure to use Norwegian. It is, most likely, due to these reasons that informants so strongly believed in this factor.

Another finding that is also linked to having a Norwegian partner is the way that it expands one's social network. So, having a Norwegian partner also includes the possibility of interacting with his or her family and friends. This study showed that the informants had almost no contact with Norwegians, apart from in situations that required them to transact with other systems in the society. This report could lead to the following question: what are the possible implications of having a Norwegian in one's social network with respect to language learning? The possible answer to this question could lie in the response of one of the informants, who said "*I would try to explain in Norwegian* […] *if I had Norwegian friends"*.

However, the findings of this study also illustrated that ethnic Somalis who migrated at an early age could offer the same supports and benefits as those associated with having a Norwegian partner. Although previous studies of destination language acquisition (Schumann 1986; Marger 2006; van-Turbergen and Kalmijn 2009) have not directly focused on this connection, they have suggested that the concentration of immigrants from the same country in one location hinders language learning. This study did not seek to determine the effects of this concentration, but it did find that the support of an ethnic network *positively* influenced language learning. The most likely reason for this is that the ethnic Somalis have acquired native-speaker language competence because of the years they have spent as residents in Norway. As a result of this, they can play the same role as ethnic Norwegians, and can provide support or act as mentors for fellow Somalis who are learning the language. It is also important to mention that the ability to act as a mentor is dependent on individual factors, such as the individual's level of education and their degree of social participation in the Norwegian society.

Motivation

The findings of this study showed that there were two kinds of motivation for learning Norwegian; one was related to the motivational attitude associated with living in Norway, while the other focused on the specific motivation to learn the language. The former will be discussed in research question three, while the latter will be analysed in this section. In this study, the motivation to learn Norwegian came primarily from the need to study or work (personal goals), and this was found to be identical for all of the informants. Motivation was linked to the desire for independence in situations that required use of the language, including the desire not to have to use a translator when interacting with others.

The women's accounts suggest that motivation to learn the language was instrumental in determining the success of the language acquisition process. According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), cited in Schumann (1986) 'an instrumentally-oriented learner is [someone who] wants to learn the language for more utilitarian reasons, such as getting ahead in his occupation or gaining recognition from his own membership group.' This finding is similar to the findings of Hayfron's and Buttaro's (2004) studies. The informants acknowledged that they required the language in order to work or study in Norway. They also added that this was the reason they were (at the time of the interview) attending the language course. The other reason for learning the language was to avoid the use of translators, and this feeling was expressed in a number of the responses. One woman's response offered an illustration of the central importance of personal motivation on the process of language learning: *"I want to help myself without relying on people to translate for me. I want to work and study."*

According to Gardner and Lambert (1972), cited in Schumann (1986), an integratively-oriented learner 'wants to learn the second language in order to meet with, talk to and find out about [people] whom he both values and admires.' There was no direct response in this study which indicated that the informants were integratively-oriented in learning the language. However, it is possible that the following responses inclined towards an integrative motivation: "*If I had Norwegian friends"* and *"I learnt the language because I wanted to work and be part of the society I live in".* In addition, one informant said that she filled in a form when she applied for Norwegian citizenship, which was a proactive action, and the move towards becoming a Norwegian citizen can be classified as an integrative

approach.[28] Espenshade and Fu (1997) found that those immigrants who own their own homes, have relatives in the destination country and are willing to change their nationalities, would be more motivated to learn the language.

Gender

With respect to gender and language learning, the findings of this thesis indicate that the identity of the informants as women influenced the investment they made in the acquisition of Norwegian literacy. It has been suggested that in the migration process, women are 'double disadvantaged' in the language learning process, partly due to their status[29] in the destination country. Men, on the other hand, are often better prepared for the transition, especially when they are moving for economic reasons, and it is likely that they may have invested in learning the destination country's language prior to migrating. It is for this reason that the results of van-Turbergen and Kalmijn's census study showed that men often had a degree of entry level English language skill which improved over time.

As mentioned previously, it is unlikely that the findings of this study will correspond directly with previous studies relating to other languages due to the different position of the Norwegian language. However, as suggested above, it is possible that the role of the men in Somalia may have led them to be exposed to the English language, and they may therefore have been able to transfer their knowledge of English to Norwegian, especially in written form. Additionally, as a result of the fact that the majority of Somali men can read and write Somali, there is likely to be a clearer relationship between the three languages. As one woman said, *"People say it is a bit easier to learn Norwegian when you know how to write Somali* […] *My husband learnt very fast because he could write Somali".* Although in this case it is English and Norwegian that are closely related, the response indicates that literacy in Somali could also be an advantage when acquiring Norwegian literacy skills. In contrast to this observation, another woman clearly pointed out that her knowledge of the English language had been a huge help when she was learning Norwegian. Based on these findings, it is possible to make the assumption that Somali men are predisposed to acquire literacy in Norwegian in a way that their female counterparts are not, apart from in the cases of those women who are literate in English or Somali.

[28] It can be argued that not all naturalized citizens' aim towards this goal.
[29] They come to live with their husbands.

On the issue of gender and culture, Morokvasic (1983), cited in Martin-Jones (2000:15), points out that previous works on immigrant women in the 60's and 70's referred to them as 'dependants, migrants' wives or mothers, unproductive, illiterate, isolated, secluded from the outside world and bearers of many children'. It is important to note that such a standpoint assumes and implies that the role of the women in the resettling country is different from the role of women in the original country, and this helps to provide more information about the reasons for the labelling of immigrant women. Although this study did not seek to investigate the labelling of immigrant women in Norwegian society, some of the findings suggested that gender was a significant factor both pre- and post- migration.

For instance, a closer look at the background of the informants involved in this study revealed that all had undergone significant changes that affected their status and identity. The following changes were reported: going from married to divorced, from being a minor to becoming an adult, getting married, and adopting the new objective of pursuing further education or careers. There were indications in the accounts of the women which resonated with the descriptions of Isrealite et al (1999), which found Somali women to be subordinate to their husbands. The study showed that the decision of one woman's ex-husband had affected her ability to invest in the language, and this was one of the reasons why she later divorced him. Another of the findings was related to gender expectations; one of the women[30] said that most of the women she knew were unhappy about the fact that the men did not help with domestic chores. This woman further explained the way in which this expectation was related to the move to Norway, and how the man found it difficult to adjust to the Somali way of life: *"the men are used to this way of life from Somalia and they continue with it in Norway*, the *woman needs help because she is alone here".* The explanation for this may simply be the result of the obvious disparity between Norwegian and Somali culture, particularly in relation to gender roles. For this individual woman, it is possible that she was previously dependent on her family and relatives for help in the home, but following the move to Norway, found that she had to cope alone. As a consequence of her situation, it would have been difficult for her to take part in the introduction programme. It is quite likely that the observed gender differences would challenge the previous ways of Somali families, and may even cause them to consider changing their identities and trying to adjust to the new culture.

[30] This woman is also a divorcee.

If they had stayed in Somalia, these women would not have had the opportunity to change their identities, and the findings of the study clearly showed that their change in situation upon moving to Norway significantly influenced their desire to pursue personal goals, such as study and employment. The development of these personal ambitions is a significant factor in influencing the women's determination to acquire Norwegian skills[31]. Although the careers of the women in this study are linked to the introduction programme, apart from in the case of two informants who reported that they had found jobs outside this scheme, this step could be regarded as a step towards reaching their goals. Through this scheme, the women were able to gain an insight into the new society, as well as coming to understand the relevance and importance of literacy skills. The professional identity of one of the women as a translator arose subsequent to her move to Norway. She reported that she was occasionally contacted to translate from English to Somali at her former place of residence. It is likely that the new roles and positions of these women will enable them to develop new identities, and the summary of the findings indicated that they were already participating or wanting to participate in a society that they have observed to be different from theirs.

Reason for migrating

The findings indicated that the women's attitudes towards their decision to invest in learning the language are directly linked to their reasons for migrating. The report showed that a number of the informants thought of Norway as a "*temporary place"* and had not committed to the language for this reason. One interpretation of this may be that the informants believed upon arrival that they would soon be returning to their home country, and as result of this, they did not consider learning the language to be important. For one of the women, it seemed as though the language gradually became more significant and appealing as time passed: "*four years ago I wasn't interested in the language*", she said. This response suggests that over the years, this informant may have been confronted with situations in Norway in which she observed and/or experienced the importance of speaking the language, and these experiences may have led to her decision to invest in the language subsequently.

In addition to the influence of the reason for migration, this study also found that the period during which the women arrived in Norway influenced their orientation towards

[31] This point has been discussed in research question one.

investing in the language and pursuing personal goals. The description of one informant attested to this when she said, "*I know some who came in (withheld) who cannot speak Norwegian* […] *but those who came after (withheld) are more determined*". There are two possible interpretations for this observation: firstly, it is possible that early Somali immigrants to Norway migrated for different reasons and at that time, the importance of Norwegian literacy and the focus on social participation was not as pronounced as it is today. In addition, the reforms to the immigration laws may be another reason for the difference in attitude caused by the time of arrival. The importance of learning the Norwegian language and understanding the culture has been articulated in recent migration laws, and this is something that may have shaped the personal ambitions of the women involved in this study. It is also likely that the various programmes established with the aim of empowering immigrants will have contributed to more recent immigrants' motivations to learn.

Education

The findings of this study showed that all of the informants wanted to acquire education or vocational training in Norway. The findings also suggested that the political situation in Somalia affected the educational level of the informants, and those who said that they had received education in their home country also attended primary schools or wanted to attend upper-primary or secondary schools in Norway. Because of the range of educational levels among the participants, the influence of education in language acquisition could not be accurately determined by this study.

Development of language skills

By conducting an analysis of the language skills in this study, it is apparent that the women's' speaking ability developed before their reading and writing abilities. In Hayfron's study, it was age at the time of migration and the number of years spent in Norway that most significantly influenced speaking proficiency. For example, an immigrant who had resided in Norway for more than twenty years would speak better Norwegian than an immigrant who had lived in Norway for ten years. Since this study focused on women who have resided in Norway for a period of two to ten years, its findings are not comparable with those of

Hayfron's study. However, the results of this study indicated that the difference between the speaking abilities of the informants according to the amount of time spent in Norway was not clear-cut, and it was not just the duration of their stay in Norway, but their level of exposure to Norwegian that accounted for the differences. The findings indicated that although some informants had resided in Norway for less than six years, they had received a higher level of language exposure through various means (children, education in Norway, employment or work experience) so that the period of stay in Norway was not accountable when considered on its own.

Hayfron's study found that a combination of the length of stay in Norway, prior knowledge of English, receiving formal education in Norway and attending the language training programme, influenced reading proficiency. The findings of the present study did not reveal any correlation between the respondents' reading skills and their length of stay in Norway. But, it did find that all of the women had gained a reasonable knowledge of the language, which enabled them to read information notices at their place of work or about the public transport system. Despite these findings, the women still made a deliberate choice when it came to selecting reading materials; as one woman said, *"I read Klartale on the internet because the language is easier".* Although all of the informants reported that they could read, it is likely that they still experienced difficulties when reading complex sentences or written text, and it is for this reason that they opted for simple reading materials. The study also indicated that the women did not just read for the purpose of gaining information, or for pleasure, but that their reading functioned as a means of enriching their vocabularies. Due to the fact that two of the women, who were literate in English, had also received formal education in Norway, and five of them were attending the training programme (at the time the study was conducted), it is likely that the findings of this study partly resemble the findings of Hayfron's study, but with an exception regarding the length of stay.

In this study, all of the informants reported that they had difficulties writing Norwegian. There was no indication that the aforementioned factors discussed in Hayfron's study influenced this ability. Although Hayfron found that knowledge of the English language was an advantage when learning to write Norwegian, it is unclear from the results of this study whether this came into play. The women involved in the study who were literate in English also said that they had problems writing Norwegian. Nevertheless, it is possible that the writing problems they encountered were of a different nature to those experienced by the

other women. As mentioned earlier, Hayfron's study suggested that the similarities between the grammar and vocabulary of English and Norwegian pose an advantage to English literates acquiring Norwegian skills. Two of the women in this study who were not literate in English offered examples of their writing habits; one said that she occasionally omitted some letters when she wrote, while another woman said that she relied heavily on the dictionary. It is likely that the first woman would have experienced difficulties when trying to write down sounds that were previously unknown to her, especially if she was neither literate in Somali nor English. Based on Hayfron's postulations, it is possible that if the second woman had been literate in English, she would have used her knowledge of English to offer clues when looking for new words in Norwegian.[32]

[32] Regardless of this fact, it is important to mention that the dictionary is a useful asset used by many; both those who are acquiring the language and those who are not.

6.3 Research question three: Exploring the acculturation experience

The third research question in this paper centres on personal accounts that describe the acculturation experiences of the informants. In this section, examples of acculturation and integration will be combined; the reason for this is that integration should be seen as the product of acculturation and vice versa. Drawing on these examples, discussions and analyses will be presented, based upon existing social structures within the society.

6.3.1 Acculturation

The findings illustrate that migration prompted a notable change in the habits and minds of the informants, relating to factors such as how they perceived themselves, how they communicated and their future aspirations in Norway. Two women participating in the study expressed how they felt that their traditional attire had become an obstacle to participation in the job sector. One woman said,

> "When I apply for a job and make it to the interview and they see how I am dressed, then they say "oh is it you". All the jobs I've gotten came after my field work, but I've never applied for a job and got it on my own"

Another woman gave a detailed account of the repercussions of this problem, and how it affected her later on. She said,

> "I tried to apply for a job in (withheld) but I couldn't get it because of my headscarf. This job at (withheld), I went there with my Norwegian reference person. The boss, she said, I will contact you as soon as possible, but she never did. I later heard from a classmate at the (withheld) that I wasn't going to get the job because as this boss said, I was going to disappoint the customers. Even though, I wore trousers and my neck was open. After that experience, I lost hope with working here. During this time, I wasn't married and I really wanted to work because I didn't want help from the government."

There was one account in this study that revealed that cultural differences in the way that people communicate could lead to conflicts when immigrants must transact in unknown sectors or territories. One of the informants in this study witnessed a scenario in which this problem arose. She said,

> "One day I went to the (withheld) and I overheard an executive officer quarrelling with her client. The client did not speak good Norwegian. So I thought to myself, if I don't intervene

> this might not end well. This Somali woman was pointing and talking to the officer. So I volunteered to translate for them. I told her we don't do that here in Norway (pointing and with a loud voice). She might think you want to hit her. This woman told me why she was there and when I told her what her officer suggested, then she said she (the executive officer) can't talk to me like that."

The cultural conflicts posed by this situation had implications for the coping strategies applied by the women. As one woman said,

> "One has to adopt by taking things from both cultures. I say to myself this is a new country."

Another woman provided an introspective account of the way in which the development and improvement of her Norwegian skills had opened her eyes to the perceived stereotypes of Somali people in Norwegian society. She said,

> "I couldn't understand Norwegian but after I learnt my place, I realised my position in this society. And then, I thought to myself how did I get here? When I think back and I see people who live here and can't speak the language; people with narcotics and can't work because they are high on it. A man involved in this business ruins the well being of the family. It will lead to all kinds of confrontation between them. But the Norwegians think, 'they just need money'. This woman needs money to take care of her kids (she has six children and no job; she has to get money from somewhere). I must either work or study. I cannot stay at home. What will I do at home?"

6.3.2 Integration

The aftermath and consequences of integration policies regarding language and participation was accounted for in this study. Language was used to establish contact and to interact with native speakers. One woman described her interaction with the parents of her children's classmates:

> "I talk to other parents at the kindergarten that my children attend. They invite us for lunch and birthday parties. I try to do the same too. One has to try to make an effort even though it is difficult."

However, in two different cases the opportunity to establish contact with native speakers was restricted. In the first of these cases, contact was not feasible, while in the second it was limited as a result of personal inhibitions:

> "There are no Somalis where I live and I haven't socialized with Norwegian speakers"

> "I am a stranger; I try to learn the language but feel hindered in a way because you are dressed like this or look like that"

An account given by another woman reconfirmed the effectiveness of the introduction programme, especially in the ways that it allowed and encouraged them to progress. This woman gave the following description of the language programme:

> "Some Somalis haven't gone to the language training programme, but the system is different now; they don't let you stay at home. If you want help you have to go to the training programme and job practice."

Another account suggested that it is still possible for these integration procedures to fail, particularly under the influence of other more personal factors. One woman said,

> "In Somalia, 45% are stay at home mums and when they leave Somalia and come to Norway they become scared to talk to strangers. They were raised like that."

The findings of two women's accounts offered an indication as to how the respondents perceived pluralism in Norway. The first of these applauded the country's attitude towards the integration of immigrants:

> "There are lots of chances here and you get help when you need it compared to other countries. But one has to work hard."

The second account drew comparisons between Norway and America, emphasising the challenges of living in Norway, while acknowledging that this was primarily related to language:

> "If Norway were like America it would be easy to get jobs because I speak English. Here, one has to wait to learn the language; it takes like two or more years to learn."

The findings clearly show that language training and job practice (offered as part of the introduction programme scheme) had also assisted acquaintances of the informants, and had helped them to secure permanent jobs. One informant described the experience of her cousin, who had previously been a participant in the programme:

> "I have a cousin who got a job through the introduction programme, after one month at her job practice."

The reports highlighted the existence of tailored courses that are available for immigrants who wish to specialise in a specific field of work. The experience of one particular participant may be taken as an example:

> "I wish to work in a cloth shop. I attended a course (customer service) that was arranged by NAV, but I didn't pass the exams […] I started working in a shop. In the summer, when tourists come to the shop they pay in foreign currency, you have to know about the exchange rate (I learnt about money exchange at the course NAV arranged)

6.3.3 Interpretation of data

Acculturation

Acculturation is something that occurs as part of the migration process, and affects both immigrants and the receiving society. According to Berry (1997) acculturation may be defined as 'the general process and outcomes (both cultural and psychological) of intercultural contact'. Berry also suggests that such terms as 'cultural maintenance' and 'contact participation' deal with the subject of acculturation. The consequences of migration are bound to manifest themselves in the situations relating to this study, due to the cultural disparity that exists between Somalia and Norway.

As a response to migration, Norway has implemented a number of changes to cope with the growing number of immigrants. Norway is regarded as a multicultural society because of its accommodative policies. Despite this, there were several accounts by women in this study which drew attention to the limitations of multicultural ideology. For instance, two women in this study felt that their attire was an obstacle to allowing their full participation in the job sector. One woman felt that her dress (traditional attire), which triggered such remarks as "*oh is it you",* indicated that employers might consider her appearance problematic. Nevertheless, the introduction programme made it possible for her to overcome the initial problems she encountered, and she was able to find employment after she had taken part in the work experience scheme. This indicates that both the informants and their employers encountered challenges that arose as a result of the different clothing traditions of the two cultures, a symptom, of course, of wider cultural differences. For the second woman, it was her headscarf that caused her problem, "*even though I wore trousers and my neck was open*." It is probable that she would have been used to wearing traditional attire in her home country,

and her decision to change her attire in Norway, even though she continued to wear the headscarf, may be interpreted as a by-product of acculturation. What can be surmised from these findings is that although these women have adapted in a number of ways, it may take some time before people already within Norwegian society, like their employers, will undergo their own process of adaption and accept cultural diversity.

The findings showed that there was another angle to acculturation. The study emphasised the need for both cultures to adjust; as one woman said, "*one has to adapt by taking things from both cultures. I say to myself 'this is a new country*'". It is possible that, having resided in Norway, it has become apparent for this woman that the two cultures do not easily assimilate, and that in order to survive, she must adopt certain features of both cultures[33] which are best suited to her and her family in their current situation. It is likely that this cultural blend would be insignificant if she were in her home country.

The other findings of this study indicate a change in behaviour. The results showed that living in Norway did influence what one informant considered to be an appropriate manner of communication. According to her "*I told her we don't do that here in Norway (pointing and with a loud voice)*". Although this finding symbolises a significant recognition of intercultural communication, it also demonstrates the likelihood of a conscious change taking place in the communication patterns of this informant when dealing with other sectors in the future. Furthermore, it is possible that an earlier experience had caused her to become aware of communication problems, which perhaps prompted her into stepping in and acting as a translator. When analysing this case, it is evident that acculturation occurred when the informant observed that problems were often caused by cultural differences in the way people communicate. She pointed this out to both parties and later offered to help, thereby averting further problems. On the other hand, as part of strengthening cultural awareness, government employees who are likely to transact with immigrants are now offered courses focusing on intercultural communication and contact. These courses were established in response to increasing reports of instances of failed intercultural communication, as a result of the diverging cultures increasingly represented in Norwegian society. Although this study did not seek to explain the effect of these courses, it is unclear from the description given by this informant whether the executive officer[34] displayed this intercultural knowledge, because it

[33] This study did not focus on the cultural patterns that were selected.
[34] Assuming he/she participated in these aforementioned courses.

seemed apparent that language was a major barrier. Nonetheless, what this finding shows is that the state has envisioned and understood the numerous challenges its workers may face as a result of cultural disparities, and has consequently adopted various approaches aimed at understanding new cultural patterns.

For one informant in this study, it is likely that acculturation occurred as a direct result of her ability to read and understand Norwegian. According to her, once she understood the language, "*I realized my position in this society*". For this woman, this awakening led to the decision to deviate from what could easily become the norm: "*I must either work or study. I cannot stay at home*". It must also be taken into consideration that statistics on immigrant groups with low or high success rates in the destination country may be sufficient to provoke inward change among those affected by it[35]. It is likely that in Somalia this observation would produce another effect.

In conclusion, what is proven by each of these accounts is the fact that migration presents both immigrants and the country in which they are resettling with numerous challenges, forcing them to adapt and implement changes; this is a clear indication of the process of acculturation. Although Berry (1997) has suggested that contact participation and cultural maintenance are at the core of acculturation, the findings of this study do not give concrete examples of these components occurring separately. Nevertheless, what could be ascertained from these findings is the likelihood that a combination of both components occurs. The results of the study showed that although the two informants mentioned above retained features of their culture, they still wanted to participate in the society. The findings showed that one woman had to change her communication pattern in order to adapt to different situations, while the other woman was involved in the selection and combination of particular aspects of the Somali and Norwegian cultures.

Integration

The results show that the informants began to spend time with ethnic Norwegian speakers, something that became possible once they were able to speak the language. It also revealed that this led to opportunities in other arenas. One woman said, "*they invite us for lunch and birthday parties*"; this would not have been the case if she had not been able to speak the language, which allowed her to socialise with other parents at the day-care centre. However,

[35] For example those recorded in the introspective account of one informant "*I realized my position in the society*".

this opportunity was not available for two of the other informants; one said, "*I haven't socialized with Norwegian speakers*", while the other felt that her individual characteristics were a hindrance.[36] According to Berry (1997), mutual acceptance and accommodation is a prerequisite for successful integration because it involves the positive effort of both the immigrants and their resettling countries. The findings of this study appear to reflect this process. For instance, from the statement of the first informant who later said "*I try to do the same too. One has to try to make an effort even though it is difficult*", the importance of both sides making a conscious and concerted effort is clearly emphasised. It is of course possible that the parents at the day-care centre had a particularly open attitude, which might have influenced their behaviour. In spite of these speculations, the different experiences of the two women could suggest the opposite. This finding is insufficient to draw any definite conclusions, but it does shed more light on the principle of mutual accommodation.

With respect to integration and acculturation, Schumann's (1986) definition of acculturation deals with the time spent by immigrants with speakers of the target language. He groups acculturation into two different types, both centering on contact with native speakers. It is for this reason that it is relevant to discuss it under this section. The findings show that the informants conformed neither to type-one nor type-two acculturation. Moreover, the findings from the previous sections showed that there was virtually no contact at all with Norwegian speakers. However, the only account which gave evidence of contact with TL speakers and the language was the case of one informant who said that her own children helped her improve her language skills. Although language exposure is partly connected to the work experience offered by the introduction programme, previous sections have also indicated that this does not necessarily occur, but is dependent on the nature of the workplace, as illustrated by the example of the chambermaid. It would therefore be imprecise to use these disparate results to suggest the type of acculturation applied.

The results provided a range of examples of how the respondents perceived Norway. For one woman who spoke English, residing in Norway presented a major obstacle in terms of language; according to her "*if Norway were like America it would be easy to get jobs* […] *one has to wait to learn the language"*. It is likely that another informant was referring to the integration and resettling strategies when she stated that "*there are many chances here and you get help when you need it*", even though it is unclear what chances and help she had in

[36] In particular, wearing the traditional cloth

mind. However, it is possible that she would be aware of the living conditions that she had heard about through relatives in other countries, and her statement may largely be a comparative observation. Another woman suggested that it was possible for the integration strategies to fail due to complicated personal factors; she said that when many women "*leave Somalia and come to Norway they become scared to talk to strangers*." Although there was no specific example in this study that illustrated this fact, another report about Somalis living in Norway found that they were a difficult immigrant group to work with, which might be seen as an indication of this problem. Nevertheless, as stated earlier, these findings are not sufficient to draw any definite conclusions.

The findings indicated that the introduction programme scheme had several effects upon the informants and their acquaintances. One woman said that the scheme had provided encouragement, and forced people to leave the confinement of their homes: "*the system is different now; they don't let you stay at home. If you want help you have to go to the training programme*". This remark reconfirms the purpose of this new system and its focus on social participation, and suggests that this was not a priority of the previous system. The findings also showed that the informants experienced difficulties entering the job market. But, the training scheme had served as a bridge between employers and employees, allowing the informants to overcome the problems they had initially encountered. The introduction programme scheme could then be a two-way process that aims to create cultural awareness for both immigrants and Norwegian employers, and therefore society as a whole.

Furthermore, there were two indications that participation in the courses organised by NAV could qualify informants directly to work in specific fields. Although one informant did not get a job through this system, she explained that the knowledge she had acquired at one of these courses had later become useful in her other jobs.

7. Summary

7.1. Norwegian literacy events

The findings produced by the first research question clearly indicate that a certain amount of literacy skills are required in order to be able to participate in the receiving society and to meet the fundamental or basic requirements of that society, especially when it comes to adults. Although some of the literacy needs presented in this study may differ from those required by Norwegians, the findings indicate that literacy needs and demands are socially determined.

The study showed that the informants in this study unanimously agreed that possessing Norwegian literacy skills is pivotal in Norway. It showed that regardless of any given situation or arena in the Norwegian context, reading and writing skills are needed to function and to carry out one's responsibilities; in this study, the arenas in which literacy was important included those relating to civil status, gender and social setting. Because all of the informants spoke two or more languages, the findings showed that the need for Norwegian literacy mostly arose outside the home, except amongst those informants who had children, who reported that they used Norwegian at home. What this study suggests is that a change in location (for example, the change connected to migration) could also mean a change in the civic literacy needs and the civil literacy events of those affected by it. However, more research needs to be carried out to observe or identify the actual changes experienced by the people involved in this process.

Although the findings indicated that the occupational literacy needs were not identical for the informants in this study, due to the dissimilarities in the job experiences recorded, it has equally demonstrated that the workplace can encourage and facilitate certain literacy demands and literacy events. Furthermore, with respect to language exposure, the study also illustrated how the activities carried out at the workplace, and the terminology used in that particular job, could help promote language learning; this was seen in the accounts of two informants in this study, one that worked in a day-care centre, and another who worked as a chambermaid. In relation to language, the study suggests that language exposure can take place through both printed and spoken forms. Because the informants did not generally speak the target language at home, a combination of both forms would be an ideal approach.

This study showed that the personal objectives of the informants were to a large extent very similar and that they significantly influenced their literacy events. It was observed that the motivation to study and work was a driving force behind their devotion to acquire the Norwegian language, and that they were willing to pursue this goal in spite of conflicting personal demands. Moreover, there was a paramount need to transact in the Norwegian society without the use of translators. The study showed that the needs of children in particular (such as those associated with having a role model) influenced the literacy of some informants. As presented in the theory of self-directed learning, these informants had independently spent time learning the language by looking up words in dictionaries; in addition to this, they had also used ethnic friends as part of their private learning methods. It was clear that for the informants in this study, motivation was an important factor in identifying personal literacy needs, and this significantly influenced the literacy events they experienced.

7.2. Factors that influence language acquisition

Previous studies (Espenshade and Fu 1997; Hayfron 2001; Chiswick and Miller 2001; van-Turbergen and Kalmijn 2009) referred to in earlier sections have indicated that speakers of languages within the same language family have an advantage when learning the target language. The findings of this study conform to previous studies, because the informants who were literate in English attested to the fact that their knowledge of English aided their learning of Norwegian. Although Somali and Norwegian, not English, were the main languages being considered in this study, the close relationship between English and Norwegian was once again confirmed.

However, the findings of research question two indicated that, despite this, participating in Norwegian language training influenced language acquisition; it was suggested by the informants that it only affected writing skills. It was also suggested that the spoken aspect should precede the written aspect in the language learning process. Apart from participating in the language training, it was found that the work training and employment experience that was part of the introduction programme offered a kind of language exposure that was often extremely important. Similarly, ethnic Somalis who were born in Norway acted as mentors to the subjects. Likewise, it was found that having a Norwegian friend or partner

could encourage the use of Norwegian, but only when Norwegian was the only common language between them, and there could be no recourse to another language.

The data collected indicated the possibility that literacy in Somali could be influenced and even predetermined by gender; it was reported that most Somali men were educated, and could read and write Somali, whereas this was not the case for the majority of women. It was found that literacy in Somali helped in the process of learning Norwegian, although it is not clear how this happened. The study also suggests that the alphabetic principle theory could provide a possible answer to this, especially in the area of reading and spelling development. This means that Somali literates could transfer the knowledge of the Latin alphabet to Norwegian, although with interferences.

The findings indicated that the purpose of coming to Norway and the time of arrival in Norway influenced the informants' decision and motivation to invest in the language. The findings showed that as a result of the changing status of the informants in Norway, the initial desire to acquire the language was often absent, but over time it became necessary for them to acquire Norwegian skills. In addition, what this thesis has suggested is that the recent immigration reforms and job programmes aimed at empowering immigrants has spurred personal ambitions and, consequently, language investment.

The data collected showed that education acquired in Somalia was not a meaningful factor, and that it was the education acquired in Norway that played an important role; this supports van-Turbergen and Kalimjn's (2009) study. Only two informants in this study had acquired primary school education in Norway.

The study found individual motivation to be a major factor in the process of language acquisition, and was connected to the informants' personal aspirations in Norway. As a result of personal aspirations, the informants had become what Gardner and Lambert (1972) cited in Schumann (1986) referred to as 'instrumental oriented learners'. Although some of the findings indicated possible inclinations towards integrative oriented learning (by the same authors) there was no direct record of this. What this study suggests is that motivation is a primary factor, given the fact that it is somewhat interrelated to the other factors examined in this study. For instance, the women in this study were attending the language course because they want to learn the language, which they know will enable them achieve their personal goals such as to study or work. Furthermore, as adult learners, they are responsible for their

own learning. This means that the language learning process will greatly depend on their individual ambitions.

A general view of the findings relating to the development of language skills showed that the informants acquired spoken Norwegian skills first. However, this was not evident when the length of stay was considered alone. What this thesis has suggested is that the length of stay in Norway should be considered alongside the level of exposure, particularly the exposure resulting from having children, employment and education in Norway.

Although the informants reported that they read Norwegian in their daily lives, the data indicated there were different levels of reading abilities. However, it showed that their reading skills were sufficient to read basic information (for example, information about the public transport system or a list of instructions when filling in forms). In regards to writing abilities, all of the informants reported that they required assistance when writing in Norwegian. Based on the results of previous studies, this thesis has assumed that the writing difficulties encountered by Somali literates or non-literates would be of a different nature to those experienced by Somali speakers who are literate in English.

7.3. Acculturation strategies

The data obtained in this study recorded the various acculturation strategies that had been used, both by the informants and the Norwegian society. However, the investigation found that there are a number of inherent problems in the arrangement of today's multicultural society. The examples presented in this study demonstrated that the apparently simple idea of adopting a multicultural ideology is not a straightforward or effortless process, because it demands a certain degree of understanding and acceptance among the parties represented in a cross-section of society.

This study found a number of changes resulting as a direct consequence of acculturation. For instance, there was a deliberate change in dress style among the informants, the calculative mixture of both cultures in the study, a sensible manner of choosing communicating patterns and a sensitive choice to deviate from the norm. Although it was not possible to classify which examples were attuned to contact participation or cultural maintenance, both of which are factors at the core of acculturation according to Berry (1997), this study suggested that there was a fusion of both.

The data collected found that language skills encouraged social interaction among those informants with children who attended the day-care centre, because it allowed them to socialize with other parents. The data also showed that introduction programmes and job qualification courses furthered social participation, by giving the women a reason to leave the house and offering them valuable insights into Norwegian culture. This study suggests that although language skills may encourage social integration, it is nevertheless likely that cultural differences will also hinder social participation.

8. Conclusion

Although previous studies carried out in Norway have placed this particular group of immigrants into different categories, and have often considered them to be 'difficult to work with', this thesis suggests that a possible explanation for the problems encountered in the process of integration may lie in the fact that what is known about Somalis is based to a varying degree on quantitative studies or on the opinions of state officers who work with them. As a consequence of this, these studies offer a limited understanding of the possibilities of other hidden contributing factors. It is also important to mention that the present thesis is in no way representative of all the Somalis in Norway or Oslo, because its findings are based on only a small sample of women. Nevertheless, this study has attempted to give the women a 'voice' so as to shed more light on some of the factors that they perceive to affect literacy acquisition in Norwegian and their general experience of Norwegian society.

In conclusion, this thesis suggests that because literacy needs and literacy demands change during the acculturation process, the acquisition of literacy skills should be considered as a post-acculturation factor that takes place after migration. Literacy skills affect the extent to which immigrants are able to transact and interact with others, as well as their ability to use available information to enable themselves to integrate into the society. Because learning Norwegian is most likely to occur in Norway, it is reasonable to assume that immigrants who are already 'disadvantaged' (in terms of not having enough positive factors that are known to influence destination language acquisition) may require more time to learn the language and integrate themselves within the society. Despite this, the study found that motivation outweighed all other factors, and had the most significant influence upon language acquisition.

Lastly, the findings indicated that acquiring literacy skills is insufficient when it comes to enabling the informants to participate in the society, mainly due to inhibiting personal characteristics. The findings of this study indicate that if multicultural Norway is to succeed, it needs to embrace ideologies that will fully accommodate cultures that do not resemble its own. It is essential to create awareness in Norway that the process of acculturation and integration is a two-way process that is dependent on both the society and immigrants.

9. Suggestion

Despite the fact that this study has presented data on the research question it sought to examine, there are a number of questions that could not be answered. It is probable that an extensive study on each of the individual research question would be required to thoroughly explore the initial questions that were raised.

For example, in the first research question, it would be interesting to observe the actual literacy events of the informants in all of the languages they speak. This would provide an approach to exploring the similarities and discrepancies that exist in the manner of carrying out literacy events, and is something that is likely to be culturally and linguistically influenced. Although literacy events have been linked to literacy needs in this study, it would be useful to consider the literacy needs of the informants in their home country, in order to provide an accurate and realistic account of the ways in which their literacy needs have transformed.

The second research question examined the factors that influenced literacy acquisition in the Norwegian language. In addition, it would be useful to study both men and women, in order to explore the reliability of the factors discussed, particularly in terms of gender, motivation and period of arrival. Another relevant area of study would be to investigate the process and progress of language development for Somali speakers who have English as a second language and are learning Norwegian. It would be interesting to study the ways in which these informants code switch and why they code mix between languages – i.e. do they code switch because similar expressions are absent in their mother tongue or target language, and vice versa, or do they code mix because of the presence of material things (flora, fauna and food) that only exist in the destination country?

The third research question sought to investigate the acculturation experience of the informants. Although the data collected gave a range of examples in this area, it is important to remember that the majority of the examples centred on experiences in the work arena. As a contrast and supplement to this, it would be useful to explore other areas in which the informants have changed their ways when adjusting to life in Norway. It would also be interesting to view the implications of these changes upon the informants, and the ways in which the society responds to these changes. In addition, further research in this area could

contribute to an understanding of the expectations that are held by both parties involved in the acculturation process.

References

Arbeids- og Inkluderingsdepartementet. 2009. Somaliere i Norge: En arbeidsgrupperapport: Departementet. Published on the World Wide Web on the 21st of august 2009: http:// www.regjeringen.no/upload/AID/publikasjoner/rapporter_og_planer/2009/R_somaliere_i_Norge.pdf

Barton, D. 2007. *Literacy*: *An Introduction to the Ecology of Written Language*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Berry, J. 1997. 'Immigration, Acculturation and Adaption.' *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, Vol 46:1, 5-68.

Blackledge, A. 2000. 'Power relations and the social construction of "literacy" and "illiteracy": the experience of Bangladeshi women in Birmingham.' In Martin-Jones, M. and Jones, K. (Eds.), *Multilingual Literacies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 55-69.

Bogdan, R. and Biklen, S. 2007. *Qualitative Research for Education: An Introduction to Theory and Methods*. Boston: Pearson A&B.

Burge, L. 1988. 'Beyond Andragogy: Some Explorations for Distance Learning Design.' *Journal of Distance Education*, Vol 3:1, 5-23.

Buttaro, L. 2004. 'Second-Language Acquisition, Culture Shock, and Language Stress of Adult Female Latina Students in New York.' *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education*, Vol 3:1 21-49.

Callahan, M. 2008. Immigration in Switzerland: Facts and Phobias.' *Socialism and Democracy*, Vol 22:3, 160-165.

Chall, J. 1990. 'Policy Implications of Literacy Definitions.' In Venezky, R., Wagner, D. and Ciliberti, B. (Eds.), *Toward Defining Literacy*. Newark: International Reading Association. 54-62.

Chiswick, B. and Miller, P. 2001. 'A Model of Destination-Language Acquisition: Application to Male Immigrants in Canada' *Demography*, Vol 38:3, 391-409.

Creswell, J. 2003. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches.* London: Sage Publications.

Dalheim, E. 2001. 'Innvandrere og utdanning: med utdanning i bagasjen.' Statistisk Sentralbyrå. 30. July 2009. http: // www.ssb.no/samfunnsspeilet/utg/200102/7

Daugstad, G. and Sandnes, T. 2008. 'Kvinner og menn i innvandrerbefolkingen - noe er likt - mye er ulikt.' Statistisk Sentralbyrå. 30. July 2009. http: // www.ssb.no/samfunnsspeilet/utg/200802/07

Dingu-Kyrklund, E. 2005. 'Migration and recognition of diplomas in Sweden.' *European Journal of Education*, Vol 40: 2, 123-141.

Directorate of Integration and Diversity. 2009. iFACTS. Fact booklet about immigrants and integration. Published on the World Wide Web on the 2nd of August 2009: http:// www.imdi.no/Documents/BrosjyrerHefterHaandbok/iFacts_2009_nett.pdf

Duke, C. and Hinzen, H. 2007. 'Adult education in Migration and Integration.' *Convergence* Vol XL 3:4, 203-209.

Edwards, V. and Nwenmely, H. 2000. 'Language, literacy and world view.' In Martin-Jones, M. and Jones, K. (Eds.), *Multilingual Literacies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 91-102.

Espenshade, T. and Fu, H. 1997. 'An analysis of English-Language Proficiency among US immigrants' *American Sociological Review*, Vol 62, 288-305.

Gurnah, A. 2000. 'Language and literacies for autonomy.' In Martin-Jones, M. and Jones, K. (Eds.), *Multilingual Literacies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 233-246.

Hagelund, A. 2005. 'Why it is bad to be kind. Educating Refugees to life in the Welfare State: A case study from Norway.' *Social Policy and Administration*, Vol 39:6, 669-683.

Hayfron, J. 2001. 'Language training, language proficiency and earnings: lesson from Norway' *Research on Immigration and Integration in the Metropolis: Working Paper Series*. 97-01, 1-33.

Hayfron, J. 2001. 'Language training, language proficiency and earnings of immigrants in Norway.' *Applied Economics*, Vol 33, 1971-1979.

Hellstrøm, U. and Gimmestad, J. (2009, 6. desember). Permitterte får lære norsk: Statsråd endrer regler etter oppslag i Aftenposten. Aftenposten (Morgenutgave), s.8.

Holm, L. 2004. *Hvilken vej ind I hvilken skriftlighed? Et studie af undervisning I skriftlighed I dansk som andetsprog for voksne*. København: Danmarks Pædagogiske Universitet.

Holme, R. 2004. *Literacy: An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Hornberger, N. 2000. 'Multilingual literacies, literacy practices, and the continua of biliteracy.' In Martin-Jones, M. and Jones, K. (Eds.), *Multilingual Literacies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 353-368.

Høien, T. and Lundberg, I. 2000. *Dyslexia: From theory to intervention*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

[Introduksjonsloven (2003)] (2007). Lov av 4. juli. nr 80 om introduksjonsordning (introduksjonsloven). Oslo: Gyldendal Akademisk Forlag.

Israelite, N. and Herman, A. 1999. Settlement Experiences of Somali Refugee Women in Toronto. Presentation for the 7th International Congress of Somali Studies York University, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, July 10 (1-25).

Knoll, J. and Hinzen, H. 2007. 'Migration and Integration – facts and findings and issues in Germany.' *Convergence* Vol XL 1:2, 41-52.

Laitin, D. 1977. *Politics, Language, and Thoughts: The Somali Experience*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Looney, J.A., A. Husby and T.D. Røyenstad. 2008. "Case Study: Norway", *in Teaching, Learning and Assessment for Adults: Improving Foundation Skills*, OECD Publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/172200736572

Majob, S. 1999. 'De-skilling Immigrant Women.' *Canadian Women Studies/ Les Cahier de la Femme*, Vol 19:3,123- 128.

Marger, M. 2006. 'Transnationalism or assimilation? Patterns of socio-political adaptation among Canadian business immigrants.' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol 29:5, 882-900.

Martin-Jones, M. 2000. 'Enterprising women: multilingual literacies in the construction of new identities.' In Martin-Jones, M. and Jones, K. (Eds.), *Multilingual Literacies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 149-170.

Menhard- Warwick, J. 2009. *Gendered Identities and Immigrant Language Learning*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

Mikulecky, L. 1990. 'Literacy for What Purpose' In Venezky, R., Wagner, D. and Ciliberti, B. (Eds.), *Toward Defining Literacy*. Newark: International Reading Association. 24-34.

Olgac, C. 2001. 'Socialisation, Language and Learning in a Somali diasporic community in Rinkeby.' *African and Asia*, Vol 1, 69-78.

Schumann, J. 1986. 'Research on the Acculturation Model for Second Language Acquisition.' *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development,* Vol 7:5, 379- 392.

Sluzki, C. E. 1979. 'Migration and Family conflict.' *Family Process*, Vol 18:4, 379-390.

Soriano, C. 2007. 'Adult literacy challenge: the 7 ms' Convergence, Vol XL 3:4, 181-188.

Stokke, O. (2008,7. september) 'Ut av isolasjonen med norskopplæring'. Aftenposten, (Morgenutgave), s. 6-7.

Stokke, O. (2009, 6. juni). 'Hva drømte de om? Ble det slik de hadde tenkt?'. Aftenposten, (Morgenutgave), s. 9-11.

Stokke, O. (2009, 10.juni) 'Tre menn fra tre land. På hver sin måte skriver de sitt liv på nytt'. Aftenposten, (Morgenutgave), s. 8-9.

Street, B. 2000. 'Literacy events and literacy practices: theory and practices in the New Literacy Studies'. In Martin-Jones, M. and Jones, K. (Eds.), *Multilingual Literacies*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 17-30.

Tarone, E. and Bigelow, M. 2005. 'Impact of literacy on oral language processing: implications for second language acquisition research.' *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, Vol 25, 77-97.

Tusting, K. and Barton, D. 2003. *Models of Adult Learning: A Literature Review*. Wales: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.

van -Turbergen, F. and Kalmijn, M. 2009. 'A Dynamic Approach to the Determinants of Immigrants' Language Proficiency: the United States, 1980- 2000.' *International Immigration Review,* Vol 43:3, 519- 543.

Venezky, R., Wagner, D. and Ciliberti, B. (Eds.). 1990. *Towards Defining Literacy.* Newark: International Reading Association.

Venezky, R.L. 1990. 'Definitions of Literacy.' In Venezky, R., Wagner, D. and Ciliberti, B. (Eds.), *Toward Defining Literacy*. Newark: International Reading Association. 2-16.

Verhoeven, L. 1994. *Functional Literacy: Theoretical Issues and Educational Implications*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Vitra, E., Sam, D. and Westin, C. 2004. 'Adolescents with Turkish background in Norway and Sweden: A comparative study of their psychological adaptation.' *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, Vol 45, 15-25.

Warsame, A. 2001. 'How a strong Government backed an African Language: the lessons of Somalia.' *International Review of Education*. Vol 47(3-4): 341-360.

Internet references

http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/about-migration/lang/en

http://www.landinfo.no/id/114.0

http://www.omniglot.com/writing/norwegian.htm

http://www.omniglot.com/writing/somali.htm

http://www.ssb.no/ssp/utg/200802/07/

http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/01/10/innvbef/

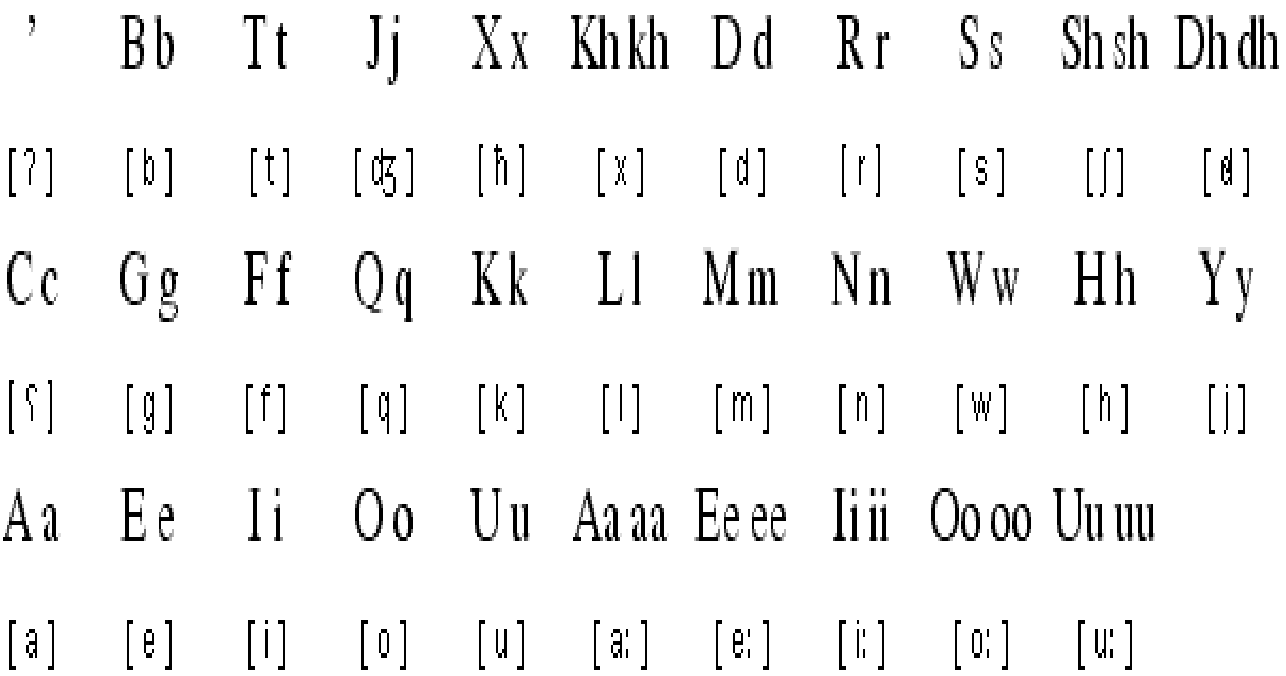
http://www.udi.no/Norwegian-Directorate-of-Immigration/Central-topics/Protection/Asylum-seekers-and-refugees/Cooperation-under-the-Dublin-Convention/

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Somali_language

http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/motivation

Appendix 1

Somali alphabets:



Source: http://www.omniglot.com/writing/somali.htm

Norwegian alphabets:

A a	**B b**	**C c**	**D d**	**E e**	**F f**	**G g**	**H h**	**I i**	**J j**
a	be	se	de	e	eff	ge	hå	i	je/jådd
K k	**L l**	**M m**	**N n**	**O o**	**P p**	**Q q**	**R r**	**S s**	**T t**
kå	ell	em	enn	o	pe	ku	ærr	ess	te
U u	**V v**	**W w**	**X x**	**Y y**	**Z z**	**Æ æ**	**Ø ø**	**Å å**	
u	ve	dåbbelt -ve	eks	y	sett	æ	Ø	å	

Source: http://www.omniglot.com/writing/norwegian.htm

Appendix 2

Interview guide

Date of the interview

Location of the interview

Duration of the interview

What is /was your occupation or education before coming to Norway?

How long have you resided in Norway?

What is your marital status?

What language (s) do you speak?

Do you have kids?

What language do you use in the home? Why?

What languages do you use outside the home? Why?

What language (s) do you speak with family and friends?

Can you tell me about your interaction with Norwegian speakers?

Could you please say more about your Norwegian friends?

Tell me - what is your opinion on the importance of Norwegian contacts?

Tell me – what did you do/ have you done with your Norwegian contacts to help you learn Norwegian?

How do/have you participate (d) socially in Norway?

Have you had any job opportunities?

What initiatives have you taken to help you function socially in the Norwegian society?

Is it easier to learn the Norwegian language if you speak Somali?

Does your mother tongue make learning Norwegian easy?

How is the Norwegian culture different from the Somali culture?

What did you do to help yourself read, write and speak Norwegian?

Where and when does the need to write Norwegian arise?

Where and when does the need to read Norwegian arise?

Tell me - do you feel confident speaking Norwegian in public?

Do you rely on the Norwegian media for news and information?

What information do you find most interesting?

What is it like being Somali in Norway?

How are immigrants portrayed in relation to the Norwegian language?

How does/ has this motivate you to learn Norwegian?

What is/ was your main reason for learning Norwegian?

In your own opinion, what are the benefits of speaking Norwegian?

What influence did your individual personality have on what you have done to learn Norwegian?

How long do you intend to stay in Norway?

Where do you see yourself five years from now?

Can you please describe the importance of language training (norskkurs) and work training (praksisplass) when learning Norwegian?

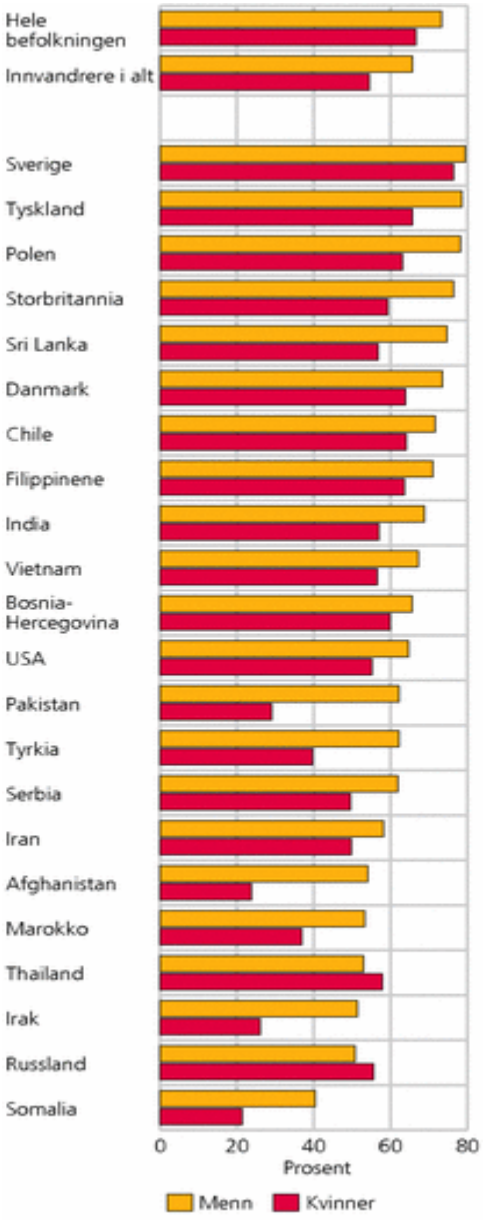
Do you consider marriage to a Norwegian important in gaining Norwegian skills?

Do you consider having a job influential in acquiring Norwegian skills?

To you, what is the most important factor influencing the acquisition of Norwegian skills?

Appendix 3

An employment table for first generation immigrants between the ages of 15-74, according to their nationality and gender.

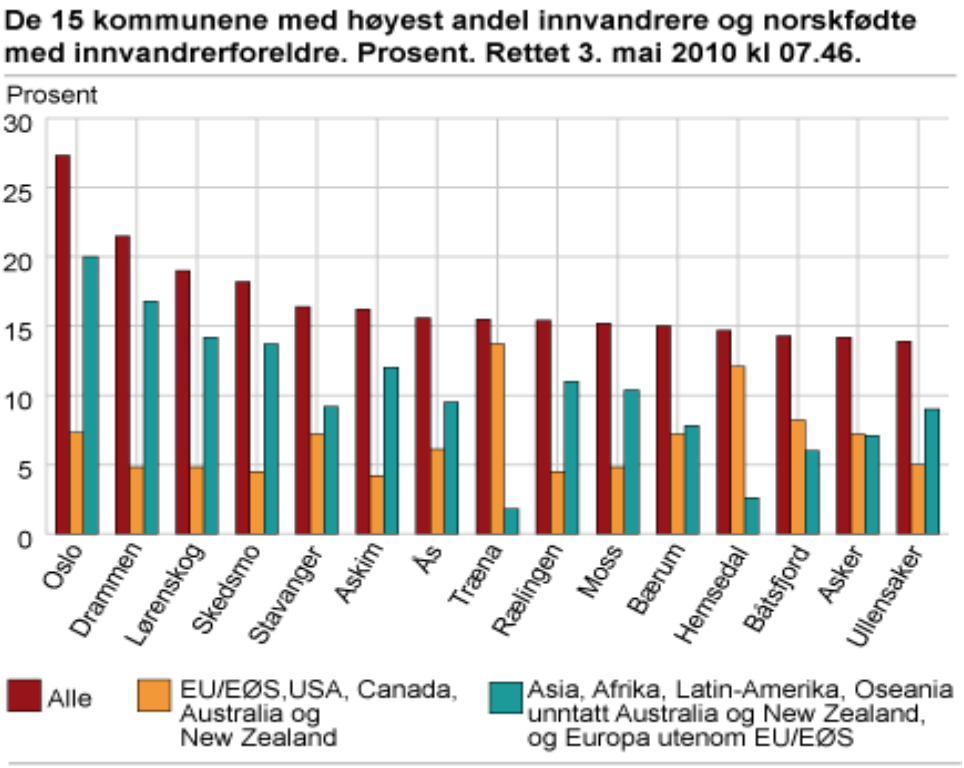


Kilde: Arbeidsmarkedsstatistikk, Statistisk sentralbyrå.

http://www.ssb.no/ssp/utg/200802/07/

Appendix 4

A table showing 15 Norwegian municipalities with the highest distribution of immigrants and Norwegians with immigrant parents



http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/01/10/innvbef/