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Abstract

The present small-scale Norwegian classroom-based qualitative study explores multicultural literature's potential for raising young EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice. The study consisted of a two-week multicultural literature project, inspired by critical literacy principles, to engage EFL 6th graders in reflecting on the topics of stereotypes and prejudice through reading and discussing two multicultural picturebooks, *The Day You Begin* (Woodson, 2018) and *Under My Hijab* (Khan, 2019), and engaging in four multimodal response activities. Following the two-week project, two semi-structured focus group interviews were carried out, and learner artifacts produced during the project were collected and analyzed.

The study aimed to investigate the potential of multicultural literature for raising Norwegian 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice and their willingness to challenge these following the two-week multicultural literature project. The study addressed the following research questions: "What potential does working with multicultural literature have for raising EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice?" and "Do the learners show a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice after the multicultural literature project? If so, in which ways?"

The study found that the participants demonstrated a better understanding of the terms stereotypes and prejudice following the two-week multicultural project. The study also showed that the learners were able to see beyond cultural differences, demonstrated acceptance and respect for individuals with different cultural and religious practices, and reported, through their self-evaluation, having developed a greater appreciation, empathy, and respect toward diversity. Additionally, the participants demonstrated awareness of how stereotypes and prejudice negatively affect individuals. Furthermore, the findings showed that the participants were willing to challenge stereotypes and prejudice by offering various strategies to do so, including creating awareness through conversations, discussions and social media, self-reflection, and taking action to combat racism, discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice. Overall, the findings emphasize the importance of integrating multicultural literature into the EFL classrooms and addressing complex topics to help learners appreciate and respect cultures beyond their own, while encouraging them to question and challenge various forms of injustice.

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1. Introduction

This thesis is a small-scale classroom-based qualitative study investigating the potential of multicultural literature for raising Norwegian 6th-grade EFL learners' awareness of and willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. The following chapter introduces an overview of the background and relevance of the current study (1.1), the research questions and aims (1.2), and lastly, the outline of the thesis (1.3).

1.1 Background and relevance

Diversity in Norwegian society and classrooms has drastically increased during the last fifty years (Andreassen et al., 2013, p. 1). With this increasing diversity, a report by Antiracist Center (2017) identified the school as a primary arena for racism and discrimination. Many informants reported experiencing racist or discriminatory insults about their appearance, ethnic background, and religion. Informants also disclosed disparaging comments, jokes, or incidents related to their school lunch or hair, frequently referencing their foreign background and drawing on group-based prejudices and stereotypes. Those who had not experienced such comments reported hearing them directed at others (Antirasistisk Senter, 2017, pp. 4-18).

The report by Antiracist Center (2017) emphasizes the need to educate children to develop respect for the cultural and religious values, beliefs, and differences of others in order to prepare them for a world where these qualities are valued. Schools and educators play a vital role in promoting democratic values and attitudes that can combat racism, discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice. If discriminatory attitudes and stereotypes are left unchallenged in education, children can be left to enter society with unfounded prejudice and an inadequate understanding of diversity (UNESCO et al., 2011, p. 13). In addition, the Norwegian core curriculum (MER, 2017) emphasizes that schools should support and encourage their learners' social learning and development through learning about equality, democracy, human rights, efforts against discrimination, and promoting inclusion, while also allowing learners to experience this through school practices, including in the English subject.

Books can impact individuals and society on many levels and hold an important place in the lives of young people. Books can provide insight into interpersonal relations and social conditions. They can shape our perceptions of the world, social groups, and ourselves and inspire us to discover and explore new ideas and perspectives (Yokota, 2009, p. 66). According to Harris (1997), multicultural literature can be essential in producing such impacts. Educators (e.g., Gates & Mark, 2010; Gopalakrishnan, 2010; Husband, 2019) have suggested that using multicultural literature in classrooms provides learners with a practical way of building an understanding of diversity and to address complex issues, such as stereotypes and prejudice. Introducing multicultural literature in the EFL classroom has the potential to motivate learners to empathize with people of other cultures and realize the existence of social injustice outside their lives (Moecharam & KartikaSari, 2014, p. 118). Several reports have revealed that racism and other complex issues are rarely addressed as relevant topics in the current Norwegian school context (Midtbøe & Lidén, 2015). Drawing on Husband's (2019a) arguments, multicultural literature can be used as a means to open up classroom spaces and opportunities where teachers and learners can openly discuss and reflect on complex topics and issues. The development of a more profound and critical consciousness is a necessary first step toward equipping EFL learners with the tools to understand different cultural and social worlds better and to help them challenge prejudice and negative stereotypes.

1.2 The research questions and aims of the study

Several studies (e.g., Colby & Lyon, 2004; Norris et.al., 2012; Stallworth et al., 2006) have explored teachers' practices and perceptions of multicultural literature, as well as its implementation with older learners. Research conducted with older learners has shown that exposure to multicultural literature positively impacts the learners' attitudes toward ethnicity, race, and self-esteem (e.g., Dressel, 2003; Wham et al., 1996). As for the younger learners, only a few studies have been conducted, and even fewer with EFL learners. However, existent research conducted with younger learners indicates that multicultural literature tends to support a positive change in young learners' attitudes toward differences (e.g., Macphee, 1997; Vasquez, 2004). This qualitative research study contributes towards filling the research gap regarding young learners, especially Norwegian EFL learners, by investigating the potential of multicultural literature for raising young EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice. The study addresses the following research questions:

1. What potential does working with multicultural literature have for raising 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice?
2. Do the learners show a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice after the multicultural literature project? If so, in which ways?

In order to address these questions, a two-week multicultural literature project was carried out to engage an EFL 6th grade class in reflecting on the topic of stereotypes and prejudice. The multicultural literature was inspired by the four dimensions of critical literacy, and involved reading and discussing two multicultural picturebooks, *The Day You Begin* (Woodson, 2018) and *Under My Hijab* (Khan, 2019), and working with four multimodal response activities designed to encourage learners to explore the topic and make meaningful connections with the two multicultural picturebooks. Following the two-week project, two semi-structured focus group interviews were carried out with eight participants from the class to obtain insight into the participants' experiences and understanding of stereotypes and prejudice. Additionally, the learners' artifacts produced during the project were collected and analyzed for a broader range of perspectives and experiences to investigate the EFL learners' awareness of and willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice.

1.3 Outline of the thesis

The thesis has been divided into six main chapters. Following the introduction in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 presents the theoretical background and literature review, including previous studies on multicultural literature and the topic of stereotypes and prejudice. Chapter 3 introduces the study's methodological approach, data collection and analysis, ethical considerations, and addresses validity and reliability. Chapter 4 presents the findings from the focus group interviews and learner artifacts. The results are presented according to the themes identified in the data. Chapter 5 discusses the findings in relation to the theoretical background, literature review, and research questions. Moreover, the chapter presents the limitations of the study, and the implications that can be drawn from the study, as well as suggestions for avenues for future research. Lastly, chapter 6 summarizes the study's main findings with regard to the two research questions.

2. Theoretical background and literature review

This chapter presents the theoretical background and literature review related to the current study. Firstly, the chapter presents definitions of multicultural literature, prejudice, and stereotypes. Secondly, it addresses multicultural literature, stereotypes, and prejudice in the curriculum (LK20) in section 2.2. Section 2.3 presents the four dimensions of critical literacy as a way of working with multicultural literature. How to select authentic and accurate multicultural literature for the EFL classroom is discussed in section 2.4. The benefits of working with multicultural literature in the classroom are discussed in section 2.5. Finally, previous studies related to the thesis's topic, including research with older and younger learners, are addressed in section 2.6.

2.1 Understanding multicultural literature, stereotypes, and prejudice

2.1.1 What is multicultural literature?

Various scholars and researchers (e.g., Bishop, 1993; Cai, 1998, 2002; Gopalakrishnan, 2010; Harris, 1997; Yokota, 1993, 2001, 2009) have defined multicultural literature in numerous ways. However, a common element relates to the inclusion of diverse cultural and racial experiences (Gates & Mark, 2010, p. 9). During the eras of civil rights and feminism in the 1960s and 1970s, there was an increase in multicultural literature for children and young adults. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, multicultural literature was commonly interpreted as literature by and about people of color. However, since the 1990s, the term has been broadened to include individuals who have been underrepresented, misrepresented, and outside the sociopolitical mainstream. This broadening also opens for addressing issues related to sexual orientation, gender, and disabilities (Bishop, 1993; Yokota, 2001). According to Bishop (1993, p. 3), multicultural literature should be defined in a “comprehensive and inclusive manner; that is, it should include books that reflect the racial, ethnic, and social diversity that is characteristic of our pluralistic society.”

Gopalakrishnan (2010, p. 5) refers to multicultural children's literature as literature that is by and about a diverse population and includes different perspectives of the sociocultural experiences of underrepresented groups. The literature validates the underrepresented group's

experiences related to differences in language, class, identity, race, gender, and sexual orientation. Likewise, Gates and Mark (2010, p. 9) define multicultural literature as literature that focuses on primary characters of an underrepresented group whose racial, religious, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or culture historically has been misrepresented or marginalized by dominant cultures. Given that multicultural literature represents the world of marginalized and misrepresented groups by portraying their voices and images, it is often regarded as the literature of minority cultures (Bista, 2012; Cai, 2002).

Yokota (1993; 2001) claims that literature that offers specific insight into a cultural group and represents distinct cultural groups through accurate portrayal should be recognized as multicultural literature. In her overview of definitions of multicultural literature, Yokota (2001) acknowledges that scholars have categorized multicultural literature in various ways. For example, she points out Cai's (1998, cited in Yokota, 2001, p. xiii) three categories of defining multicultural literature. The first category involves multicultural literature that includes as many cultures as possible and "those that assume the multiple + culture = multiculturalism." The second category entails the "focus on people of color." Finally, the last category claims that "all literature is multicultural." Yokota (2001, p. xiii) notes that several scholars (Fishman, 1995; Shannon, 1994) concur with Cai's (1998) last category and similarly claim that all literature is multicultural and that we must read literature from a multicultural perspective. Considering the broad and various definitions of multicultural literature, this thesis identifies multicultural literature in terms of the definition provided by Bishop (1990; 1993), Gopalakrishnan (2010), and Yokota (1993; 2001). Hence, multicultural literature is identified as literature that focuses on themes and characters that are underrepresented or marginalized and focuses on characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, culture, and religion.

2.1.2 The definition of stereotypes and prejudice

In the field of social psychology, discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes are among the core aspects of the matter of group perceptions. These three elements that make up social group perception are interlinked. For instance, stereotypes can lead to prejudice and vice versa, prejudice can justify stereotypes, and both prejudice and stereotypes can feed into discrimination (Balmores-Paulino, 2018). A stereotype is defined as a generalized belief about characteristics associated with a group of individuals or a social group. The characteristics are believed to be accurate and serve as a rationalization for discrimination and prejudice

(Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). Macrae et al. (1996, p. 3) define stereotypes as a mental association between category labels and trait terms. Moreover, stereotypes are the images people have of what a social group is like and are represented at both individual and collective levels. Stereotypes can be conceptualized from two perspectives. From one perspective, stereotypes are represented within an individual's mind, while from the other perspective, stereotypes are represented as a negative association shared by people within a society (Macrae et al., 1996, p. 4).

Prejudice, on the other hand, means prejudgment and is a formed opinion about an individual, a group, a race, an idea, or a thing. It is an inaccurate and false opinion and judgment based on emotions, misconceptions, and fantasies. In other words, it is a preconceived idea or opinion not based on facts, familiarity, or actual experiences (Bird, 1957, p. 490). Dovidio and Gaertner (1999, p. 101) describe prejudice as “an unfair negative attitude towards a social group or a member of that group.” Discrimination refers to unfair and unequal treatment of individuals or groups based on specific distinguishing characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, (dis)ability, sexual orientation, religion, or other categorical statuses. Discrimination can take various forms, including exclusion, prejudice, stereotyping, stigmatization, harassment, or denial of opportunities, and can occur in various settings, such as education and employment (Fibbi et al., 2021, p. 13).

Several studies reveal that children as young as three years old have implicit negative attitudes, prejudice, and racial biases towards individuals and social groups with whom they do not share social status or have a different racial background. Moreover, these prejudices tend to increase through age seven. The studies also show that stereotyping and prejudice emerge in early childhood, including ethnic-based, gender-based, and religion-based stereotypes (e.g., Apfelbaum et al., 2010; Bigler & Liben, 2007; Brown et al., 2018; Castelli et al., 2009; Dunham et al., 2013). In addition, the studies suggest that young children mainly focus on skin color to form ethnic categories (Raabe & Beelmann, 2011). Finally, these studies indicate that some learners might bring a set of understandings and attitudes that are stereotypical, biased, or limited to school (Yokota, 2009, p. 68).

Children are consistently exposed to stereotypical images and messages as they interact with various media outlets and individuals, including family members and friends, who might hold negative and biased attitudes toward different social groups around them (Husband, 2019b, p.

1067). However, Brown (2019, p. 122) suggests that it is possible to influence learners' perception and understanding of stereotypes and enable them to challenge and reconsider their previous assumptions. Likewise, Dovidio and Gaertner (1999, p. 102) claim that to reduce the direct and traditional form of, for instance, racial prejudice, it is necessary to use educational strategies to enhance knowledge and appreciation of other social groups.

2.2 Multicultural literature, stereotypes, and prejudice in the curriculum

The current national curriculum in Norway (LK20) states that schools should promote democratic values and attitudes that can counteract discrimination and prejudice and give learners an insight into cultural diversity. Furthermore, it emphasizes that schools should support and encourage their learners' social learning and development through learning about equality, democracy, human rights, and efforts against prejudice and discrimination (MER, 2017). Additionally, the objectives clause in the Education Act, cited in the core curriculum (MER, 2017, p. 3), states that school has a central role in educating and all-around development (Bildung) of all and should provide learners with a good foundation for understanding themselves, others, and the world, for making good choices in life.

The Ministry of Culture's *Action plan to combat discrimination and hatred towards Muslims 2020-2023* (2020, p. 23) emphasizes that schools should provide safe and inclusive play and learning environments where everyone is treated equally, and no individual is subjected to discrimination. Moreover, the action plan highlights schools' vital role in providing learners opportunities to learn about essential topics, such as democracy and human rights, in order to combat discrimination and racism. The action plan also mentions paragraph 9 of the Education Act, which clearly states that zero tolerance should prevail against bullying, violence, discrimination, and harassment in schools.

2.2.1 The core curriculum

The core curriculum is a part of the Norwegian curriculum that outlines core values and principles in primary and secondary education and training in Norway. The core curriculum does not directly mention the role of multicultural literature in education and training in Norwegian schools. However, some core values presented in the core curriculum correspond to

the role and benefit of multicultural literature, as stated later in section 2.4. For instance, the core value of human dignity states that schools must consider the diversity of learners and facilitate learners to experience belonging in both school and society. Moreover, schools should encourage the appreciation of differences and treat all learners equally so that no learner becomes a target of discrimination (MER, 2017, p. 4). Similar to the Educational Act (1998), the core value of identity and cultural diversity emphasizes that schools should give learners historical and cultural insight and help them develop their own identity in an inclusive and diverse environment. This includes giving the learners insight into how we live with different perspectives, attitudes, and views of life (MER, 2017, p. 5). Furthermore, education should help learners to be inquisitive and develop critical thinking and ethical awareness (MER, 2017, p. 6). Ultimately, schools should teach learners to respect differences and promote democratic values and attitudes that can combat prejudice and discrimination (MER, 2017, p. 8).

2.2.2 Curriculum in English

In LK20, it is stated that one of the central values of the English subject is to help learners develop an intercultural understanding. That involves the development of an understanding of “different ways of living, ways of thinking and communication patterns” as well as an understanding of how one’s own “views of the world are culture-dependent” (MER, 2019, p. 2). Likewise, the core element of working with English texts states that working with English texts, should help the learners develop knowledge and experience of linguistic and cultural diversity. That includes getting insight into ways of living and thinking and the traditions of indigenous peoples. Additionally, through working with English texts, the learners should “build a foundation for seeing their own identity and others’ identities in a multilingual and multicultural context” (MER, 2019, p. 3). By learning English, the learners will experience different societies and cultures, which will open a new way of understanding the world and help to prevent prejudice (MER, 2019, p. 3). In the competence aims after years two and four, it is also noted that the learners are expected to be able to “learn words and phrases and acquire cultural knowledge through English-language literature” (MER, 2019, pp. 5-6).

By introducing multicultural literature, EFL teachers will be able to address core values and elements of the Norwegian curriculum in their teaching. Using such literature in the EFL classroom can enable learners to develop knowledge of cultural diversity and experience different societies and cultures, which may result in helping learners counter stereotypes and

prejudice. Schools and teachers are the first lines of defense against racism and discrimination. Teachers can facilitate learners' ability to challenge and counter stereotypes and prejudice by selecting and introducing authentic multicultural books in the EFL classroom. One way of working with multicultural literature is through critical literacy practices.

2.3 Working with multicultural literature through four dimensions of critical literacy

Multicultural literature can be approached in various ways, and one common approach to teaching children about diversity and social justice is a critical literacy approach (Husband, 2019a, p. 16). As explained later in subsection 3.2.2, the study included a two-week multicultural literature project inspired by the four dimensions of critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2014) to work with critical thinking, critical discussions, and reflections throughout the project. Gaining knowledge about other cultures, engaging in critical thinking about the text, and personal responses to that thinking are essential to understanding and changing beliefs. Although much of previous research regarding critical literacy practice has focused on the middle school and high school, it is essential to consider that children of all ages have the capacity to be critical readers of multicultural texts (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Vasquez, 2004).

The roots of critical literacy can be traced back to Paulo Freire (1970), who proposed that critical approaches to literacy encourage readers to question, explore, or challenge the power dynamics between authors and readers. This entails adopting a critical perspective when reading and looking beyond the text to consider issues related to how language is used to convey the text producers' ideological viewpoint and what image of the participants in a text they aim to present to readers (Norris et al., 2012, p. 59). According to Short (2009, p. 10), children's critical engagement with literature can transform their worldview and develop their skills and ability to delve deeper into the meaning of a text. This can enable them to view everyday issues from new perspectives and comprehend how social and cultural forces shape their life decisions (Lewison et al., 2014, p. 39).

Critical literacy has been defined in various ways over the past 30 years. Lewison et al. (2002, p. 382) synthesized these definitions into four dimensions of critical literacy: disrupting the commonplace, interrogating multiple viewpoints, focusing on sociopolitical issues, and taking

action to promote social justice. The first dimension of critical literacy involves disrupting the commonplace. Critical literacy encourages learners to view everyday life through a new lens and challenge their commonly held beliefs and assumptions, including those about certain ethnic groups. The second dimension requires readers to imagine standing in the shoes of others and empathize with others and understand their perspectives, such as those of characters who have been marginalized or silenced in a text (Lewison et al., 2014, p. 43). The third dimension explores sociopolitical issues and investigates how power relationships, sociopolitical systems, and language shape our perceptions, actions, and responses. Finally, the fourth dimension aims to promote social justice by empowering learners to create narratives, counternarratives, essays, reports, letters, commercials, posters, plays, and webpages to effect positive change.

In addition, critical literacy involves actively engaging in discussions about oppression, injustice, human relations, fairness, and transformation. For instance, in South Africa, Janks (1993a, 1993b, 2014) utilized critical literacy as a tool in the struggle against apartheid in order to promote social justice (Vasquez et al., 2019, p. 303). Essentially, the goal of a critical literacy approach is for teachers and learners to use texts, in the broad understanding of the term, to help learners identify, resist, and ultimately act against various forms of social injustice, for example, to work against prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination (Husband, 2019b, p. 1074).

2.4 Selecting multicultural literature for the EFL classroom

Several studies have underlined the importance of cultural, racial, and religious authenticity and accuracy in multicultural literature (e.g., Bishop, 1993; Fox & Short, 2003; Louie, 2005). However, in a review of multicultural picturebooks, researchers found that several of these promoted underrepresented groups' assimilation into mainstream culture rather than pluralism (Yoon et al., 2010, p. 110). This type of underlying ideology can lead to perpetuating misconceptions of a particular group rather than challenging these, which counteracts the benefits of multicultural literature. Additionally, research on children's literature indicates that some contemporary children's literature reproduces instead of challenges stereotypes about people and groups who have traditionally experienced oppression and been marginalized by dominant cultures and groups. For example, mixed-race characters and characters from minority ethnic groups have been underrepresented or presented in biased ways (Monoyiou & Symeonidou, 2016, p. 589). Chaudhri and Teale (2013, p. 366) conducted an analysis of 90

realistic novels featuring mixed-race characters in the USA between 2000 and 2010 for children aged 9 to 14 years. Their analysis reveals that most mixed-race characters are portrayed negatively by placing them in struggling situations, thus encouraging the association of mixed-race characters with economically precarious urban environments. Thus, it is important to note that not all multicultural picture books are equal in content, literary quality, and illustrations (Monoyiou & Symeonidou, 2016).

When evaluating and selecting multicultural literature, it is essential to select high-quality literature that provides authentic portrayals and accurate illustrations of various groups in society. In other words, multicultural literature in the EFL classroom must represent and reflect realistic ways of being, seeing, and speaking shared by racial groups, avoid distorted views of differences, and foster belief in cultural diversity (Mandarani & Munir, 2021; Yokota, 1993, 2001). High-quality multicultural literature should broaden learners' vision and experiences, promote multiple perspectives, and consider class, race, gender, religion, and language. Moreover, it should explore dominant power systems, represent people taking action on social issues, and give voice to those traditionally marginalized (Ciardiello, 2004; Evans, 2010; Jones, 2004). Selecting high-quality multicultural books will expose learners to accurate and diverse representations of different cultures, religions, and ways of life and ensure that the texts are free from harmful stereotypes, biases, and misinformation.

Teachers have the power to affirm learners' lives, cultural context, and voices through their literature selections (Evans, 2010, p. 94). Thus, teachers should carefully examine the content, images, and messages in multicultural literature they want to incorporate into their classrooms. To assist elementary teachers with evaluating and selecting high-quality and authentic multicultural books, Husband (2019a, p. 19) recommends that teachers consider the following ten questions:

Has the book won a particular award or distinction? How accurate are the facts in the book? How realistic is the content in the book? Does the book contain any racial stereotypes or racist messages? Does the book reflect authentic language variations, dialects, and communication styles? Whose perspective/voices are presented in the book? Does the book have high-quality images or illustrations? Does the book present a nuanced or complex narrative of a particular racial group/event? To what degree does the book make connections between racism and other forms of oppression? What curriculum value does the book have? (Husband, 2019a, p. 19)

Likewise, Temple et al. (1998, cited in Mandarani & Munir, 2021) suggest a framework comprising eight qualities essential for multicultural literature that can assist teachers in their classroom selections. The framework is similar to Husband's (2019a) framework. It includes:

positive characters imagery with realistic behaviors and authentic cultural perspectives, multidimensional to assist readers in experiencing the depth and breadth of a certain culture, cultural details that are embedded naturally, historical accuracy when appropriate, dialect or language spoken by the characters should authentically portray the interactions, impactful visual and authentic illustration, pluralistic them to nurture belief in cultural diversities as a national asset and reflect the changing population, and lastly, high literary quality, including superb plots and well-developed characterizations. (Temple et al, 1998, cited in Mandarani & Munir 2021, pp. 6-7)

Iwai (2015, cited in Mandarani & Munir 2021, pp. 6-7) added two additional points to be included in multicultural books to improve the framework by Temple et al. (1998). The first point involves evasion of stereotyping and tokenism so the readers can gain in-depth knowledge of people and culture in their context. The last point entails exploring a variety of genres, whereby teachers include poetry, historical fiction, biographies, folktales, and picture books that align with learners' interests and experiences, enabling them to connect with the content on a personal level.

In addition to selecting individual multicultural literature texts, by using text sets as a foundation for working with social issues and injustice, teachers in elementary classrooms can enhance learners' development of more significant global awareness and empathy, enabling them to respond empathetically to people and events beyond their daily experiences (Newstreet et al., 2019, p. 567). Text sets refer to a collection of resources comprising various texts, reading levels, and media that provide multiple perspectives on selected topics, such as stereotypes and prejudice. Through text sets, learners can explore topics from various perspectives, promoting a more complete and informed understanding of the subject matter (Annenberg Foundation, 2016, cited in Newstreet et al., 2019, p. 561). Additionally, Shearer (Newstreet et al., 2019, p. 565) argues that multimodal response activities should be used to support literature reading in order to stimulate learners' growth from knowing to understanding the content of the literature and thereby provide learning about themselves and the world around them.

2.5 The benefits of working with multicultural literature in the classroom

2.5.1 Multicultural literature as a classroom tool

A study conducted by Dunham et al. (2013) suggests that many young children harbor implicit racial biases against groups in society that are frequently associated or portrayed with negative character traits. In other words, stereotypical representations of various groups have entered the everyday life of children and fostered negative attitudes (UNESCO et al., 2011, p. 13). It is, therefore, more important than ever for teachers to educate learners about social issues and encourage the development of skills necessary to detect bias so the learners can counteract stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. In addition, Kohl (1995) claims that including multicultural literature in the classroom can influence learners' values and beliefs. In this way, multicultural literature can be a powerful tool utilized in the classroom when engaging learners in exploring complex issues, such as stereotypes and prejudice, and guiding them into developing attitudes to foster acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity.

Multicultural literature's role in a multicultural society has been a topic of discussion for several decades (Birkeland, 2017). Gopalakrishnan (2010) and Osorio (2018) argue that multicultural literature must be considered as a tool in the classroom rather than used for children's free choice of reading and entertainment purposes. For example, Osorio (2018, p. 51) used multicultural literature in her second-grade bilingual Spanish and English classroom to "promote or develop an appreciation for diversity, honor learners' voices, connect to learners' rich linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and promote critical consciousness." Likewise, Thein et al. (2007, p. 55) claim that teaching multicultural literature is more than teaching and working with literacy conventions. It is about changing learners' cultural perspectives and understanding their lives and the lives of those around them. Levin (2007, cited in Erbas, 2019, p. 405) similarly claims that multicultural children's literature is an essential means to use in the classroom to represent the world and the diverse cultures within it to children.

2.5.2 Multicultural literature as mirrors, windows, and sliding doors

Bishop (1990) suggests that multicultural literature can be envisioned as mirrors, windows, and sliding doors. Through mirrors, learners can reflect on aspects of their lives in the literature and

enhance their self-image and awareness of personal cultural heritage (Bishop, 1990; Colby & Lyon, 2004; Evans, 2010; Yokota, 2009). Likewise, Hefflin and Barksdale-Ladd (2001) discuss the importance of children making connections between literature and their everyday lives. They state that learners need to relate to characters and situations that will give them a sense of affirmation about themselves and their culture. Likewise, Husband's (2019b) study, where he employed multicultural picture books in the classroom, suggests that through multicultural literature, children will not only gain knowledge and information about other races and cultures but that this literature will also help to instill a sense of pride in children, particularly children who come from a diverse racial and ethnic background. In this way, multicultural literature can affirm their identity and the identity of their families and communities.

Moreover, some children need help with reading and being engaged and interested in the reading process when they do not see themselves or their culture represented in the literature. Consequently, they might believe that school is for someone else, not people like them (Colby & Lyon, 2004, p. 26). Thus, one of the benefits of multicultural literature is that it allows learners with racially diverse backgrounds to see themselves and their experiences affirmed and represented in the book and broaden their horizons which will lead to them gaining more knowledge about other countries, cultures, and global issues in general (Husband, 2019b, p. 1069; Rass, 2020, p. 589). In addition, multicultural literature in EFL classrooms can motivate learners to be lifelong readers who can appreciate human diversity and empathize with people of other cultures since they become familiar with their inner worlds (Moecharam & KartikaSari, 2014).

In addition to providing affirming and cultural experiences to children, by envisioning multicultural literature as windows and sliding doors, children can develop respect, inclusivity, empathy, tolerance, equality, and sensitivity toward other racial groups and cultures in society. According to Bishop (1990), through windows, the reader can see into the lives of individuals who are different from them, while through sliding glass doors, the reader can step into the imaginary world created or recreated by the author in the literature. Mathis (2001) claims that providing multicultural literature in class is a beneficial way for children to learn about new cultures, experience different cultural patterns, and discuss various cultures. Through multicultural literature, children will be exposed to a large spectrum of information about different racial, social, and cultural groups and their societal beliefs and values. Moreover, by exposing children to different perspectives and ways of life and providing a more profound and

critical understanding of the complexities and diversity of the world, multicultural literature can be used to teach the foundations of democracy, cultural appreciation, social justice, the common good, and social responsibility (Owens & Nowell, 2001; Wolk, 2004, cited in Evans, 2010, p. 94).

Several studies (e.g., Dever et al., 2005; Fain, 2008; Nikolajeva, 2013) suggest that multicultural literature, in particular, multicultural picturebooks, can support young children in developing abilities such as empathy toward histories and experiences of individuals and groups who are being and have been racially oppressed and marginalized in society. Similarly, Hardstaff (2014, cited in Husband, 2019b, p. 1069) suggests that multicultural picturebooks can be introduced to help children develop empathy towards bullied and mistreated people. In addition, exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences can lead learners to recognize the commonalities they share with people from different backgrounds and help them see beyond cultural differences. Furthermore, by including multicultural literature that focuses on topics such as people of color, regional cultures, and religious minorities in the EFL classroom, Barta and Grindler (1996) suggest that children can better understand diversity and see the differences between people and cultures.

Overall, multicultural literature exposes children to multiple perspectives on the world, helps them identify with their own culture, and opens dialogue on issues regarding diversity (Bishop, 1990; Colby & Lyon, 2004). In other words, by teachers introducing multicultural literature in the EFL classroom, children will have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of both their own culture and the cultures of others and learn about the histories, backgrounds, and life experiences of people with different racial and cultural identities in the classroom and the broader society (Husband, 2019b, p. 1069). This aligns with the Norwegian curriculum (LK20), which clearly states that schools should give learners an insight into cultural diversity and different ways of living and thinking (MER, 2019, p. 2).

2.5.3 Multicultural literature and development of empathy and critical consciousness

A substantial number of studies, such as Hinton and Berry (2004), have emphasized the benefits of using multicultural literature to work with social issues and support children in developing critical perspectives. Multicultural literature can help children realize inequities, encourage learners to detect stereotypes and other social injustices and work toward their elimination

(Colby & Lyon, 2004; Evans, 2010; Yokota, 2009). Gripton (1993, cited in Mandarani & Munir 2021, p. 3) claims that learners who read multicultural literature will start to realize that all ethnic groups possess roots in the past and have valid heritages that contribute to the overall culture. Thus, multicultural literature will enable teachers to facilitate learners to get an insight into the lives of others and realize the existence of issues outside their lives (Rass, 2020, p. 590). Concerning negative stereotypes and other complex social issues related to diversity, Goo (2018, p. 325) states that multicultural literature can counteract traditional stereotypes. That can be done by choosing literature and portraying characters engaging in non-stereotypical behavior or by pointing out examples of unacceptable stereotyping.

Segal and Wagaman (2017, p. 2010) state that giving children experiential opportunities to understand historical patterns of social injustice, such as oppression and discrimination, and helping children develop empathy, can encourage children to identify, resist and combat racism, stereotypes, and prejudice in the social and cultural worlds around them. Moreover, this will help children develop attitudes to foster acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity and sensitivity to social inequalities (Ruiz-Cecilia & Guijarro-Ojeda, 2005, p. 72). Gopalakrishnan (2010, p. 34) also suggests that multicultural literature will help children experience understanding, empathy, and tolerance that will guide them to break debilitating stereotypes and see the importance of giving equal voice and representation to everyone. For instance, Shearer in Newstreet et al. (2019, p. 560) engaged her sixth-grade learners with theme-based multicultural books to learn more about the Muslim area of the world, the diverse cultures of Muslim people, and the complex issues related to Islamophobia. She engaged learners through interactive read-aloud and used open-ended questions to foster intertextual connections. In addition to the read-aloud and the Direct Reading-Thinking Activity (Stauffer, 1969), she integrated multimodal response and extension activities to stimulate learners' growth from knowing to understanding the content and to promote student learning. The activities enabled the learners to develop questions and plan inquiry.

Lastly, multicultural picture books can help children develop a sociopolitical and critical consciousness of racial justice issues in the world around them (Husband, 2019b). Through reading multicultural literature about oppression in the world and issues of power, learners can evolve from what Freire (1970, cited in Husband, 2019b) referred to as the magical consciousness of injustice toward a critical consciousness of injustice in the world. Magical consciousness is the state of consciousness in which people perceive themselves as being

controlled or influenced by power-dominant forces and the powers of injustice. On the other hand, critical consciousness refers to recognizing the persistent issue of racial oppression across different aspects of society. Developing critical consciousness aims to identify meaningful ways to resist, counteract, and combat injustice. Multicultural picturebooks can provide spaces in the classroom for dialogue and reflection on issues of race and racial justice in direct and critical ways to help children move toward a critical consciousness of injustice in the world (So Jung & Hyesun, 2017, cited in Husband, 2019b, p. 1072). As a result, through critical reflection and dialogue, learners will gain a more profound and less superficial understanding of race and social issues, such as negative stereotypes, discrimination, and racism within the world (Kemple et al., 2016; Kuby, 2011). Additionally, children will better understand issues of oppression and develop awareness and understanding of how injustice works in the world around them.

2.6 Studies on multicultural literature with learners

2.6.1 Studies with older learners

Thein et al. (2007) conducted a study to explore what changes can transpire when white learners of eleventh- and twelfth-grade English classes respond to various multicultural literature books. They used instructional strategies to assist the white learners in making sense of the diverse social and cultural worlds in the multicultural literature assigned. These strategies included discussion techniques, writing prompts, drama, and performance activities designed to help learners develop perspective-taking as a habit of mind through which they acknowledge, respect, understand, and possibly still disagree with alternative perspectives (Thein et al., 2007, p. 59). Thein et al. (2007, p. 55) state that significant changes in beliefs and attitudes happen slowly; however, they claim that a powerful kind of change can be imagined when learners read, discuss, and write about multicultural literature, a change they define as an increased “willingness to try on different perspectives.”

The results from the study indicated that when learners encountered new perspectives throughout the multicultural literature, they experienced tensions between the beliefs and perspectives they brought with them from their experiences and the characters they met in text worlds. Through these tensions, learners became more critically aware of their beliefs and perspectives. The researchers also suggested that these changes may result in the learners

becoming more willing to temporarily try to see the world from a different perspective and may even become willing to reconsider or amend their original perspectives and beliefs. From experiencing characters' interrogation of oppressive or limiting people and institutions, by reading and responding to, for example, the multicultural book *Their Eyes Were Watching God* (Hurstun, 1937), learners began to consider the kinds of challenges that confront them in their lives and the lives of those around them. (Thein et al. 2007, pp. 56-59).

Additionally, when the learners experienced interrogation of oppression, they began to consider the kinds of challenges others have to encounter. Perspective-taking practices that were introduced in the study helped learners effectively see the world from a different perspective. The study demonstrates the powerful changes that can occur in learners' understanding of the world and diversity when learners read, discuss, and write about multicultural literature (Thein et al., 2007, p. 56).

In another context, Thein et al. (2011) conducted a significant ethnographic study of ninety tenth-grade learners' literacy practices. The study involved assigning learners multicultural literature, including *Bastards out of Carolina* (1992), and encouraging them to participate in literature circles. The study aimed to evaluate whether engaging learners in discussing current, political, and multicultural literature could impact learners' attitudes toward diversity and other cultures and change their perspectives. The study revealed that learners developed a deeper connection with the characters in the assigned texts and that reading multicultural literature increased their awareness about different beliefs, views, and social practices of cultures outside of their own.

In a study by Dressel (2005), samples of the writing of 123 eighth-grade learners produced during a unit on multicultural literature were analyzed to determine the learners' perceptions of characters and individuals from cultures that differed from their own. The study revealed how reading and responding to multicultural literature positively influenced most learners. However, a few learners expressed negative or neutral feelings towards reading the literature both before and after the unit, indicating a lack of positive influence in their case. Despite this, the study found that two-thirds of the learners could make connections and demonstrate an insightful understanding of non-dominant groups. Although many learners showed an increased awareness of other cultures and groups, the study concluded that educators of dominant-culture learners need to regularly incorporate multicultural texts into their curriculum to help learners

gain exposure to diverse perspectives and gain knowledge about alternative worldviews. Dressel (2005) suggested that by using multicultural texts that offer different perspectives, educators can assist learners in reflecting on underlying ideologies.

In another study, Louie (2005) investigated how high school learners develop empathy while reading multicultural novellas set in China. The study revealed that learners could express empathy in their discussions and written responses as they better understood how Chinese people lived as they received substantial information about the text's historical, political, social, and cultural context (Louie, 2005, p. 569). For instance, some learners showed emotional empathy toward the people who lived during the Chinese Cultural Revolution by explaining how they believed the individuals felt and thought (Louie, 2005, p. 573). Additionally, several learners believed that acquiring knowledge about other cultures would heighten their awareness of their own community and society.

Given that this thesis focuses on Norwegian EFL learners' perception of prejudice and stereotypes and works with the selected multicultural picturebooks using critical literacy practices, the study by Brown (2019) can also be seen as relevant. Brown (2019, p. 120) investigated Norwegian upper secondary learners' visual stereotypes and their awareness of and willingness to challenge these stereotypes before and after participating in an educational intervention that included critical visual literacy. In her intervention, Brown (2019) used *American Born Chinese* (2006), a multicultural graphic novel. In the study, critical visual literacy was introduced as an approach to teaching about culture in three EFL classrooms. In addition, the study engaged learners in tasks that required reflection on visual stereotypes.

The study's findings show a reduction in stereotyping concerning religious and ethnic groups, as the learners explicitly addressed stereotypes related to religion and ethnicity. In other words, the learners were less inclined to stereotype based on religion or ethnicity after the intervention, and the learners had an increased awareness of stereotyping as a process. That led some learners to challenge and address specific stereotypes (Brown, 2019, p. 120). In addition, as the learners' understanding and knowledge about certain ethnicities and the social issues related to these ethnicities increased, the researcher saw a reduction in the use of stereotypes in the post-interviews. For example, there was a reduction in Asian stereotypes in the post-interview after the learners' understanding of the problems related to Asian stereotypes was increased (Brown, 2019, p. 128). Previous research has shown that addressing stereotypes can encourage learners

to re-evaluate and change their assumptions and beliefs about cultures and social groups (Forsman, 2010). Based on similar findings in her study, Brown (2019, p. 135) suggested that these findings look promising for the EFL classroom if one aims to encourage EFL learners to gain a better understanding of diversity and increase respect and interaction between people with different cultural backgrounds.

Forsman (2010) addressed the evolving role of English as a Foreign Language teaching by presenting findings from her earlier 2006 study, which aimed at increasing the understanding of the inclusion of cultural aspects in the foreign language classroom. This was an action research project that focused on the promotion of intercultural competence among 17 minority Swedish-speaking learners in Finland who were aged between 13 and 15 years old during their three-year lower secondary school program. The study investigated efforts to foster awareness of diversity and difference in the EFL classroom to prevent and modify stereotypical views among adolescent learners through a socio-cultural and social constructivist framework of learning with the implementation of experiential and dialogical approaches in the classroom (Forsman, 2010, p. 501).

Forsman (2010) found that many Swedish adolescents held stereotypical beliefs about British teenagers and had a limited understanding of the multicultural nature of British society. In addition, British English was often perceived as outdated and inferior compared to other standard registers, with American English being more popular. The media was identified as a significant contributor to these attitudes, while insufficient attention to cultural aspects in the EFL classroom was also proposed as a factor. However, after implementing experiential and dialogical approaches in the classroom, Forsman's findings suggested that many learners seemed to have modified some previously held stereotypical perceptions and images. In addition, the knowledge acquired during this process could be utilized, to varying degrees, to consider how to apply their newfound understanding to other situations and contexts (Forsman, 2010, p. 515). Lastly, Forsman suggested that by gaining a greater understanding of diversity across various social and ethnic groups, learners can ideally continue to engage with and encounter differences in a manner that is not influenced by stereotypical views or prejudices, both within and outside the classroom setting (Forsman, 2010, p. 516)

2.6.2 Studies with younger learners

Early childhood is believed to be the appropriate age for cultivating experiences that promote inclusion and reduce prejudice since children are commonly viewed as more flexible than adolescents and adults (Brown et al., 2018, p. 68). Evans (2010, p. 92) conducted a study to examine whether reading multicultural books aloud to fourth-grade learners could serve as a tool for altering learners' perspectives of others and for increasing their tolerance of diversity and social action by learners. Contemporary and historical fiction and nonfiction literature that encouraged positive portrayals of diverse characters with authentic and realistic behaviors were selected for the study Evans (2010, p. 92). The study revealed that innovative critical literacy practices with multicultural literature could impact learners' understanding and awareness of others. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that reading multicultural picture books facilitated the learners' increased knowledge and understanding of prejudice, bias, and tolerance. For instance, after working with multicultural literature, learners expressed their understanding of prejudice as a sense of judging people through visible features (Evans, 2010, p. 99). In addition, the learners expressed a change of thinking towards others, tolerance, and personal non-prejudicial actions.

Moreover, through listening to various multicultural picture books, learners increased their awareness about the values, beliefs, and social practices of cultures other than their own. Working with multicultural literature through critical literacy practices heightened the learners' acceptance and respect for people different from themselves. By reading books about the Jewish experience during the Holocaust, the learners experienced getting placed in someone else's shoes and reacted with feelings of anger and sadness for others. This indicated that the heightened awareness in the learners also increased empathy toward others (Evans, 2010, p. 97). The findings also show that learners had an increased understanding and acceptance of their own culture and cultural similarities and differences, including ethnicity and religion.

Overall, Evans's (2010) study suggests that using multicultural literature led to attitudinal changes in the learners. The changes also occurred in the learners' perceptions. Through engaging with multicultural literature, learners developed awareness, acceptance, and respect for people different from themselves and an increased understanding of prejudice, bias, and tolerance. Unfortunately, there was no method in place in this study to record any specific

changes in the learner's behavior. However, Evans (2010, p. 99) reports that the learners strongly believed that reading multicultural stories resulted in a change in their behavior.

Lalani and Bhutta (2019, p. 83) explored the efficacy of literature relating to Anna Frank through a quasi-experiment to reduce children's attitudes toward prejudice and discrimination regarding categories such as race, ethnicity, religion, and gender. The study consisted of 100 upper key-stage 2 learners of the British schools in Karachi. An Experimental Group (EG) and a matched Comparison Group (CG) were used to represent these schools. The study used the intervention plan entitled ROYAL (Reading of Young Anne's Literature), practical activities, and task-based activities to help the learners to reflect on the issues related to prejudice and discrimination (Lalani & Bhutta, 2019, p. 85).

The study found that both EG and CG groups displayed high discriminatory and prejudicial attitudes during the pretest. Nonetheless, there was a significant change in the learners' attitudes during the post-test and after the interventions. For instance, when the learners' responses expressed prejudice, the responses lacked the aggressive and hateful tendencies observed in the pretest (Lalani & Bhutta, 2019, p. 87). During the interventions, the learners were taught that the Nazi ideology regarded Germans as a superior race and that they sought global domination. The combination of historical facts and readings of Anne Frank's experiences prompted the learners to examine racial and ethnic prejudice both within their own context and in the broader world. They demonstrated their comprehension of these insights by providing examples of, for example, the relationship between White Americans and African Americans and the importance of working together with mutual respect (Lalani & Bhutta, 2019, p. 88).

Furthermore, by studying the racially and religiously motivated anti-Semitism and Anne Frank and Hanneli Goslar's experiences, the learners reflected on issues of prejudice and discrimination in modern contemporary society. The learners' attitudes gradually changed through readings, reflections, and discussions, and their responses reflected attitude changes over time. This was also observed in the discussions and posters they created. Moreover, after the interventions, some learners were intrinsically motivated to learn more about Anne Frank (Lalani & Bhutta, 2019, p. 88). The results of this study point to the efficacy of using literature that focuses on issues and topics related to prejudice and discrimination in reducing the acceptance of prejudice and discrimination.

Brown et al. (2018) conducted a study implementing a storybook intervention using multicultural friendship stories in Indonesia. Indonesia has a history of strong ethnic bias and high racial tensions. The study aimed to reduce prejudice and ethnic bias in young children and examine whether reading multicultural friendship storybooks reduced ethnic prejudice among ethnic preschool children in two Indonesian cities. The study was based on two studies involving 138 children between the ages of 4 and 7 (Brown et al., 2018, p. 68).

In contrast to Evans's (2010) study, this study found minimal to no effect of the intervention using multicultural friendship stories. Across Studies 1 and 2, there was no reduction in prejudice. The findings in Study 1 are that Indonesian preschoolers are notably prejudiced against Papuan children as the children wanted to be the farthest away from Papuan children compared to the other groups. Moreover, the Papuan children had the most negative attributes and were assigned the fewest positive attributes (Brown et al., 2018, p. 78). The Papuans are the lower-status ethnic out-group in Indonesia, and the children's biases and responses reflected this status. On the other hand, the Chinese were a high-status ethnic out-group. Brown et al. (2018, p. 81) claimed that the ineffectiveness of the intervention could be attributed to the deeply ingrained cultural biases against individuals belonging to dark-skinned ethnic groups, which were held even by the young children participating in this study.

That prejudice reduction was not observed in either Study 1 or Study 2 emphasized the strength of racial bias against out-groups of the lowest status and how it is developed from an early age in young children from the ethnic in-groups. These findings also suggested that such prejudices are challenging to modify and highlighted the need for increased focus on early childhood educational research (Brown et al., 2018, p. 67). Overall, a review of the literature (e.g., Aboud and Fenwick, 1999; Aboud et al., 2012; Cameron et al., 2006, 2007; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, cited in Brown et al., 2018) suggests that the most efficient approach to reducing prejudice is by exposing children to positive intergroup interaction through various forms of media, such as multicultural literature, and by explicitly addressing prejudice through readings and explicit discussions (Brown et al., 2018, p. 67).

As mentioned in section 1.2, only a limited number of studies have been conducted on using multicultural literature with young learners, especially EFL learners. Therefore, the current study aims to contribute to filling the research gap regarding young Norwegian EFL learners. Based on the theoretical considerations and previous studies presented in this section (e.g.,

Bishop, 1993; Brown, 2019; Evans, 2010; Husband, 2019a, 2019b; Kohl, 1995; Lalani & Bhutta, 2018; Lewison et al., 2014; Thein et al., 2007; Thein et al., 2011), the researcher has designed a multicultural literature project comprised of readings and discussions of two multicultural picturebooks and including four multimodal response activities. The multicultural literature project aimed to investigate the potential of working with multicultural literature for raising 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice and increasing their willingness to challenge them. The current thesis proposes that multicultural literature can serve as an essential tool in combating stereotypes and prejudice. Furthermore, it can provide children with opportunities to learn about various social groups and potentially contribute to raising EFL learners' awareness of and willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice.

3. Methodology

This chapter is divided into five sections and presents the methodology used in this study. Section 3.1 presents the overarching methodological approach. Section 3.2 presents the research design, including a description of the multicultural literature project, the sample, and the study's datasets. Section 3.3 describes the data collection methods, which comprised the collection of learner artifacts produced during the project and focus group interviews. Following this, section 3.4 gives a description of the data analysis procedure, including how the data were organized and analyzed. Section 3.5 addresses the study's ethical considerations. Lastly, section 3.6 presents issues of validity and reliability in this study.

3.1 Methodological approach

In order to investigate the potential multicultural literature has for raising 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice and to answer the research questions stated below, this study employs a classroom-based qualitative research design.

1. What potential does working with multicultural literature have for raising 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice?
2. Do the learners show a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice after the multicultural literature project? If so, in which ways?

There are three main methodological approaches to research: quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-method approaches. According to Dörnyei (2007), quantitative research involves collecting and analyzing numerical data and is analyzed by statistical methods. Quantitative research design follows a 'meaning in the general' strategy that tends to provide less information about the phenomena under examination. In contrast, a qualitative research design concentrates on an in-depth understanding of the 'meaning in the particular'. A qualitative research design was, therefore, considered to be better suited for this study.

Denzin and Lincoln (2005), claim that, unlike quantitative research, qualitative research is difficult to define. According to McKay (2006, p. 8), qualitative research involves data collection methods that lead to open-ended and non-numerical data that are analyzed by non-statistical methods. Additionally, qualitative research is inductive and uses the collected data to

derive a general conclusion of the research rather than making hypotheses during the initial phase of the study, such as in a quantitative research design.

Qualitative research is a phenomenological approach that seeks a contextualized understanding of phenomena. It aims to understand and explain behavior and beliefs, identify processes, and understand the context of human experiences (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 17). The qualitative research approach allows the researcher to examine human experiences in detail using specific research methods. These research methods include in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation, content analysis, life histories, and biographies. To gather information, a qualitative researcher has to be open-minded, curious, and empathic. Additionally, they need to be flexible and able to listen to people sharing their experiences (Hennink et al., 2020, p. 10).

Some of the advantages of a qualitative research approach are that it can broaden our understanding of the phenomena and situation being studied by widening the range of possible interpretations of human experiences rather than seeking a generalized interpretation (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 40). This approach is, therefore, well suited for examining 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice. Most importantly, qualitative research is more flexible and offers greater internal validity, accounting for the various perspectives of the participants (Dörnyei, 2007). However, some of the weaknesses of a qualitative research approach are related to the researcher's role. In qualitative research, the results rely on the researcher's interpretation of the data and can therefore be influenced by the researcher's personal biases. Furthermore, qualitative research is more time-consuming and labor-intensive. Thus, this approach often relies on relatively small sample sizes. Considering this, the most frequent criticism of this research approach is the small participant samples and that a small sample may not provide insights into a phenomenon that applies broadly to others (Dörnyei, 2007). Nevertheless, given the constraints of a master thesis, having a small sample of participants from one EFL class was considered acceptable for this thesis.

3.2 Research design

3.2.1 Project description - The two-week multicultural literature project

A two-week multicultural literature project was designed to engage EFL learners in reflecting on the topic of stereotypes and prejudice through reading and discussing text sets involving two multicultural picturebooks and a range of multimodal response activities. The four dimensions of critical literacy inspired the design of the multicultural literature project to work with critical thinking, critical discussions, and reflections throughout the project. Critical reflections and discussions were incorporated into the project to enable the learners to identify, resist, and ultimately take action against various forms of social injustice, including stereotypes and prejudice (Husband, 2019b; Lewison et al., 2014). Additionally, the multicultural literature project was designed based on Newstreet et al.'s (2019) suggestions of using text sets and multimodal response activities as a foundation for working with complex issues such as stereotypes and prejudice.

The project lasted for two weeks and included three 60-minute sessions per week. The role of the researcher during the two-week project was to carry out the lessons and collect data. Throughout the lessons, only the researcher and the learners were in attendance. The entire class participated in the multicultural literature project as the project was integrated into the selected 6th grade's usual English lessons and the topic covered was relevant to the Norwegian curriculum. Thus, teaching proceeded as usual, and all learners participated in the teaching and activities throughout the project. A lesson plan that outlines the structure and content of the project and a description of the tasks is provided in Appendix A.

During the project, the researcher read aloud one multicultural picturebook each week. Throughout the reading, the researcher asked critical questions inspired by the four dimensions of critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2014) before, during, and after the read-aloud (see Appendix B and C). The multicultural picturebooks selected for the project were *The Day You Begin* (Woodson, 2018) and *Under My Hijab* (Khan, 2019). The multicultural picturebooks were evaluated and selected based on the framework by Temple et al. (1998) and Husband (2019a) (see section 2.4) to ensure a selection of high-quality and authentic multicultural books for the EFL class, which could allow for the challenging of stereotypes and prejudice. Following

each reading, the learners wrote reflection notes to express their thoughts and reactions to the multicultural picturebooks (see Appendix D).

The first multicultural picturebook read during the project was *The Day You Begin* (Woodson, 2018). The picturebook tells the story of a young girl who feels different and excluded when she starts a new school. She struggles to fit in because of her physical appearance and cultural background. However, as the story progresses, she gradually finds the courage to share her experiences and interests with her classmates. In doing so, she discovers that everyone has their own unique story. The picturebook emphasizes the importance of embracing diversity, encouraging empathy, and finding strength in one's own identity.

The second multicultural picture book was *Under My Hijab* (Khan, 2019). The picturebook explores the role of the hijab in Muslim culture through the eyes of a young girl. The story features a diverse group of Muslim women and girls who wear hijabs in different styles, showcasing the variety of ways in which they choose to express their identity. In addition, the book challenges stereotypes and misconceptions about Muslim women, portraying them as strong, accomplished individuals with rich and diverse cultural heritages.

The project involved four multimodal response activities in total, which allowed the 6th grade EFL learners to address the topic of stereotypes and prejudice and make meaningful connections with the two multicultural picturebooks selected for the project. During each lesson, the researcher introduced the activities, after which the learners worked independently on the activities, either individually or in groups, depending on the nature of the activity. An overview and description of the four activities, and the timeline for these, can be found in Appendix A. As previously mentioned, the activities were inspired by the four dimensions of critical literacy, which are disturbing the commonplace, considering multiple viewpoints, focusing on socio-political issues, and promoting social justice (Lewison et al., 2014). In line with Newstreet et al. (2019), the activities were also designed to align with the general topic of stereotypes and prejudice, enabling the learners to reflect on the topic and the multicultural picture books between the lessons and tasks.

Activity 1 (see Appendix E) of the project consisted of an instructional activity in which learners were asked to pair pictures of individuals with their corresponding occupation titles, inspired by a similar task in Brown (2019), followed by an introduction to the concepts of

stereotypes and prejudice. This activity was designed to have the learners reflect on different stereotypes they might have. Following reading the multicultural picturebook *The Day You Begin* (Woodson, 2018), Activity 2 (see Appendix F) was adapted from a Dembra learning activity and aimed to address everyday racism and establish connections between the picturebook and the task. Activity 3 (see Appendix G) consisted of differentiating between statements that were facts, opinions, or prejudice and was carried out after reading the multicultural picture book *Under My Hijab* (Khan, 2019). Lastly, in Activity 4 (see Appendix H), the concluding task of the project, learners were asked to provide ideas for an Idea Jar to demonstrate how they could challenge stereotypes and prejudice to promote social justice (Lewison et al., 2014).

3.2.2 *The sample and the data sets*

The two-week multicultural literature project was undertaken in a Norwegian 6th grade EFL class with eighteen learners, comprised of ten boys and eight girls. The decision to focus on EFL 6th grade learners was motivated by the underrepresentation of young EFL learners in previous research, representing a research gap that this study aimed to contribute to filling. The classroom-based qualitative research study included two different data collection sets. The first dataset consisted of the anonymous reflection notes and ideas for the Idea Jar submitted by the whole class. Using learner artifacts produced by the whole class provided a wider range of perspectives and experiences represented in the data collection process (Dörnyei, 2007).

The second dataset for this study was based on the transcripts from focus group interviews with eight learners from the Norwegian EFL 6th grade class that participated in the multicultural literature project. The participants for the study were chosen based on convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is when participants are selected based on being accessible to the researcher (Mackey & Gass, 2012, pp. 185-186). In this study, the participants were selected due to the researcher's previous contact with the school. In addition, the researcher asked the teacher to select participants for the two focus groups at random from the class. This was done to give every learner who had consent from their parents to participate in the focus group interviews an equal chance of being selected. The researcher's decision to include both a larger sample, incorporating the learner artifacts, and a smaller sample in the study was motivated by the aim to gather a wide range of perspectives and experiences during the data collection process. The larger sample size facilitated a broader range of examples of learners' awareness

of stereotypes and prejudice, while the smaller sample size allowed for a more in-depth exploration of participants' reflections, thereby providing a deeper insight into their experiences throughout the project.

The selected participants were then divided into two focus groups, with equal representation of both genders in each group. The study aimed to have homogenous samples for the focus groups, following Dörnyei's (2007, p. 144) suggestion that the dynamics of a focus group work better with homogenous samples. Hence, despite the gender differences, the samples for the focus groups can be considered homogenous to some extent, as all participants were of the same age and in the same class. Adler et al. (2019, p. 5) argue that children feel safer and more willing to express their opinion if they are familiar with the group members. The eight participants for the focus group interviews shared a long-standing familiarity, having been in the same class since their first year of primary school.

3.3 Data collection methods

This study is a small-scale study with a classroom-based qualitative research design using learner artifacts produced during the project and semi-structured focus group interviews after the project as the data collection methods.

3.3.1 Learner artifacts

Artifacts produced by the learners during the multicultural literature project were collected throughout the project. All collected artifacts were anonymous, as none of the learners included their names or other personal information on the materials. In this study, the artifacts that allowed learners to share written reflections and ideas, such as the reflection notes (Appendix D) and the Idea Jar (Appendix H), were collected and used for the data analysis.

The researcher collected a total of 45 learner artifacts, consisting of 27 from the reflection notes and 18 from the Idea Jar. The learners were allowed to write their reflection notes and ideas for the Idea Jar in either Norwegian or English. The learners' final artifacts reveal that several learners chose to write in English. While all the learners present in the class contributed ideas for the Idea Jar, nine did not submit their reflection notes due to illness or absence from school.

The artifacts collected consisted of verbal texts and were collected in response to the two multicultural picturebooks and the topic of stereotypes and prejudice. These artifacts allowed for including a broader range of perspectives and experiences in the data collection.

3.3.2 Focus group interviews

Two focus group interviews were carried out the week after the two-week multicultural project. Both focus group interviews were conducted at the participants' school, and only the researcher and the participants were present during the interviews. Each focus group consisted of four 6th grade learners with two participants from each gender. The focus group interviews were audio recorded using a Dictaphone. The advantage of recording the interview was that the actual language used by the participants was preserved and provided an objective record of what they said that could later be analyzed (McKay, 2006, p. 56). In addition, the Dictaphone was tested beforehand to ensure the quality of the recording. The interview recordings were stored in separate files on a password-protected pen drive which only the researcher accessed. Both focus group interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes.

Research with children is different from doing research with adults. There are specific challenges to conducting interviews with children. For example, they may lose interest, be inattentive or be slow in their responses. To ensure that the participants were able to express their thoughts and opinions, the researcher therefore facilitated semi-structured focus group interviews and seated the participants at a round table as this setup allowed them to see and hear each other (Beyea & Nicoll, 2000; Wong, 2008, cited in Adler et al., 2019, p. 8). Focus groups are very suitable for collecting data with children. They can create a safe peer environment for the children participating in the interviews and enable the researcher to collect in-depth data that provides more details of the phenomenon under study (Adler et al., 2019, p. 1).

Additionally, using focus group interviews can avoid some of the power imbalance between the researcher and the participants (Shaw, Brady & Davey, 2011). Through semi-structured interviews, the participants could answer the interview questions openly, creating a dialogue. During a semi-structured interview, the researcher uses a written list of questions as a guide while the participants still have the freedom to digress and probe for more information (Mackey

& Grass, 2016, p. 225). This also allows for the researcher to ask follow-up questions and follow up on misunderstandings to increase data validity.

Lund, Helgeland, and Kovac (2016) recommend when doing research with children to provide the young participants with concrete questions that are phrased in simple language. Therefore, before the interviews were conducted, an interview guide was developed (for the full interview guide, see Appendix I), and approval was granted by Sikt, the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (see Appendix J). Dörnyei (2007, p. 137) indicates that the purpose of making an interview guide is to ensure that all relevant aspects of the research are covered and that nothing is forgotten by accident. Furthermore, an interview guide can be used to offer suitable wording to the questions and to have a list of additional probing questions or comments if needed. The interview guide for this study was structured by the following sections: Questions related to the multicultural literature project, questions related to the multicultural picturebooks, and questions related to stereotypes and prejudice. The questions were formulated to address the research questions regarding 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of and willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice after the multicultural literature project. The interview guide was piloted twice, and the interview guide was adjusted after each pilot to ensure that the interview questions would facilitate rich data.

Mackey and Grass (2016, p. 225) claim that by conducting interviews in the learners' first language (L1), the researcher removes the concerns about the proficiency of the learners impacting the quality and quantity of the data. Thus, the interviews were held in the dominant school language, Norwegian, which was the L1 for the majority of learners. Additionally, the participants were free to choose to respond in Norwegian or English. In focus group one, the researcher and the participants communicated in Norwegian. However, in focus group two, one of the participants' L1 was English. Thus, during focus group interview two, the researcher read the questions in Norwegian and English to ensure that all participants understood the question and could express themselves in the language they felt comfortable using. As indicated later in the results section, the various L1 languages of the learners did not appear to hinder their participation in the discussion. Despite the language barrier, the L1 English learner (referred to as B.4 in the results section) was able to participate equally in the discussion, as the discussions alternated between Norwegian and English. Furthermore, when the other learners wanted to comment on something the L1 English learner said, they did so in English, allowing for effective communication among all participants.

Dörnyei and Taguchi (2009) suggest that allowing the participants to answer using their mother tongue can increase the quality of the data in questionnaires. This can also apply to interviews as using the participants' L1 allowed the young participants to speak more freely and better express themselves. Conducting the interviews in the participants' L1 also ensures minimizing misunderstandings and not losing important information due to a possible language barrier (Rolland et al., 2019). However, when conducting the interviews in the participant's L1, meaning may be lost when translating quotes from non-English to English. Hence, it is essential to keep the translation as authentic as possible to minimize the loss of meaning and enhance the validity of cross-English qualitative research (Van Nes et al., 2010, p. 314).

The data from the focus group interviews supplemented the findings from the learner artifacts analysis as the focus group interviews allowed for examining the participants' reflections behind their suggestions and answers in the learner artifacts, thus allowing for more in-depth data. After the data were collected through focus group interviews, the data were transcribed and analyzed.

3.4 Data analysis

The data analysis in this study drew on Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a commonly used analytic method in qualitative research. Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) define thematic analysis as a method for analyzing, identifying, and reporting patterns, also referred to as themes within data. Furthermore, it is about searching the entire data set to find meaning and allowing the researcher to interpret and understand collective or shared meanings and experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The six phases of thematic analysis involve: 1) familiarizing oneself with the data; 2) generating initial codes; 3) searching for themes; 4) reviewing themes; 5) defining and naming themes; and 6) producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). These phases served as a guide for the thematic analyses conducted in the current study.

The first step of Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis involves getting familiar with the data. Accordingly, the audio recordings from the focus group interviews were transcribed by listening to the audio recordings and writing the data down in Microsoft Word. However, transcribing the recorded interview can be tedious and result in a great deal of data,

some of which may not be valuable (McKay, 2006, p. 56). Therefore, the researcher chose not to transcribe words, sounds, or other suprasegmental features that were not considered necessary for the question. A few such features were identified in the audio recordings and, as a result, were excluded from the transcription process. The researcher did not reformulate sentences or correct any inaccurate sentence structure or grammatical errors in the audio transcripts or the learner artifacts so as to keep the raw data materials as authentic as possible. Transcribing the interview data and reading the transcript and learner artifacts thoroughly allowed the researcher to understand the data set better (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The second phase of the analysis was organizing the data in a meaningful way and identifying patterns. This was done by producing initial codes relevant to the research questions. The transcripts were imported into an analytic software called NVivo to organize the data effectively and more systematically. Then, in phase three, the codes and categories were sorted into potential themes. In thematic analysis, “a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82). Braun and Clarke (2006) divide phase four into two levels of reviewing and refining the themes found in phase three. As such, in phase four the themes were first reviewed and then modified where the themes did not work in the context of the entire data set.

The fifth phase consisted of defining the themes and giving them names. To ensure that the themes reflected the entire data set, the themes identified were created based on their relevance to the research questions. The main theme was identified as: multicultural literature and EFL learners’ awareness of and willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. In answer to the research question, six sub-themes were identified: 1) understanding the terms stereotypes and prejudice, 2) understanding of diversity, 3) understanding the consequences of stereotypes and prejudice, 4) understanding the importance of working with multicultural literature and the topic of stereotypes and prejudice, 5) connecting the picturebooks to real-life experiences and the world outside, and 6) willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. The results section presents the results from the transcriptions and the learner artifacts based on the identified themes.

Following is a visual representation of the main theme and the six sub-themes:

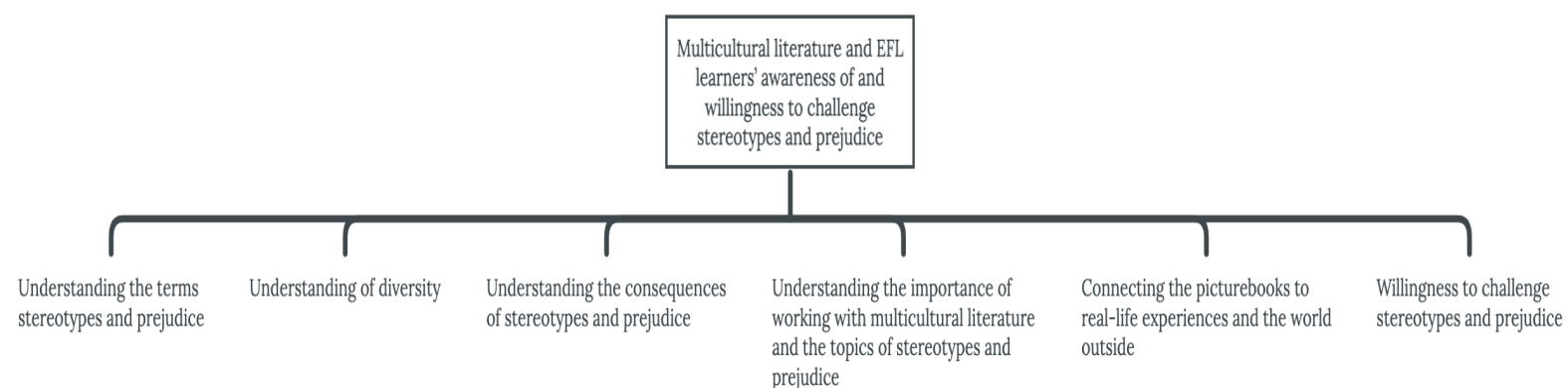


Figure 1. The main theme and six sub-themes of the analysis.

3.5 Ethical considerations

In recent years, there has been an increase in children’s participation in research. As a result, there is now a considerable body of literature focusing on numerous areas of ethical concern in research with children (e.g., Darbyshire et al., 2005; Grover, 2004; Hill, 2005; Mahon et al., 1996; Morrow & Richards, 1996; Tangen, 2008; Thomas & O’Kane, 1998; Williams & Rogers, 2014, cited in Lund et al., 2016). The ethical concerns revolve around fundamental principles such as information, consent, issues of power, confidentiality, and the protection of children (Lund et al., 2016, p. 1532). Thus, as a researcher, it is essential to consider ethical issues when conducting research with children (Mackey & Gass, 2016, p. 38).

In terms of ethical considerations, this research has been conducted following the ethical guidelines of the National Committee for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH) and approval from Sikt, the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research, was granted before the data collection commenced (Appendix J). Sikt approved the project regarding how the data were stored and anonymized during the research process. In line with Sikt’s recommendations, identifiable data, e.g., names of the participants, have been replaced with pseudonyms or codes to maintain the research participants’ anonymity and confidentiality.

The guidelines for research ethics in Norway state that “children who participate in research have a particular right to protection. As a main rule, researchers must obtain consent both from parents and the children themselves” (NESH, 2021, p. 20). Considering that the participants in the current study were children, parental consent was necessary. Therefore, after getting approval from Sikt, the researcher distributed an information letter about the research project and a consent form to every learner in the selected 6th grade EFL class. The information letter (Appendix K) contained a description of the study and information about the participants’ rights. Additionally, the researcher made sure to simplify the language used in the information letter and consent form to make this understandable for the children as well, as according to NESH (2021, p. 19), information “should be adapted to the participant’s age and background, and it should be communicated in a language and manner that they understand”. According to NESH (2021, p. 21), children always have the right to refuse participation even if their parents have consented. Hence, researchers must respect and understand children’s capacity to refuse and their different ways of expressing refusal depending on their age and developmental stage. To ensure that learners were not selected against their choice and without their consent, the researcher informed the young participants of their rights both before the start and after the completion of the project. Additionally, the eight participants selected for the focus group interviews were informed before and after the focus group interviews. This included information about their right to refuse to participate and their right to withdraw from the research project at any desired time. Moreover, they were informed about how the data would be stored safely and destroyed after the project was completed.

As stated in the NESH guidelines (2021, p. 26), “Researchers have a responsibility towards persons who are directly or indirectly affected by the research”. Through, for instance, interviews and learner artifacts, researchers may gain information about more people than those participating in the study, including their names. The focus group interviews and activities undertaken in the project had the potential to elicit sensitive or personal information. Hence, anonymization was particularly important. Through anonymization, the researcher can protect the participants’ identity and integrity (NESH, 2021, p. 23). During the focus group interviews, some learners shared the names of classmates, friends, and family members when answering the interview questions. Therefore, all data were pseudonymized to prevent any information being traced back to particular individuals. Overall, an effort was made to ensure that the best

interests of the young participants and their right to be heard and protected was prioritized at every step of the study.

3.6 Validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are key aspects of all research when referring to criteria for evaluating the scientific merit of qualitative research. In research, validity covers the accuracy and truthfulness of findings (Brink, 1993). Thus, several alternative terms for validity have been proposed, such as trustworthiness, credibility, veracity, authenticity, and consistency (e.g., Dörnyei, 2007; Glaser & Strauss; 1967, Leininger; 1991, Lincoln & Guba; 1985).

Validity can be divided into internal and external validity (Dörnyei, 2007). Internal validity refers to the extent to which research findings are accurate rather than the effect of extraneous variables (Brink, 1993). In other words, internal validity deals with the “extent to which the results of a study are a function of the factor that the researcher intends” (Mackey & Gass, 2012, p. 160). To ensure internal validity, the researcher must be aware of their biases. Researchers’ bias may be introduced when they interpret findings and considerably influence data trustworthiness. Brink (1993, p. 36) suggests that a researcher can decrease biases by being aware of the possibility of introducing bias at various points during the research. To avoid researcher bias, the researcher consciously attempted to avoid integrating their own beliefs and perceptions during the two-week multicultural literature project and data analysis.

Bias may also be introduced into the study by the participants. According to Lund et al. (2016), it is important to consider power dynamics and power imbalance when conducting research with children. The power imbalance between researchers and learners in this study could have compelled learners to provide responses they believed the researcher expected rather than to share their authentic opinions, experiences, and underlying stereotypes. As a result, the answers provided by the participants can raise concerns about the study’s reliability. Additionally, the wish to provide the expected answers can also make it difficult to assess whether the learners in this study have developed a better awareness of stereotypes and prejudice through the multicultural literature project or whether this awareness and understanding were already there, and the activities and interviews provided them with opportunities to articulate them.

According to Brink (1993), the researcher can attempt to increase the validity of participants' responses by informing them about their rights, how the researcher will collect data, and what the researcher will do with it. As mentioned in section 3.5, the 6th graders were informed during the introduction of the project about their rights and that their artifacts would be collected. Additionally, the participants of the focus group interviews were informed before and after interviews about their rights and how the data would be stored. Brink (1993) also suggests building a trusting relationship with the participants and having several discussions during the project to increase validity. During the two-week project, the learners were given opportunities for discussions throughout all the activities. The researcher observed how the learners became more engaged and expressive during the discussions and witnessed the development of a safe atmosphere in the classroom for discussing challenging topics such as stereotypes and prejudice.

External validity in research deals with the degree or extent to which the findings can be generalized to larger groups and other contexts (Dörnyei, 2007). It addresses whether the findings are legitimately applicable across a wider population (McKay, 2006). The generalizability of this qualitative study is limited, as it only involved learner artifacts produced by one class of eighteen 6th grade EFL learners and additional insights from eight learners who took part in the focus group interviews. However, as stated in section 2, other studies on multicultural literature have indicated similar findings to this study. The similarities between the findings suggest that the findings of this study may be somewhat generalizable to the classroom context. To increase the external validity of this study, further research could be carried out using a larger sample of EFL learners and a longer multicultural literature project. Regarding transferability, which is similar to generalizability and relates to the applicability of findings to other or similar contexts (Cope, 2014, p. 89), it is worth noting that the study was conducted in a Norwegian EFL classroom working according to the Norwegian national curriculum. This could support the transferability of the study's findings to other EFL classroom contexts within Norway.

Reliability is concerned with the consistency, stability, and repeatability of the participant's accounts and the researcher's ability to collect and record information accurately (Brink, 1993). According to Dörnyei (2007, p. 50), reliability focuses on "the extent to which our measurements, instruments, and procedures produce consistent results in a given population in different circumstances.". To improve the reliability of this study, the researcher discussed and

reflected on the project plan (Appendix A), interview guide (Appendix I), and the activities implemented in the project and adjusted them based on feedback. Additionally, to facilitate rich data the interview guide was piloted twice with two different subjects to uncover any lack of clarity in the interview guide and adjusted accordingly. Furthermore, to maintain the authenticity of the data, the researcher took measures to ensure that the interview transcripts and learner artifacts remained as close to the original as possible. This was done by conducting a thematic analysis of the original Norwegian texts and accurately translating the relevant quotes into English.

The focus group interviews were held in the participants' L1 to improve reliability further. This ensured that the participants could speak freely and that all the participants understood the questions similarly, and finally, to minimize misunderstandings. However, it is essential to note that there is still a possibility of individuals interpreting questions differently, even when presented in their L1.

Validity and reliability are typically associated with quantitative research (Noble & Smith, 2015, p. 34). Hence, the researcher addressed strategies adopted by qualitative researchers, such as transferability and dependability, to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research. The researcher presented a detailed description of the data collection procedures (see sections 3.2 and 3.4) and a project plan for the multicultural literature project (Appendix A) to facilitate their replication by other researchers. This could ensure the study's dependability and transferability and thereby enhance the reliability and trustworthiness of the current study (Noble & Smith, 2015). However, given that the data collection was highly contextual and based on the EFL learners' self-reporting, a replication of the current study is not likely to generate identical discussions and findings.

4. Results

The following chapter presents the results of the collected research data. The results draw on the learner artifacts produced during the project, comprised of the learner reflection notes and suggestions for the Idea Jar and the focus group interviews following the multicultural literature project. The findings are presented thematically, and findings from the learner artifacts and the focus group interviews are presented concurrently in each section. In order to address the research questions, the chapter is divided into two main sections: Section 4.1 addresses EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice, and Section 4.2 their willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. Section 4.1 is divided into five sub-sections: 1) associations with the terms stereotypes and prejudice, 2) empathy, acceptance, and understanding of differences, 3) reflection on incidents of injustice and discrimination, 4) the effect of stereotypes and prejudice on people's lives and 5) understanding of the importance of working with multicultural literature and learning about stereotypes and prejudice. Section 4.2 is divided into two sub-sections: 1) how to challenge and reduce stereotypes and prejudice, and 2) ideas from the Idea Jar on how to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. It is important to note that the learners were allowed to write their artifacts in Norwegian or English, while the focus group interviews were primarily conducted in Norwegian. Thus, certain quotes from the learner artifacts and the focus group interviews have been translated from Norwegian to English. The participants are referred to as focus group A or B and as learners 1-4 (e.g., A.1). In the transcription showing the participants' responses, the symbol '[...]' indicates missing text, while the symbol '(-)' indicates pauses.

4.1 EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice

This section deals with the participant's self-reported understanding of stereotypes and prejudice before and after working on the multicultural literature project in their artifacts and focus group interview responses. First, the participants' associations with stereotypes and prejudice are presented. The participants also gave examples of incidents they considered stereotypical and prejudiced in order to explain the terms. Following this, the participants' understanding of differences is addressed with examples drawn from the multicultural picturebooks read during the project and their everyday life. In addition, the participants' reflections on incidents of injustice and discrimination and their thoughts on how they consider

stereotypes and prejudice to affect and influence people are provided. Lastly, the participants' thoughts on the multicultural picturebooks read during the multicultural literature project are addressed, as well as their thoughts on working with multicultural literature and the topics of stereotypes and prejudice.

4.1.1 Associations with the terms stereotypes and prejudice

During the focus group interviews, the eight participants were asked if they were familiar with the terms stereotypes and prejudice before the multicultural literature project and whether they had gained a different understanding of these terms after the project. Most participants had heard the terms stereotypes and prejudice in various contexts before. However, they were unfamiliar with the meaning of the terms until they participated in the multicultural literature project. The participants' answers from the interviews indicate that the participants had different conceptions and associations with the terms before the project and that they better understood the definitions of terms after the project.

For instance, one participant indicated, "I have heard the word prejudice but never stereotypes. I thought it was a radio or telephone or something like that because stereotypes sound like a telephone or something like that" (B.2). In contrast to this, another participant associated stereotypes with feelings and differences in people: "Differences, if I would have heard stereotypes before, I would have thought of some kind of feelings or something like that or different people or something like that" (B.1).

Concerning the participants' understanding of the terms after the multicultural project, one participant indicated how they had learned more about the terms after working on the project and that: "[...] actually I have never thought about the difference between stereotypes and prejudice" (B.1). Similarly, another participant indicated: "I learned more what prejudice (-) I began to know more what prejudice looks like and what it is" (B.3).

In addition to understanding the meaning of the terms and the differences between stereotypes and prejudice, A.2 pointed out how following the project allowed them to understand how victims of stereotypes and prejudice might feel: "I understand more how they feel" (A.1). Furthermore, in the reflection notes the learners wrote after reading *Under My Hijab*, one

learner wrote: “This was an interesting topic, and I learned a bit about stereotypes and prejudice.”

When the participants were asked to share what they think of when they hear the word stereotypes, some of the participants referred to the term as something inaccurate and something that deals with differences. A.2 explained stereotypes by claiming that the term indicates: “something which is not true.” While B.2 stated: “Everyone is different [...] you do not have to stereotype a person just because they are different”. Similar claims were identified in the learners’ reflection notes. For example, one of the learners wrote: “All stereotypes are not true. All people are people too, even if they wear strange headgear. Muslims are not terrorists. Muslims and Islam themselves decide to wear the hijab and are free”.

Two participants from focus group A gave examples of discriminatory actions when describing stereotyping. Participant A.2 gave an example related to stereotyping based on religious clothing in employment:

“[...] and if someone needs to have a job, for example, then if someone wears a hijab, and then you have someone who doesn’t wear it, but the person with the hijab has a better CV, then there is more certainty that the person without hijab gets the job because she doesn’t wear a hijab and not the one with a good CV” (A.2).

A.3 suggested that stereotypes deal with racial discrimination and affected: “Black people who are discriminated against” (A.3).

When speaking of prejudice, several participants focused on people’s beliefs and opinions of others and their behavior. For instance, B.1 explained prejudice as: “[...] and prejudice, there I would think of what people think and their opinion, but I didn’t really know much about it before. Now I think more how people behave, what they do”. Similarly, B.2 stated: “Yes, their opinion in a way.” The statement was followed up by the researcher asking the participants to clarify what they meant by opinion and what type of opinions, negative or positive. B.1 responded, “I would have said negative. I mostly think about that”. Moreover, one participant explained prejudice as: “I think of bad reputations for people, like people who have done nothing wrong. It becomes a bit like they have done this because they are like that” (A.1).

Similar to the term stereotypes being understood as something that is associated with differences, A.3 addressed prejudice in a similar manner: “Prejudice against people who are different. [...] for example different from people here” (A.3).

In addition to the participants being asked to share what they thought of when they heard the terms stereotypes and prejudice, they were asked to share where they think stereotypes and prejudice come from. Both B.2 and B.4 suggested “people,” and B.4 supported the suggestions with: “from people, people who think a lot about it.” Furthermore, B.1 added: “[...] they believe in fake things and say things like you are a terrorist, get out of here, I don’t want to play with you”.

In contrast, A.1 suggested it comes from white people: “White people. [...] most likely white people who think that people are not worth much”. This claim was followed by A.2 adding: “Or they think that they are worth more than others, people think they are worth more.”

On the other hand, some of the participants focused on stereotyping and prejudiced attitudes and behaviors being learned from somewhere, such as by parents: “They are taught by their parents that they are much more valuable than those who look different. Perhaps because their parents were also taught that” (A.3). Similarly, another participant claimed that parents were responsible for teaching stereotyping and prejudiced attitudes and behaviors: “For example, their parents have been rude to them” (B.2). In this context, it can be presumed that participants have witnessed their parents engaging in stereotyping or displaying prejudiced attitudes towards a particular group with “them” in this statement referring to individuals targeted by such attitudes.

Likewise, B.1 added:

“Everyone is actually kind. Those who say that people are bad must have had a bad upbringing or something like that [...]there is always a reason behind why people are a bit mean, not because I do it because I want to.”

B.2 emphasized this statement by highlighting peer pressure as a contributing factor to the development of stereotypes and prejudice, suggesting:

“[...] you don’t think like that when you are a child. But if everyone else does it in one way, then you start doing it. Because you want to be a part of the cool gang, for example. Because you don’t want to be left out, then you do what they do, and even if it’s stupid you don’t think about it”.

On a different note, B.1 stated: “I think that people have very small brains like a few racists.” When asked what the participant meant by “small brains,” the participant explained it by identifying the people they were referring to as: “Idiots.” To this, B.2 added: “Stupid.”

4.1.2 Empathy, acceptance, and understanding of differences

During the focus group interviews, the participants were asked to share their thoughts on the two multicultural books, *The Day You Begin* and *Under My Hijab*, that were read and discussed during the multicultural literature project. Their thoughts and answers around these books revealed the learners’ understanding of human differences, especially racial and cultural differences. In addition, their answers indicated empathy, acceptance, and the importance of diversity. Most participants frequently mentioned how all human beings are different from each other but equal simultaneously. For instance, B.2 suggested: “Everyone is different [...] everyone is different in the world, no one is the same really”. Furthermore, B.2 added: “[...] it is good that everyone is different”.

Other participants focused on all humankind being the same despite our differences: “Even if you look different, you are not different” (A.3) and “That everyone is different, but the same at the same time” (A.1). Additionally, A.1 mentioned that the multicultural books had taught them: “We are not really all different, we are all human”. Similarly, B.4 stated: “Yeah, everyone is different, but we are all human.” When the participant was asked what inspired them to make this statement, B.4 responded: “Just by thinking of people around me.” B.3 mentioned that they had written in the Idea Jar, “Everyone is different but worth the same.”

A similar example was provided by B.1 after the group had discussed what thoughts or ideas they were left with after this project:

“I think it is terrible that people believe such stupid things about other people and do not understand the difference between people. Everyone in my class, we are different in a way, but we are the same. It is not like one is evil here and one is kind”.

Similar understandings and reflections were also identified in the learners’ reflection notes, where they were told to write down their thoughts after reading and discussing the multicultural picturebooks. For example, some of the learners wrote:

“That no one is the same. That you shouldn’t be embarrassed by how you look.”

“Everyone is different, but everyone is good in their own way. Be proud of who you are. You are perfect.”

“That we all are different and that your hair and skin don’t matter. You can be yourself and be nice to everyone.”

“That one must treat others equally. You can look nice even if you look different from the others in the class.”

Additionally, the reflection notes written by some of the learners after reading *Under My Hijab* showed an awareness and understanding of the headscarf Hijab. The multicultural literature project’s readings and reflection activities allowed them to reflect on these understandings:

“I think it is okay for people to wear headgear. I think it is okay for people to wear headgear that belongs to their religion. It is okay that someone is a little different and that they believe in a different religion.”

“It was about the fact that even if you wear a hijab, you can have a good job and you can have your own style.”

“I think people can’t just go up to people and ask if they have bombs or rip off their hijab.”

“I thought that the book was really good. I think that we need to be better with hijab and not try to just take it off somebody’s head.”

In one of the learner’s reflection notes, the learner expressed how the book affected their own relation to wearing a headscarf:

“After reading this book with the class I feel more comfy in my hijab”.

Moreover, some of the learners shared in their reflection notes the new knowledge they had acquired after the reading *Under My Hijab*:

“I learned that people are not forced to wear a hijab.”

“I learned new things and that you can dress how you can dress.”

“It is a good story. I did not know that you could get more than one type of hijabs.”

During the focus group interviews, learner A.1 stated that they had not been familiar with all types of hijabs they got introduced to throughout the book:

“The aunt who seemed to have a different hijab, I had never seen it like that. I was more used to seeing what (mentioned name of a fellow student) has or the long one (mentioned name of a fellow student) wears (-) I am more used to that, not those that are not long at all”.

Reflections on similarities and differences, and how these affect characters’ sense of belonging, also arose regarding the second picturebook, *The Day You Begin*. During the interviews, participants used elements from the picturebook to scaffold their discussions regarding belonging and acceptance of differences. B.1, for example, claimed that the main characters from *The Day You Begin* seemed detached from the other characters. However, the participant believed that everyone is the same despite their differences: “The feeling that they don’t belong and stuff like that, but everyone is different, so you really belong to everyone.” The statement was followed up by B.2 adding: “A bit sad actually, because they can’t feel completely welcome in a way.”

Participants from focus group A also took inspiration from a scene in *The Day You Begin* to discuss cultural differences:

“You know that food, that thing in one of the books where they talked about one of the girls who must have come from Asia. She brought rice to school, and she was also looked at differently and another girl started whispering about her” (A.3)

“[...] it was about people’s food. That is culture and shouldn’t become annoying. You shouldn’t see them differently because they have different cultures” (A.3).

During the discussion, some participants pointed out how they could relate to the scene. They tried to normalize the concept of bringing diverse lunch to school by indicating: “I do that as well, bring rice to school. I also bring pasta and soup” (A.2). Likewise, A.1 stated: “I did that a couple of days ago, last week, then I brought rice.” On the other hand, A.3 argued: “If I had brought it then, (mentioned name of a fellow student) in the class would have said, ‘oh æsj, your food stinks.’ That’s white racism”. To support A.3, A.1 added: “It is actually racism, and rice is eaten all over the world and it is actually good.”

4.1.3 Reflection on incidents of injustice and discrimination

During the focus group interviews, some participants pointed out examples of injustice and discrimination, specifically related to racial differences, as they discussed the origins of stereotypes and prejudice and the importance of addressing these topics:

“I can understand that people look a bit strange at other people if they have not seen someone who looks like that. I guess I do too, but I don’t go around saying nasty things and such. [...] everyone has the same rights. It doesn’t matter how you look and stuff” (B.1).

Both focus groups had participants that mentioned the murder of George Floyd that took place in 2020 as an example to highlight racial injustice. One participant from focus group A stated:

“Do you remember 2020 about the George Floyd thing? That’s when my whole TikTok was filled with stereotypes and prejudice and all that. He was stopped because he was black, and he died because he was black” (A.3).

Likewise, a few participants from focus group B also discussed the case of George Floyd. The discussion started after B.1 claimed: “In the US, there is a lot of racism against black people.” This was followed by B.2 stating: “There was a person who was killed, George something. [...] it was like that the police took him and choked him”. B.2 provided another example of discrimination experienced by certain individuals: “Or get out of our country because you don’t fit in here or something like that.”

B.1 provided an additional example related to racial discrimination and injustice in a real-world context:

“It was a guy who was killed because (-) he was like outside his street walking and stuff like that and he was killed. Also, it was like we did it to protect my street like because he was dark. Like instead of, you won’t be allowed to go, you won’t get a fine or something.”

B.2 compared B.1’s example to Anders Breivik, who was responsible for the Utøya terror attack in Norway in 2011: “Breivik was like that. He actually killed too many people”.

The focus group participants also brought up instances of racial discrimination and police brutality seen in a movies. A.2 provided the following example:

“Yes, for example, I have seen a movie [...] it’s like that there is a very, very big person who is kind of black. Also, it is like that everyone is afraid of him because he is so big, but then he is actually a friendly giant. But then he hit a girl with the car. Since he was black the cops arrested him straight away.”

4.1.4 The effect of stereotypes and prejudice on people's lives

The participants' answers during the focus group interviews and their reflection notes also indicated an understanding of how stereotypes and prejudice could potentially affect people's lives and showed empathy. For example, when focus group A was asked how stereotypes and prejudice could affect people, the participants' answers mainly focused on the feelings and emotions of those affected. In addition, two of the participants used the noun "hurt" to explain the effects. For instance, A.1 reflected: "People are kind of mean with what they say about people [...] because it can hurt (-) it actually hurts people (-) people can get so hurt that they start killing themselves". A.2 agreed with A.1 and added: "Sad and hurt." Furthermore, A.3 suggested how stereotypes and prejudice could result in cultural discomfort and detachment from a person's cultural heritage: "It can give them negative thoughts. It can make them think that I have to stop being with my culture and somehow be more like the people around me."

Participants from focus group B similarly focused on how stereotypes and prejudice can affect people's feelings and emotions. In addition, their answers reflected feelings of otherness. For example, B.2 commented on how stereotypes and prejudice can affect someone's self-esteem and image: "They can become tired of themselves. They can sort of be like, they are right, I am not perfect enough like them". Furthermore, B.1 reflected: "They may feel hurt and not feel like doing anything. Feel what is the meaning of life really."

B.1 and B.2 also gave examples of how stereotypes and prejudice can affect people's, especially children's, everyday life. B.1 noted that it could affect schooling:

"Sit inside your room the whole day. They can skip school. They feel out of place maybe. They feel like they shouldn't go around maybe they need to change, maybe change their hair or things because they want to be like them."

The examples were followed by B.2 mentioning:

"Cry, lie on a pillow. [...] because they don't feel like doing anything and feel uncomfortable. They may think something is wrong with themselves (-) if you are not perfect for the others".

The participants were also asked to share how they believe stereotypes and prejudice affect the people around them. A few participants in focus group B focused on how people can influence others to be stereotypical and prejudiced. For instance, B.2 claimed:

“People can believe in people who don’t have anything perfect in their head [...] and listen to those who are not right”.

To this, B.3 added: “Just because they are cool”.

B.1 agreed with B.2 and B.3 and similarly argued: “Yes, then they are on their side and believe the same as they believe just because they want to be with them.” The discussion was followed up by B.1 and B.2 suggesting how not to be influenced by others and to avoid stereotyping and prejudice: “Think for yourself and be smart” (B.1), and “And don’t listen to those people who are really cool, because even if they say something stupid, you don’t have to.”

In the learners’ reflection notes, one of the learners indicated how they noticed scenarios where the characters in the book *The Day You Begin* experienced bullying by classmates due to their differences:

I noticed that the girl was not feeling good at first since people were gossiping about her, because of her hair. And a boy who spoke another language was not feeling good, because he spoke another language, and then the others in the class started laughing. And another boy was not allowed to join, and someone talked about a girl’s lunchbox. But all four became friends in the end.

4.1.5 Understanding the importance of working with multicultural literature and learning about stereotypes and prejudice

During the focus group interviews, the participants were asked why they thought we read the picturebooks *The Day You Begin* and *Under My Hijab*. The participants’ answers focused on learning about stereotypes and prejudice as well as the consequences of stereotypes and prejudice. For instance, A.1 suggested that they read the picturebooks: “Because there were

stereotypes and we got to learn a bit more and stuff about what it is really like and stuff like that” (A.1). A.4 suggested that they read the picturebooks: “To understand that there is not always justice in the world.” Similarly, A.3 suggested it was because the picturebooks:

Dare to teach us about how crazy, how rude, and annoying it is and hurtful comments about people’s clothes and food or how they speak can be. [...] because it can teach people how different things are and show people that if they look different, that they look like they are tough, and so on, they can be sensitive about things. (A.3)

The participants also referred to real-life incidents in their school environment when discussing reasons for reading the multicultural picturebooks. During the interview, two participants from focus group A mentioned an incident they considered to be racist that occurred in the parallel class. Following the explanation of this incident, A.2 asked the researcher why the picturebooks were not read with the parallel class. A.3 suggest that there was a need to have a similar project in the parallel class to teach them about stereotypes and prejudice: “Maybe you should have done that with them because they need a lot of learning about stereotypes and prejudice.”

The answers from focus group B participants regarding reasons why they read the picturebooks also focused on learning more about stereotypes and prejudice and changing people’s beliefs and understanding. B.1 suggested that the picturebooks were read to:

“Learn more about what people’s theories are. Even though you think you know a lot from before, you feel that sometimes you haven’t learned anything from it, but actually, you have learned a lot. Maybe it changed your brain a little. [...]showing how other people feel when someone has done something to them when they have not done anything. They feel yeah out of place maybe, they feel like they shouldn’t go around, maybe they need to change, maybe change their hair or things because they want to be like them.”

In a similar vein, B.2 suggested the picturebooks were read because:

“It is educational. Because then we learn more maybe. You learned a little more that everyone is not the same. [...] because then you got to know more about what is happening around the world. [...] They have tried to teach us more. I have learned a lot.”

B.3 had a similar response and gave a specific example of what they had learned through the picturebooks:

“The books were educational, and we get to learn more. [...] I was thinking about the hijab and things like that. No one is forced or most are not forced to wear it. [...] You kind of know how other people feel when they hear things like that. If you don’t get to hear that, other people will do things like that.”

Finally, B.4 reflected specifically on the effect reading the multicultural picturebooks had had in terms of developing an awareness of prejudice and stereotypes, stating how they did not think of stereotypes and prejudice before the multicultural project. However, after the project, they thought a lot more about it. They also noted the importance of reading multicultural picturebooks because: “[...] it can change people who think a bad thing. It can change their mind. It can help them think oh I am thinking wrong, wrong things.”

Having first had the participants reflect on their impressions of the picturebooks and why they thought they read them, the participants were informed that someone had indicated that such books might help combat stereotypes and prejudice and asked whether they agreed or disagreed. In both focus groups, all participants agreed. A.1 agreed as they believed that people could get inspired by the books and could stop stereotyping as well as learn about the effect of stereotyping. They explained: “Because people can get inspired and not have stereotypes against people. [...] How much it really hurts people and teach you how bad it really is to say things like that”. Additionally, A.1, A.2, and A.3 claimed that they found the multicultural books realistic and were inspired by the books when writing their ideas for the Idea Jar: “The books were quite true” (A.1), and “They were actually very realistic” (A.3).

In the second focus group, B.4 agreed that such books could help combat stereotypes and prejudice and argued: “It helps people if they read them because it can change their mind, something changes inside their mind.” Likewise, B.2 claimed: “It can help because then you read more what people think. Because I know that when you get older you stare at people more if they are different from you. Then if we learn, then we don’t do that.”

B.1 suggested they should continue reading multicultural books similar to those read during the multicultural project: “We can actually continue to read books like this. They are actually very good”. B.1’s statement led to B.2 discussing the lack of multicultural books in the school library and suggesting a way they could continue working with multicultural books:

“Not many books come out actually (-) but we should get it. [...] It can also be an idea that the teacher gives everyone a book like that, and then the teacher says sometimes that you can read a chapter if they are not too long, so you learn a bit. Otherwise, it will just sit on the shelf, and you can never learn about that kind of thing and learn about racism and stuff like that.”.

All the participants in focus group B agreed with B.2’s suggestion to get more multicultural books in the school library and continue reading and working with this type of literature to obtain new knowledge through the books and to challenge stereotypes and prejudice.

With regard to the learners’ reflection notes, one of the learners reflected on the inclusion of everyone and perspective-taking after reading *The Day You Begin*: “Good that the book suggests that we must include and help people who are not feeling good. Helping people who cannot speak Norwegian. See from someone else’s perspective”. Another learner wrote: “This is a very good book because it is about feeling excluded and making friends. The book makes you think about how some people have it and how they feel”. However, another learner claimed the book to be “uncomfortable”: “I find the book uncomfortable because people are being unfair, and they made people feel insecure.”

4.2 Willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice

This section considers the participants’ understanding of how one can contribute to challenging and reducing stereotypes and prejudice. First, the participants’ suggestions and ideas on challenging and reducing stereotypes and prejudice from the focus group interviews and reflection notes are presented. Second, the ideas from the Idea Jar on how to challenge stereotypes and prejudice are presented.

4.2.1 How to challenge and reduce stereotypes and prejudice

In addition to the participants showing an understanding of how people are affected by stereotypes and prejudice, the participants showed increased activism to combat and challenge these by sharing ideas during the focus group interviews, in their reflection notes, and their ideas for the Idea jar.

During the focus group interviews, two participants from focus group A suggested that one could combat stereotypes and prejudice by creating awareness through conversations with individuals who use negative stereotypes and engage in prejudiced behaviors. For instance, A.1 suggested convincing individuals to stop expressing negative stereotypes by highlighting that certain stereotypes are inaccurate: “One can at least try to persuade people that it is not true and that they have done nothing wrong.” “People” in this statement referred to individuals that stereotype, while “they” referred to those that are being stereotyped. To this, A.2 added: “Say that everyone is worth the same. [...] Keep your thoughts to yourself”. In contrast, A.3 claimed that talking to people that are prejudiced was not helpful and recommended: “To share, it never works, I have tried (-) ignore it”. Simultaneously, the participant suggested: “Just don’t say negative things to people.” Additionally, A.3 recommended: “People should not shout at people in public.”

In focus group B, the participants’ suggestions focused on self-awareness. For instance, B.1 suggested: “Think for yourself and be smart. I wish people could change their minds a bit. Take out the one screw that is a bit broken and put in a new polished one”. Similarly, B.3 suggested: “Think if it is right to do first.” To this, B.2 added: “Think twice instead of doing something stupid.”

As previously mentioned in section 4.1.5, some participants also recommended continuing to read multicultural books to obtain new knowledge through the books and getting more multicultural books in the school library to help combat stereotypes and prejudice. Moreover, B.2 claimed that the activity program many Norwegian schools offer during school breaks, also known as “Trivselsprogram - TL,” can help: “We can ask people to join the game, we can bring them into TL.”

Some learners also expressed ideas on how to challenge stereotypes and prejudice in their reflection notes through supportive and inclusive practices. For example, one learner suggested saying to individuals affected by the feeling of otherness and low self-esteem and image: “No one is the same. That you should not be embarrassed by how you look”. Similarly, a learner stated: “Be proud of who you are. You are perfect”. Another learner suggested: “You must treat everyone equally so that they do not feel left out. Don’t bully people or shut them out”. After reading *The Day You Begin*, one learner wrote in the reflection note:

“Good that the book suggests that we must include and help people who are not well. Helping people who cannot speak Norwegian. See from someone else’s perspective. Tell adults if others are feeling bad if they don’t dare to say themselves. Include and play with everyone for a nice environment”.

4.2.2 Ideas from the Idea Jar on how to challenge stereotypes and prejudice

The multicultural literature project ended with an activity where the learners were told to write down ideas for an Idea Jar on how they could challenge and reduce stereotypes and prejudice. The learners’ ideas are categorized into three categories. The ideas are also presented in Table 1 below and in Appendix H. The first category concerns challenging stereotypes and prejudice by raising awareness on social media. In this category, two learners suggested: “Post a video on TikTok where you can talk about it” and “Write on Twitter about what stereotypes are and share that it is not true.”

The second category is related to challenging stereotypes and prejudice by creating awareness by talking about those topics. The ideas learners shared were: “If someone has a prejudice against Islam, we can say that not everyone who is from Islam is a terrorist or something else”, “Talk more about stereotypes and prejudice to learn more and teach others that it is not okay”, “Say to them that everybody is different, but we all are human”, “We can try to convince someone that the prejudices are not true and that everyone is of equal value”, “Tell people that it’s wrong and that everybody is just as human as they are”, and “We can get better at talking nicely about/to people. We can include everyone in a game.”

The last category addresses ideas on how one can challenge and reduce stereotypes and prejudice by taking action. The actions learners wrote in the Idea Jar were: “We can report it to

the police”, “Call someone you trust”, “Stop teaching the children that foreigners are terrorists”, “Don’t say people can’t join because they’re different”, “Stop the bullies at school and persuade people that everyone is of equal worth”, “Don’t say people with different food stink”, and “Don’t talk badly about other people and understand that people are different.”

Table 1. Ideas from the Idea Jar

Categories	Idea
Raise awareness on social media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Post a video on TikTok where you can talk about it.” - “Write on Twitter about what stereotypes are and tell that it is not true.”
Increase awareness by challenging stereotypes and promoting inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “If someone has a prejudice against Islam, we can say that not everyone who is from Islam is a terrorist or something else.” - “Talk more about stereotypes and prejudice to learn more and teach others that it is not okay.” - “Say to them that everybody is different, but we all are human.” - “We can try to convince someone that the prejudices are not true and that everyone is of equal value.” - “Tell people that it’s wrong and that everybody is just as human as they are.” - “We can get better at talking nicely about/to people. We can include everyone in a game.”
Taking action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “We can report it to the police” - “Call someone you trust.” - “Stop teaching the children that foreigners are terrorists.” - “Don’t say people can’t join because they’re different.” - “Stop the bullies at school and persuade people that everyone is of equal worth.” - “Don’t say people with different food stink” - “Don’t talk badly about other people and understand that people are different.” - “Don’t need to discriminate against people who are different.” - “That everyone can wear what they want.”

5. Discussion

The following section considers the findings from the learner artifacts and focus group interviews in light of the theoretical considerations and previous studies presented in Chapter 2 in order to address the thesis's two overarching research questions. Section 5.1 discusses the potential of working with multicultural literature for raising 6th grade Norwegian EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice. Section 5.2 considers the learners' willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice following the multicultural project and the ways in which they propose to do so. Finally, section 5.3 addresses the study's limitations, while section 5.4 points to the study's implications and future avenues of research.

5.1 EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice

5.1.1 Understanding of stereotypes and prejudice

According to several studies, (e.g., Bigler & Liben, 2007; Castelli et al., 2009; Apfelbaum et al., 2010; Raabe & Beelmann, 2011; Dunham et al., 2013; Brown et al., 2018; Husband, 2019a), stereotyping and prejudice emerge in early childhood. Consequently, learners may come to school with a set of understandings and attitudes that are stereotypical and prejudiced (Yokota, 2009). Thus, Brown et al. (2018) propose that fostering experiences that encourage and promote inclusion and reduce prejudice and stereotypes should begin at a young age. Moreover, Kohl (1995) suggests that working with multicultural literature can influence learners' beliefs and understanding and enable them to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. The results in the present study with Norwegian EFL 6th graders are consistent with previous studies (e.g., Brown, 2019; Brown et al., 2018; Dressel, 2005; Evans, 2010; Kohl, 1995; Louie, 2005; Mandarani & Munir, 2021; Osorio, 2018; Thein et al., 2007, 2011) and indicative of the potential that multicultural literature in the EFL classroom can have to support learners in developing awareness of stereotypes and prejudice, as well as promoting empathy and respect towards diversity.

In the focus group interviews, the researcher inquired about the participants' familiarity with the terms stereotypes and prejudice before the multicultural literature project and whether their understanding of these terms had evolved following their participation. The findings of the focus group interviews suggest that the eight learners participating in the interviews had heard

the terms stereotypes and prejudice before the project but were unfamiliar with their meanings. Furthermore, the participants had different conceptions and associations with the terms before reading the two multicultural picturebooks and participating in the multicultural literature project. For instance, some participants associated stereotypes with radio and telephone (B.2), while others associated them with feelings and differences (B.1). These differences in understanding could be due to various factors, such as differences in cultural and personal background and experiences. The participants' answers suggest that after the project, they understood the definitions and the meanings of the terms better, indicating that in line with Kohl (1995), the multicultural literature project influenced the learners' previous beliefs and understanding of the term. Additionally, the learners reported learning the difference between stereotypes and prejudice (B.1) and becoming more aware of the consequences of stereotyping and prejudice. However, it is important to acknowledge that the terms were explained and discussed during the project's initial phase, potentially leading to a better understanding among the learners even without relying on the multicultural picturebooks. Conversely, the multicultural picturebooks used in the project provided concrete illustrations of stereotypes and prejudice, making these concepts less abstract and facilitating a deeper understanding of their implications and real-life experiences.

Similar to Brown's (2019) study, the responses provided by the participants suggest that after the project, they developed a better understanding and awareness of stereotyping as a process. Specifically, they associated stereotypes with inaccurate, generalized, and harmful assumptions about individuals based on cultural, religious, and racial differences. Their new associations with the term align with the definitions by Baumeister & Vohs (2007) and Macrae et al. (1996). When explaining stereotypes, some participants associated them with racial, religious, or cultural differences, such as wearing a headscarf, while emphasizing that such differences were normal and should not be the subject of stereotypes. For example, after reading *Under My Hijab*, one learner provided examples to refute stereotypes, such as Muslims being terrorists and emphasizing that wearing the hijab is a personal choice for Muslims. Based on the learner's response to the picturebook ("*All stereotypes are not true. All people are people too, even if they wear strange headgear. Muslims are not terrorists. Muslims and Islam themselves decide to wear the hijab and are free*", see section 4.1.1), it can be inferred that the portrayal of the characters in *Under My Hijab* engaging in non-stereotypical behaviors has the potential to counteract traditional stereotypes, as suggested by Goo (2018) in the context of multicultural literature.

It is necessary to note that although *Under My Hijab* provides a positive depiction of hijab-wearing women, showing them in various contexts with and without hijab, the picturebook does not explicitly address any negative experiences these women may have faced. As a result, the discussions concerning the stereotypes associated with the hijab and Muslim women do not solely stem from reading the book. They are also inspired by the discussions and multimodal response activities the learners engaged in throughout the multicultural literature project. Hence, it is essential to recognize the important role these activities played in shaping the learners' responses in their artifacts and interview responses. Additionally, similar to the findings of Brown's (2019, p. 120) study, in which learners' increased awareness of stereotyping prompted them to challenge and address specific stereotypes, such indications can be identified in the participants' responses in this study. For instance, participant A.2 applied the lessons from the picturebook, and activities connected to it to real-life situations, providing an example of stereotyping based on religious clothing in employment and reflecting on the disadvantages Muslim women might experience at the workplace due to their headscarves.

Several studies (e.g., Bishop, 1993; Louie, 2005; Fox & Short, 2003; Husband, 2019b) have argued for cultural, racial, and religious authenticity and accuracy in multicultural literature to develop a deeper awareness of diversity and injustice. The participants' responses suggest that reading *Under My Hijab*, a multicultural picturebook that represents authentic portrayals and accurate illustrations of Muslim women, and the multimodal response activities helped the participants develop a critical awareness of societal injustice, such as stereotyping and discrimination due to religious and cultural differences. Additionally, one participant (A.3) linked stereotypes with racial discrimination, implying that stereotyping can lead to discrimination based on race. The correlation between stereotypes and race-based discrimination has also been established in Fibbi et al.'s (2021, p. 13) study, where they highlight that discrimination can occur based on distinguishing characteristics such as race and take various forms, including stereotyping. Despite the learners' ability to explain the term stereotype and provide examples, their responses, such as the one considering religious discrimination in the workplace (A.2) and regarding racial discrimination (A.3), also reveal a challenge in distinguishing between stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination. However, from another point of view, this could also indicate the learners' understanding of the correlation between discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes, which aligns with Balmores-Paulino (2018), who points out these three elements are interlinked.

The participants associated prejudice with negative opinions, attitudes, and behaviors toward individuals caused by misconceptions. Their new associations with prejudice align with the definitions provided by Bird (1957). Some participants linked prejudice to negative opinions and false accusations (B.1), while some associated prejudice with a harmful act towards individuals due to their differences, such as racial differences (A.1). Evans (2010) suggested that working with multicultural literature could impact learners' understanding and awareness of others and facilitate the learners' increased knowledge and understanding of prejudice. In his study, after working with multicultural literature, the learners expressed their understanding of prejudice as a sense of judging people through visible features. A similar understanding of prejudice is found in this study's responses. A noteworthy finding in the study is that one participant demonstrated a shift in their perspective regarding stereotypes and prejudice. Before engaging in the project, the individual had not considered these matters much but has since reflected more deeply upon these issues (B.4). The definitions of the terms stereotypes and prejudice and the examples provided in the participants' responses align with Brown's (2019) suggestion that learners' perception and understanding of stereotypes and prejudice can be influenced and that learners can be encouraged to challenge and reconsider their previous assumptions.

The participants' responses indicate they have gained new knowledge and understanding of the terms stereotypes and prejudice. This can result from some learners experiencing tension between their previous beliefs, understanding of the terms, and the new knowledge they encounter through meeting the characters in the multicultural picturebooks and participating in the project. For instance, participant B.2 initially associated stereotypes with radio or telephone. However, after the project, B.2 understood that stereotypes were based on differences and that it is inappropriate to stereotype based on those differences. This example is consistent with what was found in Thein et al.'s (2007) study. According to Thein et al. (2007), when learners experience tension and changes in belief, they become willing to try to see the world from a different perspective. They may even become willing to reconsider or amend their original perspectives and beliefs. An example of this is the one learner who wrote in the reflection notes after reading *Under My Hijab* that the learner discovered that wearing a hijab is a matter of personal choice and not something individuals are forced to wear. These examples indicate that the new knowledge and understanding the learners obtained after the project challenged the learners' previous understanding of the term's stereotypes and prejudice. Hence, after

participating in the multicultural literature project, the findings indicate a development in learners' awareness and understanding of the term's stereotypes and prejudice.

Despite the participants showing a better understanding of the concept of stereotypes and prejudice and exhibiting an awareness of their meanings, some of the learners' responses also revealed the presence of stereotypes. During the focus group interviews, the participants were asked to share their perceptions of the origins of stereotypes and prejudice. According to the responses provided by participants A.1 and A.2, the origin of stereotypes and prejudice can be attributed to "White people" who perceive themselves as superior. Their stance appears to be rooted in stereotyping individuals of Caucasian descent, as they generalized all such individuals as being responsible for stereotypes and prejudice. In addition, another intriguing finding is that two participants in focus group B tended to employ stereotypical language while referring to individuals who engage in stereotyping and prejudice. Specifically, they utilized derogatory terms such as "idiots" and "stupid" to characterize such individuals, thereby contributing to negative stereotypes.

In contrast to Forsman's (2010) study, where learners could modify previously held stereotypical perceptions, particular participants in this study were not able to apply their newfound understanding of the terms when discussing stereotypes and prejudice. This inconsistency indicates that although the learners acquired new knowledge and awareness and experienced tension between their previous and current understanding of the terms stereotypes and prejudice, they still held on to their own stereotypes and revealed unconscious stereotypes. Additionally, it is possible that the learners might have developed these stereotypes during the project or that these stereotypes and prejudices were unintentionally introduced throughout the project, making some believe that those who stereotype are "idiots" and "stupid". Nevertheless, the examples of some of the learners' efforts to counter stereotypes while showing less reflection regarding their own stereotyping practices highlight the importance of reflective teachers facilitating discussions that encourage and allow learners to further reflect on their personal stereotypes. It also emphasizes that working with stereotypes should be an ongoing and iterative process.

On the other hand, some participants believe that stereotypical and prejudiced attitudes and behaviors are learned from parents (A.3). Husband (2019b) argues that children are consistently exposed to stereotypical images and messages as they interact with family members and friends,

who might hold negative and biased attitudes toward different social groups around them. This understanding can be seen in the participants' responses, as some believe that individuals may be taught to hold certain attitudes and beliefs from a young age and that their parents may reinforce them. Similarly, B.2 suggests that negative attitudes and behaviors may be learned through negative experiences. This could include experiences of discrimination or prejudice or viewing parents or figures of authority enacting such practices. These findings highlight the critical role parents and other authority figures, such as teachers, can play in shaping attitudes and behaviors related to prejudice and stereotypes. It also suggests the importance of addressing these issues at a young age, as Brown et al. (2018) suggested, promoting awareness of stereotypes and prejudice and positive attitudes and behaviors toward diversity and inclusivity.

5.1.2 Embracing diversity through mirrors, windows, and sliding doors

The Day You Begin and *Under My Hijab* are two multicultural picturebooks that validate the experiences of underrepresented groups due to differences in language, identity, race, and religion. *The Day You Begin* is recounted from the perspective of minoritized children and explores the feelings of being different and the power of embracing one's unique voice and experiences. *Under My Hijab*, on the other hand, explores Muslim women's diverse identities and experiences by highlighting the various ways the hijab is worn and normalizing it. These two multicultural picturebooks thus align with Bishop's (1990, 1993), Gopalakrishnan and Persiani-Becke's (2011), and Yokota's (1993, 2001) understanding of multicultural literature. As indicated in section 2.5.1, various studies (e.g., Dever et al., 2005; Fain, 2008; Nikolajeva, 2013) suggest that multicultural literature can support young learners in developing values such as empathy, tolerance, and respect toward experiences of individuals and groups who are being and have been racially oppressed and marginalized in society. Husband (2019b) also argues that multicultural literature allows learners to explore complex issues like stereotypes and prejudice. These benefits and values are evident in the participants' responses during focus group interviews and the 6th graders' reflection notes, as they demonstrate empathy and respect towards diversity.

Bishop (1990) suggests that multicultural literature can be envisioned as mirrors, windows, and sliding doors. A specific learner conveyed in their reflection note that reading *Under My Hijab* impacted their relationship with wearing a headscarf, making them feel more comfortable

while wearing one. This suggests that the learner could relate to the characters (mirrors) and situations in *Under My Hijab*. As a result, the learner experienced a sense of affirmation about themselves and their religious background, as emphasized by Colby and Lyon (2004) and Husband (2019b). In addition, Hefflin and Barksdale-Ladd (2001) stress the importance of children being able to connect literature with their daily lives in order to feel validated. This concept aligns with the finding of the learner who experienced affirmation regarding their headscarf use. This learner's reported experience is also consistent with Evans's (2010) study, which showed that learners in his study showed an increased understanding and acceptance of their own culture and cultural similarities and differences, including ethnicity and religion, after working with multicultural literature.

In other words, the findings of this study suggest that the reading of *Under My Hijab* provoked a sense of pride in one of the learners. Similar findings were also found in Husband's (2019b) study, where he utilized multicultural picturebooks in the classroom and discovered that these books particularly evoked a sense of pride among children with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. This further corresponds to the core value of human dignity in LK20, which states that schools must consider the diversity of learners and facilitate learners to experience belonging in both school and society (MER, 2017).

From the focus group interviews and the reflection notes, it appears that learners experienced empathy and showed tendencies towards embracing diversity by gaining insight into the lives of the diverse characters portrayed in the selected multicultural picturebooks (windows) and by stepping into the imaginary world created by the authors (sliding doors). For instance, particular reflection notes written by some learners suggest that after reading *Under My Hijab* and encountering the characters through 'windows' and 'sliding doors,' they better understood the headscarf hijab, simultaneously debunked stereotypes related to headscarves and displayed empathy for the characters who wore headscarves. Additionally, during the focus group interviews, it was revealed that some participants were not acquainted with all the types of hijabs portrayed in the book, which led to an increase in their knowledge regarding the various types of hijabs (A.1). The new knowledge that the participant gained about the various types of hijabs is an example of disrupting the commonplace, which is one of the dimensions of critical literacy described by Lewison et al. (2014). Furthermore, similar to what was observed in the study by Thein et al. (2011), through reading multicultural literature, the learners in this study

developed an understanding of the experiences of the characters and increased their awareness about different beliefs, views, and practices of cultures and religions outside of their own.

These findings also indicate that the participants in this study developed a greater appreciation for diversity, specifically concerning wearing headgear such as hijabs, and recognized that individuals have the right to dress according to their religious beliefs without facing discrimination or harassment. These results align with Evans's (2010) study, which found that multicultural literature can increase learners' awareness and understanding of others and heighten their acceptance and respect for people different from themselves. Similarly, in the present study, participants demonstrated a more nuanced understanding and appreciation of the hijab after reading *Under My Hijab*. This engagement may have helped foster a greater acceptance and respect for individuals who dress according to their religious beliefs while increasing awareness of stereotypes and prejudices related to religious symbols and clothes.

5.1.3 Recognizing commonalities across cultures

Hardstaff (2014, cited in Husband, 2019b, p. 1069) points out that exposure to diverse perspectives and experiences through multicultural literature can lead to learners recognizing the commonalities they share with people from different backgrounds. Building upon Hardstaff's (2014) point, an important finding from the focus group interviews and reflection notes demonstrates that the learners tried to recognize the commonalities they share with the characters introduced in the picturebooks and individuals from different backgrounds, which helped them see beyond cultural differences. For instance, during the focus group interview, participants from focus group A discussed cultural differences portrayed in *The Day You Begin*, such as a character bringing rice to school and experiencing bullying. The discussion revolved around acknowledging and accepting cultural differences. In addition, the participants drew connections between the situations in the picturebook and their personal experiences of bringing diverse lunch boxes to school while emphasizing the importance of not judging or treating others differently because of their culture.

The finding indicates that the participants are aware of stereotypes related to diverse food from various cultures and are open to challenging these assumptions. These findings were also reported by Hardstaff's research (2014, cited in Husband, 2019b), which suggested that

multicultural picturebooks can help children develop empathy towards bullied and mistreated people. Moreover, this indicates that the multicultural picturebook allowed learners to gain insight into the lives of others and become aware of issues beyond their own experiences, including stereotypes and discrimination related to diverse food. This finding aligns with the argument presented by Rass (2020), who also emphasizes the significance of using multicultural literature to give children an insight into the lives of others and raise awareness of issues beyond their personal experiences. Furthermore, Segal and Wagaman (2017) state that giving children experiential opportunities to understand discrimination can help children develop empathy and develop attitudes to foster acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity, which is evident in the participants' discussions regarding diverse food. Finally, according to Gripton (1993, cited in Mandarani & Munir, 2021), exposure to multicultural literature can help learners appreciate the historical roots and cultural heritage of different ethnic groups, leading to a greater sense of respect and inclusivity. The acceptance and appreciation of cultural diversity identified in focus group A contributed to the learners breaking down stereotypes surrounding food and cultural diversity.

However, while several participants shared positive experiences and normalized the idea of bringing diverse foods to school, one participant (A.3) expressed concerns about potential negative reactions from classmates if they were to bring culturally different food. Participant A.3 referred explicitly to these potential adverse reactions as an instance of white racism. As stated in section 5.1.1, this participant once again attributed racism to individuals of Caucasian descent, revealing a tendency to generalize and stereotype this group as being solely responsible for acts of discrimination. Furthermore, this finding suggests that A.3 is aware of the possibility of discrimination and racism occurring within their own classroom, which is in line with the participant's earlier disclosure of previous instances of stereotyping and prejudice occurring in their classroom. While such instances were not mentioned by others in the group interviews or in the learner reflection notes, and no further clarification was provided as to why A.3 harbors concerns about negative reactions in response to bringing culturally different food, this individual finding underlines the importance of educational efforts centered around racism, stereotypes, and prejudice to raise awareness and support learners in countering such behaviors.

5.1.4 Upholding the principle of equality

The findings from the focus group interviews and the reflection notes demonstrate that the participants frequently emphasized that everyone possesses inherent differences. However, despite these differences, the participants recognized and affirmed the principle that all individuals are equal and, as a result, should be treated with equal respect and acceptance. For instance, several participants conveyed that the two multicultural picturebooks had enlightened them about the notion that despite the differences between individuals, they share a common humanity (A.1) and, thus, are not fundamentally distinct from one another (A.3). Additionally, one participant expressed the argument that clothing, particularly religious clothing, should not be considered a distinguishing factor among individuals and that every individual holds the right to dress following their preferences and such choices should not be a basis for discrimination (A.2). Furthermore, the participants' discussions extended beyond the context of the picturebooks to real-life situations. For example, one participant (B.1) acknowledged the diversity within their class but also emphasized the fundamental similarity and equal rights shared by all individuals. This indicates that the concepts and experiences conveyed through the multicultural picturebooks have the potential to be applied to real-life situations, enabling the learners to develop awareness and actively challenge stereotypes and prejudice associated with diversity.

These findings demonstrate that the multicultural picturebooks promoted a rise in the learners' awareness of the value of human differences and allowed them to develop greater empathy, acceptance, and understanding of diversity while upholding the principle of equality. This aligns with the views expressed by Gopalakrishnan and Persiani-Becke (2011) as they suggest that multicultural literature will help children experience understanding, empathy, and tolerance that will guide them to break debilitating stereotypes and see the importance of giving equal voice and representation to everyone. Moecharam and KartikaSari (2014) also posit that multicultural literature can motivate learners to appreciate human diversity and empathize with people of other cultures. The study's findings indicate that the two multicultural picturebooks positively impacted participants' ability to empathize with and understand diversity and equality. Furthermore, by raising awareness of stereotypes and prejudices and challenging these, the books helped foster greater acceptance and appreciation of different cultures. Reading multicultural literature is therefore in line with the Norwegian curriculum's (LK20) emphasis that schools should support and encourage their learners' social learning and development

through learning about equality, democracy, human rights, and efforts against racism, and promote inclusive practices in all subjects while also allowing learners to experience this through school practices (MER, 2020).

5.1.5 Awareness of the effect of stereotypes and prejudice on people's lives

An intriguing finding from the focus group interviews was that the participants deeply understood how stereotypes and prejudice can significantly influence individuals' lives. Furthermore, when asked how these negative attitudes could affect individuals, the participants provided thoughtful responses. Their answers mainly focused on the feelings and emotions of those affected and showed empathy toward them. Louie (2005) also reported similar findings when investigating how high school learners develop empathy while reading multicultural literature. The study revealed that learners showed emotional empathy towards individuals by explaining how they believed the individuals felt and thought. In line with this, participants from focus group A primarily focused on the emotional and psychological impact of stereotypes and prejudice on those affected. These findings are consistent with several studies (e.g., Evans, 2010; Dressel, 2005; Louie, 2005; Thein et al., 2011), which suggest that multicultural literature can provide learners with greater awareness and appreciation of other people's emotions.

The findings indicate that the participants displayed an ability for perspective-taking while reflecting on and discussing the impact of stereotypes and prejudice. For example, some participants discussed how stereotypes and prejudice could lead to cultural discomfort and detachment and how individuals may feel pressured to abandon their cultural heritage in order to assimilate into the dominant or mainstream culture (A.3). Similarly, B.2 suggested that stereotypes and prejudice could have an impact on one's self-esteem and self-image. Their reflections regarding cultural discomfort and low self-esteem suggest that the participants can contemplate the concept of otherness and feeling inadequate or imperfect because of race, culture, or religious differences. These findings reflect those of Thein et al. (2007, p. 55), who found an increased "willingness to try on different perspectives" among learners in their study. The participants seemed to consider the kinds of challenges, such as stereotypes and prejudice, that confront them in their lives and the lives of those around them by using perspective-taking practices to see the world from a different perspective effectively. This is an example of the participants interrogating multiple perspectives and imagining standing in the shoes of the

characters who experienced stereotypes and prejudice. This aligns with the second dimension of critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2014).

In their reflections, participants B.1 and B.2 provided concrete examples of how stereotypes and prejudice can adversely affect individuals, especially children. For example, B.1 noted that such negative attitudes could affect schooling by causing some children to skip classes or experience a sense of alienation and not fitting in. Additionally, they may feel pressured to conform to dominant cultural norms, such as changing their hairstyle. B.2 expanded on this by explaining that societal pressure to conform could lead to negative emotions, such as crying and demotivation. These insights indicated the learners' awareness of the potentially harmful consequences of stereotypes and prejudice, particularly for children. A possible explanation for this perspective is that the participants are children themselves, making them more likely to consider how stereotypes and prejudice could affect their peers and themselves. However, despite the learners showing awareness of the consequences of stereotypes and prejudice, it is unclear whether they had already developed this awareness before engaging in the multicultural literature project or if the project enhanced their existing or new understanding and awareness.

5.2 EFL learners' willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice

5.2.1 Challenging racial stereotypes through the reflection of social injustice

By reading literature and engaging in reflection activities related to the literature that address issues related to diversity and inclusion, such as in *The Day You Begin*, learners can progress from a state of what Freire (1970, cited in Husband, 2019b) called magical consciousness of injustice to a critical consciousness of injustice in the world. Critical consciousness helps children become aware of societal inequities and injustices and empowers them to recognize and challenge stereotypes and other forms of social injustice like racism and racial discrimination. During the focus group interviews, several participants pointed out examples of injustice and discrimination, specifically related to racial differences. For example, some of the participants in both focus groups mentioned the case of George Floyd, indicating that they are aware of the systemic racism and police brutality that affect African American people in the US. The participants' focus on sociopolitical issues aligns with the third dimension of critical literacy that attempts to step outside of the personal to investigate how power relationships and

sociopolitical systems shape our perceptions, actions, and responses (Lewison et al., 2014). One noteworthy finding is that the participants emphasized the injustice faced by individuals like George Floyd due to their race, especially skin tone. The participants' examples of social injustices can be viewed as a way of showing a willingness to challenge racial stereotypes and prejudice.

For instance, B.1 emphasized the racism experienced by African Americans, highlighting how discrimination due to their skin tone and race can lead to fatal consequences. Furthermore, the discussion about George Floyd led the participants to challenge racial stereotypes associated with specific skin tones. The participant reflections on social injustice are comparable to those seen in Lalani and Bhutta's (2018) study where learners reflected on issues of prejudice and discrimination in modern contemporary society and demonstrated comprehension of these insights by providing examples of, for example, the relationship between White Americans and African Americans. While the events suggested by the learners primarily focused on the US, one participant (B.2) brought up the Utøya terror attack in 2011 during the discussion on instances of injustice and discrimination, thus also indicating an awareness of such incidents within Norway. This shows that the learners are well-informed about current events and social issues, and they can connect these events and the broader societal issues of discrimination and injustice. The findings also indicate that the multicultural picturebooks and multimodal response activities provided spaces in the classroom for dialogue and reflection on race and racial justice issues in direct and critical ways. That helped learners move toward what Freire (1970 cited in Husband, 2019b) calls a critical consciousness of injustice in the world.

During the discussions, participant B.1 acknowledged that people might have initial reactions or curiosity towards someone who looks different, but that this should not lead to negative behavior or remarks. B.1 also claimed they did not engage in negative behavior or derogatory comments about others. The learner also emphasized that everyone has equal rights regardless of their appearance or background. The statement reveals an awareness of diversity, respect for others, and a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice, also seen in Brown (2019). This is evident when B.1 suggested that they personally should refrain from engaging in behavior that harms others. In discussing these issues in focus group A, A.2 shared an example of police brutality in a movie, indicating that the learner can recognize discrimination and injustice in different contexts. The examples given by the participants indicated that they could reflect on the experiences of marginalized groups and recognize the negative impact of

stereotypes and prejudice. They also show a willingness to challenge these by showing awareness that discrimination is harmful and that everyone has the same rights, regardless of appearance or ethnicity.

Another interesting finding is that the participants frequently used the term ‘racism’ or ‘racist,’ in addition to discrimination (see section 5.1.1) when discussing stereotypes and prejudice. The participants’ use of these terms could have been influenced by the activities included in the project, such as Activity 2 (see Appendix F), which addressed everyday racism. This further highlights the influential role the multimodal response activities may have played in shaping the learners’ discussions and responses. By recognizing the connection between stereotypes and prejudice, and racism, learners are demonstrating a critical awareness of how social and cultural factors contribute to systemic inequalities, and they are beginning to challenge these biases in their thinking and actions. As a result of engaging in critical reflection and dialogue through the multicultural picturebooks and activities, learners showed an understanding of race and social issues, such as negative stereotypes, discrimination, and racism within the broader world, as also indicated by Kemple et al. (2016) and Kuby (2011).

However, it is important to acknowledge that the selection of multicultural texts for the two-week project may have specifically influenced learners to contemplate stereotypes and prejudice within the context of race and racism. It is possible that their responses would have been different if a different text set had been implemented in the project. Furthermore, as in Evans’s (2010) study, there was no method in place in this study to record any specific changes in the learner’s behavior. However, the participants’ self-reported increased awareness, following the multicultural literature project, of stereotypes and prejudice, acceptance and respect for people different from themselves, and of social injustice can be interpreted as an indication of a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice.

5.2.2 Different ways of combating and challenging stereotypes and prejudice

The Norwegian curriculum (LK20) emphasizes that schools should teach learners to respect differences and promote democratic values and attitudes that can combat prejudice and discrimination (MER, 2017). The findings from the focus group interviews and reflection notes indicate that the participants showed an active stance toward combatting and challenging

stereotypes and prejudice. The participants shared ideas on how to do this during focus group interviews, in their reflection notes, and through the idea jar.

In focus group A, two participants suggested that combating stereotypes and prejudice can be achieved by raising awareness through open conversations with individuals who use negative stereotypes and engage in prejudiced behaviors. In contrast, participant A.3 suggested that engaging in conversations with people was not beneficial and instead recommended avoiding discussions on such topics. Without additional information, it is difficult to determine the exact reason behind A.3's statement. However, participant A.3 may have felt that mere discussions would not lead to meaningful changes. Alternatively, the participant may have had a different perspective or experience than the other participants, leading them to arrive at a different conclusion.

On the other hand, at a different point during the focus group interview, A.3 recommended implementing a similar multicultural literature project in a parallel 6th-grade class to educate them about stereotypes and prejudice, as there had been incidents of these issues in the parallel class. This raises questions about whether A.3 provided different responses based on what they perceived as acceptable in different contexts and whether A.3 considered the multicultural literature project important in addressing stereotypes and prejudice and therefore recommended implementing a similar project in the parallel class. The learner may have considered the multicultural literature project different from discussing stereotypes and prejudice with prejudiced individuals. In addition, the inconsistency in A.3's responses and the tendency to associate all individuals of Caucasian descent as responsible for acts of racism (see section 5.1.3) poses a challenge in determining whether the multicultural project truly benefited the learner's awareness of and willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice.

Regarding focus group B, the participants' recommendations centered around the importance of self-awareness. For instance, B.1 and B.3 suggested that individuals should be more aware of their actions and reflect on them before engaging in negative behavior. Participants frequently tended to concentrate on self-awareness and modifying the actions and attitudes of individuals. This understanding could have impacted their own attitudes and influenced their responses in the interviews and reflection notes. In contrast to Lalani & Bhutta's (2019) study, in which the learners' attitudes gradually changed through readings, reflections, and discussions, it was challenging to determine attitude changes in this study. However, the

findings from both focus groups show that participants recognized the importance of addressing stereotypes and prejudice and are willing to suggest various ways to combat them. It is worth noting that although the participants acknowledged the importance of addressing stereotypes and prejudice in their interviews and reflection notes, it is possible that the learners already recognized this importance prior to the project.

During the focus group interviews, the participants were asked why they thought we read the books *The Day You Begin* and *Under My Hijab*. The participants' answers focused on the importance of learning about stereotypes and prejudice and how reading multicultural literature can contribute to addressing these issues. This aligns with Husband's (2019b) argument of reading multicultural literature to challenge social injustices. These findings suggest that the participants from focus groups A and B recognized the value of reading books that challenge stereotypes and prejudice. Participants from both groups recommended continuing to read multicultural books and getting more multicultural literature in the school library, as they will obtain new knowledge. Notably, participant B.2 expressed the belief that educating learners about these topics through multicultural books would provide them guidance on to avoid engaging in stereotyping and prejudiced behaviors.

Husband (2019b) claims that learners can use literature to help them identify, resist, and ultimately act against various forms of social injustice, for example, to work against prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination. The participants identified several benefits of reading multicultural books, including increased knowledge about different cultures, religious practices, and perspectives, expanded empathy, and the potential to change their beliefs and others' beliefs and understanding of diversity (as seen in Thein et al., 2007; Evans, 2010; Brown, 2019; Lalani & Bhutta, 2019). In addition, the participants appreciated the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences of people who are different from themselves, including the characters introduced in the multicultural picturebooks, and to expand their awareness of the injustices in the world. These findings highlight the participants' awareness and understanding of the multicultural books' potential to challenge stereotypes and prejudice, indicating their willingness to do so as a form of social action.

5.2.3 Promoting social justice through the Idea Jar

The multicultural literature project ended with an activity where the learners were told to write down ideas for an Idea jar on how they could challenge and reduce stereotypes and prejudice. The fourth dimension of critical literacy inspired this last activity (Activity 4). According to Lewison et al. (2014), the fourth dimension aims for empowering learners to promote social justice and enact change by taking action, for example by creating an Idea jar like in this study. As seen in Table 1 and Section 4, the findings from the Idea jar suggest that the participants came up with diverse ideas for how to take action to promote social justice. Husband (2019b) claims that the goal of a critical literacy approach when working with texts should be to use the texts to guide learners in identifying various forms of social injustice. The learners in this study used the text sets to identify, resist, and ultimately act against various forms of social injustice they became familiar with during the reading and activities. In this case, they worked against stereotypes and prejudice and promoted social justice through their suggestions.

Owens and Nowell (2001, cited in Evans, 2010, p. 94) argue that multicultural literature can promote a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice in children. Additionally, it can expose them to diverse perspectives and ways of life, leading to a more comprehensive and critical understanding of the world's complexities. Such literature can also be used to teach fundamental democratic principles, cultural appreciation, social justice, the common good, and social responsibility. The learners' ideas on challenging stereotypes and prejudice reflect these values. The first category of ideas focused on raising awareness on social media, which suggests that the participants recognized the power of social media as a platform to create awareness about the harmful effects of stereotypes and prejudice. Furthermore, the findings indicated that one participant (A.3) demonstrated awareness of stereotypes and prejudice prevalent in social media platforms. The participant mentioned encountering stereotypes and prejudice on the TikTok platform, particularly during and following the George Floyd case.

The second category of ideas suggests that the participants recognized the importance of discussing stereotypes and prejudice. This category of ideas suggests that the participants believed that talking about these issues could help them learn more about the topics, challenge their biases, and educate others on the harmful effects of stereotypes and prejudice. This suggests that the multicultural literature project offered a secure environment in the classroom for open and critical discussions and reflections on topics concerning stereotypes and prejudice,

thus assisting children in developing what Freire (1970, cited in Husband, 2019b) refers to as critical awareness of injustice. As a result, based on their experience, the learners suggested continuing to use this approach to talk about social injustice, creating a secure space for conversations, and motivating others to reflect on their own biases. These findings are similar to those expressed in the reflection notes and interview responses, reinforcing the strength and consistency of the learners' ideas, and implying that the participants consistently recognized the significance of engaging in conversations about stereotypes and prejudice and working with multicultural literature to combat them.

The third category of ideas focused on taking action, such as reporting incidents of discrimination to the police or stopping bullies at school, suggesting that the participants recognized that challenging stereotypes and prejudice requires more than just awareness and conversation. Overall, the findings from the Idea jar suggest that the participants show a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice by recognizing the importance of taking a multi-faceted approach, which includes raising awareness on social media, having conversations, and taking tangible actions to combat stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination.

5.3 Limitations

One of the primary limitations of this study is its small sample size, which limits the generalizability of the findings (McKay, 2006; Dörnyei, 2007). With a small number of participants, the study may not adequately represent a larger population's diverse perspectives and experiences, and as such cannot be generalized. This means that the results may not apply to other groups or contexts, and other factors may influence the outcomes that were not accounted for in the study. As a result, the study only provides insight into the eighteen selected 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of and willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice. Increasing the sample size in order to enhance reliability would be advantageous for future research. In addition, there was no method in place in this study to record any specific changes in the learner's behavior and attitudes, such as pre-interviews or tests to document specific changes in learners' awareness. Instead, the study relied on the learners' self-reporting of changes in awareness in their learner artifacts or interview responses. While this does not provide an external measure, it allows for a more nuanced exploration of learner voices and experiences and their own assessment of the potential working with multicultural literature has

for raising awareness of stereotypes and prejudice. In addition, it is essential to acknowledge that although the participants expressed the importance of addressing stereotypes and prejudice in their interviews and reflection notes, it is possible that they were already aware of this importance prior to the project. However, most of the findings in this study are consistent with previous research and studies (e.g., Thein et al., 2007; Evans, 2010; Thein et al., 2011; Lalani & Bhutta, 2018; Husband, 2019a, 2019b; Brown, 2019) that show that working with multicultural literature can increase such awareness.

The overall time frame of the study was also a limitation. The data was collected over two weeks with only three 60-minute sessions per week. However, for this study, a more extended period would have been ideal, especially considering the young age of the participants. A semester or larger project would have allowed for a more extensive exploration of the potential of working with multicultural literature in raising EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice and facilitated deeper discussions on stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, and racism. By expanding the study's time frame, the teacher researcher could have incorporated a wider selection of multicultural books addressing more social justice issues and worked more extensively with multicultural literature.

This is a small-scale study with a classroom-based qualitative research design where the qualitative data analysis involves subjective interpretation of data (Dörnyei, 2007). As a result, this can introduce bias into the analysis and make it difficult to generalize the findings to other populations or contexts. In other words, the subjective interpretation of data may lead to researcher bias, where the researcher's preconceived notions or expectations influence the analysis and interpretation of the data, which may not accurately reflect participants' actual behaviors or attitudes. This can impact the findings' validity and reliability and limit the results' generalizability. As mentioned in section 3.6, the researcher in this study consciously attempted to avoid integrating their own beliefs and perceptions during the two-week multicultural literature project and data analysis. Additionally, to maintain the authenticity of the data, the researcher ensured that the interview transcripts and learner artifacts remained as close to the original as possible. This involved conducting a thematic analysis of the original Norwegian texts and accurately translating the relevant quotes into English. The aim was to preserve the meaning of the participants' responses and prevent any potential influence of researcher bias during the translation process. By undertaking these steps, the researcher aimed to present an accurate representation of the participants' perspectives and minimize researcher bias.

Lastly, interviewing children has specific challenges (Adler et al., 2019). For example, the young participants in this study may want to provide answers they believe the interviewer wants to hear rather than their honest opinions or experiences. In other words, young participants may feel obligated to provide “acceptable” responses and conform to their peers’ opinions or the researcher’s expectations, especially if the researcher is also the teacher, as was the case in this study, which can result in unreliable answers. To mitigate this limitation, the researcher tried to create a supportive environment for student dialogue and incorporated mechanisms such as anonymous reflection notes and Idea Jars. These tools allowed students to freely express conflicting opinions without concerns about identification which might have promoted more honest and authentic responses.

5.4 Implications and avenues for future research

The national curriculum in Norway (LK20) and the Education Act emphasize the importance of learning about equality, democracy, human rights, and efforts against racism and promoting inclusion in school subjects and through school practices. In addition, schools should promote democratic values and attitudes to counteract discrimination and prejudice and provide insight into cultural diversity (MER, 2017). Introducing authentic multicultural literature in the EFL classroom can be a powerful means for teachers to help their learners challenge and counter stereotypes and prejudice. If educators fail to address and challenge discriminatory attitudes, prejudice, and stereotypes in education, it may lead to children entering society with unfounded prejudice and a limited understanding of diversity (UNESCO et al., 2011, p. 13). Thus, schools and teachers are the first lines of defense against racism, discrimination, stereotypes, and prejudice.

Significant changes in beliefs and attitudes happen slowly. However, powerful changes can be envisioned when learners read, discuss, reflect, and write about multicultural literature (Thein et al., 2007). Nevertheless, it is important to emphasize that incorporating multicultural literature into the EFL classroom should be an ongoing and integrated practice, accompanied by establishing a safe space for dialogue and reflection when addressing complex topics such as stereotypes and prejudice. Taking this into account, the findings of this study have several implications for future teaching practice in the Norwegian EFL classroom. Firstly, EFL teachers can work with authentic multicultural literature in their Norwegian EFL classrooms to promote

empathy, tolerance, and respect for marginalized individuals and groups while providing insights into the sociocultural experiences of underrepresented communities and guiding EFL learners to challenge stereotypes and prejudices. By incorporating such literature into the English subject, teachers can facilitate learners' development of a greater appreciation for diversity, foster greater acceptance and respect for individuals who differ from themselves, and enhance awareness of stereotypes and prejudices.

In addition to the benefits of working with multicultural literature, teachers need to be aware of the potential challenges they may encounter. For example, teachers should be aware of the potential for the emergence of new stereotypes and prejudices. Without careful implementation, these books can inadvertently introduce learners to stereotypes and prejudices they may previously have been unaware of. Therefore, it is important to approach such literature with sensitivity and ensure that students develop a critical understanding rather than reinforcing harmful biases. Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge that certain learners may experience a deep emotional response to the characters' experiences within the texts. Hence, teachers should be aware of the significance of creating a safe space for discussing uncomfortable topics and dedicating time to do so.

As seen in the findings of this study, the multimodal response activities included in the multicultural literature project played an important role in facilitating the learners' reflections, discussions, and responses to the picturebooks and the topic of stereotypes and prejudice. Hence, in order to engage learners in discussing and reflecting on texts, it is essential to provide them with scaffolding during their reading of these texts. Teachers should, for example, provide thoughtful reflection questions. One approach to doing this is to incorporate questions related to the four dimensions of critical literacy, as demonstrated in this study, to encourage critical reflection and thinking when exploring texts and complex topics. Additionally, teachers can support the literature reading with reflection activities allowing learners to explore and discuss these texts even more deeply.

Lastly, EFL teachers should consider incorporating multicultural picturebooks into their Norwegian EFL classes to promote critical consciousness and sociopolitical awareness among EFL learners. Exposure to multicultural literature that addresses oppression, injustice, and diversity can create a safe space for dialogue and reflection on race and racial justice issues. Moreover, EFL teachers can encourage learners to take action against discrimination and racism

by fostering critical awareness and providing opportunities for dialogue and reflection. This can include exploring ways to create awareness and promote change, such as taking action to promote social justice. Learners can do this through, for example, creating an Idea Jar, as demonstrated in this study, choosing an idea from this to implement in practice, or conducting research on social issues and having presentations to share their findings with the rest of the class. Furthermore, teachers can also work towards an inclusive and culturally responsive classroom environment that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion. Ultimately, the findings of this study suggest avenues for educators to promote critical consciousness and social justice awareness among their learners and facilitate their journey toward becoming active agents of combating social injustices such as stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, and racism.

Based on this small-scale study, several avenues for future research could be explored. One future research avenue could involve replicating the study with several EFL classes, thus providing a more extensive and diverse sample of EFL learners to contribute towards the generalizability of the study's findings. This could include learners from different age groups, grades, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds to investigate if the results are consistent across a broader population. Conducting a more extensive study would also address the research gap concerning young EFL learners. Another future research avenue is conducting a longitudinal study to investigate whether changes in beliefs and awareness toward stereotypes and prejudice are sustained over time. This could involve following up with the participants after a certain period to see if the outcomes of the multicultural literature project have lasted. Finally, one could conduct pre- and post-interviews to determine whether the multicultural project has changed learners' beliefs and attitudes or whether the values expressed in the post-interviews were already present before starting the project.

6. Conclusion

The current study investigated the potential working with multicultural literature has for raising Norwegian 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice and their willingness to challenge these. In order to address these questions, the study implemented a two-week multicultural literature project which involved reflecting on and discussing the topics of stereotypes and prejudice through reading two multicultural picturebooks and engaging in a range of multimodal response activities. The data consisted of two semi-structured focus group interviews with eight participants and learner artifacts produced by the 6th graders during the two-week project.

The first research question of the study asked: "What potential does working with multicultural literature have for raising 6th grade EFL learners' awareness of stereotypes and prejudice?". The findings indicate that the participants demonstrated an increased understanding of stereotypes and prejudice after the multicultural literature project. Following the project, the learners associated stereotypes with inaccurate and harmful assumptions based on cultural, religious, and racial differences. Prejudice was associated with negative opinions, attitudes, and behaviors caused by misconceptions. The study found that the two multicultural picturebooks acted as mirrors, windows, and sliding doors for the learners, allowing them to see beyond cultural differences and recognize commonalities across cultures. Following the reading of the picturebooks, the participants emphasized the importance of not judging or treating others differently based on cultural, racial, or religious differences, thus demonstrating empathy and respect towards diversity.

Additionally, the multimodal response activities implemented in the project were seen to contribute to shaping the learners' reflections and discussion of the picturebooks and the topic of stereotypes and prejudice. These activities facilitated the learners gaining insight into the lives of underrepresented groups, such as Muslim women, and allowed them to develop a deeper understanding of their experiences. The participants demonstrated an acceptance of and empathy for individuals with different religious and cultural practices, such as wearing a headscarf, and indicated an appreciation of diversity. Lastly, the study found that participants demonstrated an ability for perspective-taking and an awareness of how stereotypes and prejudice affect individuals, for example by leading to cultural discomfort and detachment, low

self-esteem, and negative emotions. However, despite the positive effects observed regarding the multicultural literature project, some learners still held on to their own stereotypes and revealed unconscious biases in their responses. This highlights the complexity of addressing stereotypes and prejudice with younger learners and the need for ongoing efforts to promote awareness and challenge deeply ingrained beliefs.

The second research question asked: “Do the learners show a willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice after the multicultural literature project? If so, in which ways?”. The study found that the multicultural literature project supported the learners in developing a critical consciousness of injustice and becoming aware of societal inequities and injustices. The participants in the study demonstrated their comprehension of social issues related to racism and discrimination, citing examples such as the case of George Floyd. In addition, they were willing to challenge stereotypes and prejudice, particularly related to skin tone and race. Moreover, the participants recognized the negative impact of stereotypes and prejudice. They therefore expressed a desire to combat these by offering various strategies, including creating awareness through conversations and self-reflection. In addition, they advocated for the importance of reading multicultural books to gain knowledge, expand empathy, and change beliefs and understanding of diversity. Lastly, the Idea Jar activity further revealed the participants’ diverse ideas for challenging and reducing stereotypes and prejudice. Participants recognized the power of social media for raising awareness, the importance of discussing such issues openly, and the need for tangible actions such as stopping bullies at school and other individuals from stereotyping in order to combat discrimination. These ideas reflected the participants’ willingness to challenge stereotypes and prejudice through various actions.

The current study has demonstrated the importance of working with multicultural literature in the Norwegian EFL classroom to raise EFL learners’ awareness of stereotypes and prejudice and support young learners in adapting to the changes in our increasingly multicultural society by challenging stereotypes and prejudice and respecting cultures other than their own. Overall, this small-scale classroom-based study aligns with and contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence of the positive potential of multicultural literature on the developing awareness of stereotypes and prejudice among young learners. Furthermore, the findings suggest that using multicultural literature in the EFL classroom and engaging in dialogue and reflection can foster a critical awareness of injustice, promote respect for diversity, and empower learners to challenge stereotypes and prejudice in the pursuit of social justice.

However, due to the limited number of previous studies with young learners, further research is needed to explore long-term effects and optimal strategies for integrating multicultural literature into Norwegian EFL classrooms to achieve such aims.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Project description

Project description - Multicultural literature project

Competence Aims for the multicultural literature project

Competence aims after Year 7

- use simple strategies for language learning, text creation and communication
- listen to and understand words and expressions in adapted and authentic texts
- express himself or herself in an understandable way with a varied vocabulary and polite expressions adapted to the receiver and situation
- initiate, maintain and conclude conversations about his or her own interests and current topics
- read and present content from various types of texts, including self- chosen texts
- read and listen to English-language factual texts and literature for children and young people and write and talk about the content
- write cohesive texts, including multimedia texts, that retell, tell, inquire about and express opinions and interests adapted to the receiver
- investigate ways of living and traditions in different societies in the English-speaking world and in Norway and reflect on identity and cultural belonging

(MER, 2017, p. 7-8)

Week 1	
Lesson 1	<p>1. Activity 1 – Who am I? (see Appendix E)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Learners will get a task where they will be given pictures and occupation titles. The learners must match the pictures to the occupation titles and give the reasoning for their choices (Match the job to the person) <p>2. Introduce the two-week project.</p>

	<p>3. Introduce the topic of stereotypes and prejudice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The teacher will introduce the terms stereotypes and prejudice. - Mind map → students can point out stereotypes they might have come across or/and know related to gender, race, sexual, or religious stereotypes.
Lesson 2	<p>1. Read the first book and discuss – <i>The Day You Begin</i> (Woodson, 2018)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read aloud of the first book - Ask critical questions before, during, and after the reading. Ask questions that refer to the four dimensions of critical literacy (see Appendix B) <p>2. Reflection on the first book</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners will write down their thoughts on the first book (see Appendix D)
Lesson 3	<p>1. Activity 2 – Everyday racism? (Hverdagsrasisme?) (see Appendix F)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners will be divided into groups of 3-4. Each group will get eight statements/pictures from Appendix E. They will discuss each statement/ image based on these questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Who do you think hears such statements or experiences situations described on the note?</i> • <i>Why do you think people make such statements?</i> • <i>How do you think this statement is perceived? Is there anything that can be experienced as hurtful?</i> • <i>Is there anything about this statement/image that can be defined as racist? What and how?</i> <p>2. Presentation and class discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each group must present a statement or image and discuss it with the rest of the class based on the questions they were given in Activity 2.
Week 2	
Lesson 4	<p>1. Read the second book and discuss – <i>Under My Hijab</i> (Khan, 2019)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read aloud of the second book - Ask critical questions before, during, and after the reading. Ask questions that refer to the four dimensions of critical literacy (see Appendix C) <p>2. Reflection on the first book</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners will write down their thoughts on the second book (see Appendix D).

Lesson 5	<p>1. Activity 3 – Fact, Opinion, or Prejudice (Fakta, Mening eller Fordom) (see Appendix G)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Each learner will get a worksheet to assess 11 statements and tick what type of statement they think it is. For example, is it a fact, opinion, or prejudice? - Review the various statements and reflect on the learners’ views together. Discuss any ambiguities or disagreements that might be interesting to explore.
Lesson 6	<p>2. Activity 4 -Idea Jar - Work with social justice (see Appendix H)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learners will write down ideas on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How can they challenge/reduce stereotypes and prejudice?</i> <p>1. Discuss the ideas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the ideas in the Idea Jar and reflect on them together.
Week 3	
Lesson 7	<p>Focus group interviews – Group 1 (see Appendix I for interview guide):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus group interview with Group A after the multicultural literature project.
Lesson 8	<p>Focus group interviews – Group 2 (see Appendix I for interview guide):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focus group interview with Group B after the multicultural literature project.

Appendix B: Critical Questions – *The Day You Begin* (Woodson, 2018)

Questions to ask before, during, and after the read-aloud of *The Day You Begin*. The questions focus on the four dimensions of critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2014):

(The picturebook is without page numbers, and one illustration and text are displayed over two pages in the book. Therefore, two pages count as one when referring to the pages below)

Cover:

- What do you think the title means?

Page 1:

- What does the author mean by “*no one there is quite like you*”?

Page 2:

- How do you think Angelina is feeling?
- Why is she stretching her hair out?
- What do the other kids in the picture think about Angelina?

Page 3:

- How do you think Rigoberto feels when others are laughing at the way he speaks?
- Why do you think some people laugh when they hear someone speak differently or with an accent?

Page 4:

- Compared to how Rigoberto is illustrated on the previous page, how does he look now?
- Why do you think he looks this way?
- Are there other ways to make him or others in his situation feel better?

Page 5:

- How do you think Angelina feels?
- Why is she feeling like that?

Page 6:

- Why do you think Angelina could not travel like the other students?
- Why does she feel like no one is like her?

Page 7:

- What does the author mean by the words strange and unfamiliar?
- What do you think about how the other kids look at the girl with the lunch box?
- How do you think she is feeling?
- Is it strange to bring something in your lunch box that no one is familiar with, but you love?

Page 8:

- Are there differences between the two girls' lunch box(es)?

Page 9:

- What is happening on this page?
- How would you feel if someone didn't want you on their team?

Page 10:

- Why do you think the boy feels that the world is a place where he is standing outside?
- What can we do to make people feel more included and accepted?

Page 11:

- Look at the illustration. What do you think it is trying to tell us?

Page 12:

- What do you think Angelina means with the day you begin to share stories? Which stories is she talking about?
- What does it mean to have a strong voice?

Page 13:

- What does the author mean by "*the world opening itself up a little wider to make some space for you*"?

Page 14:

- Is it a bad or a good thing to be different from others?
- Are you any different from others, for example, your classmates or friends? If yes, in which way?
- How can we accept and respect differences?

After reading:

- What do you think the author wants us to learn from reading *The Day You Begin*?
- What is the message of the story?
- Why do you think the characters felt the way they did?
- Have you ever been in a room of people who differ from you? How did it make you feel?
- How should we deal with differences?

Appendix C: Critical Questions – *Under My Hijab* (Khan, 2019)

Questions to ask before, during, and after the read-aloud of *The Day You Begin*. The questions focus on the four dimensions of critical literacy (Lewison et al., 2014):

(The picturebook is without page numbers, and one illustration and text are displayed over two pages in the book. Therefore, two pages count as one when referring to the pages below)

Cover:

- What do you think the title means?
- What is under the hijab?

Page 1:

- What does the author mean by “*strong Muslim sisters*”?
- What does it mean to be strong?

Page 2:

- Do you think the grandma feels comfortable with wearing a hijab while working in a bakery where it can get warm while working?
- Is there a difference between the grandma’s hijab and the man in the background’s hat?

Page 4:

- What does the patient’s father’s facial expression tell us? Does he look scared of the doctor or comfortable?

Page 5:

- Why does the mother wear a hijab in front of her patient and his father but not in front of her husband at home?
- Does the mother look happier at home because she has taken the hijab off, or does she seem as happy with and without the hijab?

Page 7:

- Why does the Auntie need to color her hair when she covers her hair anyway when she is outside?

Page 8:

- What do the scouts think about their troop leader being the only one wearing a hijab?
- Does Jenna need a sun hat when she is wearing a hijab?

Page 10:

- Do you think one can wear a hijab and still wear a fashionable outfit?
- Do you think the hijab can prevent you from dressing how you wish?
- What do you think Zayna's friend next to her thinks of Zayna? Do you think she finds it weird that her friend doesn't show her hair?

Page 12:

- Do you think the hijab can prevent you from doing sports?
- Is there anything you believe the hijab can prevent you from doing?

Page 14:

- Do you think the women in the illustration are forced to adopt the hijab?
- Do they look happy with the hijab on their head?

Page 15:

- What does the girl mean by her hair "*shines bright like her future*"?
- What do you think her future will look like?
- Do you think she will get higher education?

After reading:

- Why is the hijab worn in so many different styles in the book?
- Why do the women take off their hijab at home?
- Did any of the women look oppressed in any way?

Appendix D: Reflection notes

(Summary of the 6th graders' reflection notes)

The Day You Begin (Woodson, 2018)

Task: My thoughts after reading and discussing *The Day You Begin*:

- At ingen er like. At du ikke skal være flau over hvordan du ser ut.
- This was fun and when there was fun aktivitis.
- I think that it was good book. And that we have to be kind to each other.
- Bra at boken miner på om at vi må inkludere og hjelpe folk som ikke har det bra. Hjelp folk som ikke kan snakke norsk. Se fra andres perspektiv. Føler seg trist er vanlig og folk må tenke på det og ikke ha små hjerner. Si ifra til voksne hvis andre har det dårlig men ikke tør å si det selv. Inkludere og leke med alle for et fint miljø.
- Everyone is different but everyone is good in there own way. Be proud of who you are. You are perfect.
- The story and drawing was good. I think that its sad that few people might feel like how any of these people felt it, so I hope it gets better.
- Jeg la merke til at jenta ikke trivtest så godt i begynnelsen siden folk baksnakket henne på grunn av håret. Og en gutt som snakket et annet språk hadde det ikke så bra siden han snakket et annet språk og da begynte de andre i klassen å le. Og en annen gutt fikk ikke lov og være med. Og noen snakket om en jente sin matboks. Men alle de fire ble venner til slutt.
- I find the book uncomfortable because people are being unfair and they made people feel insecure.
- That we all are different and that your hair and skin doesn't matter. You kan be urself and be nice to everyone.
- At man må behandle andre likt. Man kan være fine selv om man ser annerledes ut enn de andre i klassen.
- Dette er en veldig bra bok fordi at den handler om å føle seg utenfor og å få venner. Boka får deg til å tenke å hvordan noen folk har det og de føler.
- Du skal behandle alle likt sån at de ikke skal føle seg utenfor. Ikke mobbe folk eller ute stenge.
- It was intresting to see how the children had evolved from being shy to friendly.

Under My Hijab (Khan, 2019)

Task: My thoughts after reading and discussing *Under My Hijab*:

- Jeg syntes det er greit at folk bruker hodeplagg
- Jeg syntes det er greit at folk har på seg hodeplagg som tilhører deres religion. Det er greit at noen er litt annerledes og at de tror på en annen religion.
- Jeg lærte nye ting og at kan kle deg hvordan du kan kle deg.
- I thought that the book was really good. I think that we need to be better with hijab and not try to just take it of somebody head.
- Alle stereotype er ikke sanne. Alle mennesker er mennesker også selv om de er med rare hodeplagg. Muslimer er ikke terrorister. Muslim og Islam bestemmer selv å ha på hijab og er frie.
- Mine tanker er at selv om du bruker hijab kan du klare ting men det er alltid noen som ikke støter deg.
- The book was good. I think that even if your wearing a hijab you are stil amazing.
- Det handlet om at selv om du har hijab kan du ha en bra job og du kan ha din egen still.
- After reading this book with the class I feel more comfy in my hijab.
- I learned that people are not forced to wear a hijab.
- Man kan være fin selv med hijab.
- Dette var et intresangt tema og jeg lærte litt om stereotyper og fordommer.
- Jeg tror at folk kan ikke bare gå til folk og spør om de har bomber eller og rive av hijaben deres.
- It is a good story. I did not know that you could get more than one type of hijabs.

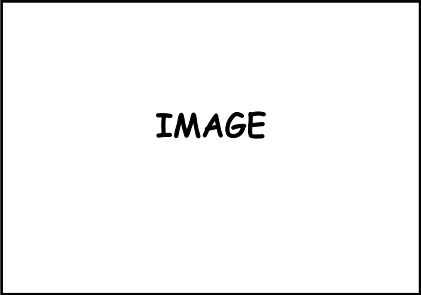
Appendix E: Activity 1 – Who Am I?

(Images are not provided due to copyright restrictions)

WHO AM I?

Match the job titles given below to a person in one of the pictures:

Nurse, cleaner, taxi driver, lawyer, teacher, musician, banker, cook, entrepreneur, politician, plumber, waiter/waitress, police officer.

















Appendix F: Activity 2 – Everyday racism?

Elevark til undervisningsforslag 1

<p>– Hei! Hva heter du? – Abdi – Å, kult! Er du fra Afrika?</p>	<p>– Hvor kommer du fra, da? – Fra Oslo. – Ja, men hvor kommer du egentlig fra?</p>	<p>– Muslimene tar snart over landet vårt.</p>
<p>– Kan jeg få kjenne på håret ditt? Det er så morsomt å ta på!</p>	<p>– Kommer du fra Afrika? Kan ikke du vise meg en dans? Dere har jo så mye rytme i kroppen!</p>	<p>– Du har blitt veldig flink til å snakke norsk! Hvor lenge har du egentlig bodd her? – Jeg ble født her.</p>
<p>– Ser du like godt som oss andre, siden du har sånne skrå øyne?</p>	<p>– Bor dere samer i lavvo hele året?</p>	<p>– Er dere fattige? Sånne som dere jobber jo ikke.</p>
<p>– Tvinger faren din deg til å bruke hijab?</p>	<p>– Får du lov til å gifte deg med hvem du vil?</p>	<p>– Skulle du ikke heller ønske du var hvit?</p>
<p>– Det må være kaldt for deg her i Norge. Du er vel ikke vant til det der du kommer fra?</p>	<p>– Er ikke du jøde? Hvorfor hater dere egentlig muslimer?</p>	<p>– En hund som blir født i en stall, kan aldri bli hest. (Barn av innvandrere kan aldri bli helt norske)</p>
<p>– Hvorfor går du i 17. mai-tog når du ikke er norsk?</p>	<p>– Hvorfor går utenlandske gutter alltid sammen i gjenger?</p>	<p>I 2015 ønsket USAs president å stenge grensene for muslimer.</p>
<p>Innvandrere gidder ikke å lære seg norsk.</p>	<p>– Hva er galt med ordet neger? Det betyr jo bare svart.</p>	<p>– Sånne asiatiske jenter er pene.</p>
<p>En svart mann ble stoppet av politiet 17 ganger på tre uker, mistenkt for å ha stjålet sykkelen sin, som var av en dyr modell.</p>	<p>– Du er ganske flink på skolen til å være tater.</p>	<p>– Islam er en terroristreligion.</p>
<p>Nordmenn med mørk hud opplever at de blir kontrollert oftere av tollerne på flyplassen enn hvite nordmenn.</p>		<p>– Kan du spise svin? Men er ikke du muslim, da?</p>
<p>– Hvis du vil jobbe som telefonseiger her hos oss, må du nok bytte til et norsk navn.</p>	<p>– Er du ikke litt misunnelig på at jeg kan spise svin når du ikke kan?</p>	<p>– Samer er sånne som driver med reinsdyr.</p>
<p>– Beklager, men vi ansetter ikke personer som er mørke i huden.</p>	<p>– Jeg er ikke rasist, men ...</p>	<p>– Hvorfor bruker du turban?</p>
<p>Personer med navn som ikke er «typisk norske», opplever at det er vanskeligere for dem å bli kalt inn til jobbintervju enn personer med tradisjonelle norske navn.</p>	<p>Personer med mørk hud får sjeldnere hovedroller i teater, film og TV-serier enn personer med hvit hud.</p>	<p>Kvinner med mørk hud som er ute på byen i helgene, opplever å bli tatt for å være prostituerte.</p>
<p>Er du polakk? Hadde du gidde å male rommet mitt i kveld, eller?</p>	<p>Personer med mørk hud som er høyt utdannet (f.eks. leger, ingeniører) har ofte problemer med å få seg jobb i Norge.</p>	<p>Personer med mørk hud opplever ofte at folk med hvit hud snakker ekstra høyt og langsomt til dem.</p>
<p>Innvandrere eller personer med innvandrerbakgrunn opplever noen ganger at etnisk norske personer ikke ønsker å leie ut leiligheten sin til dem.</p>	<p>En del barn med innvandrerbakgrunn opplever at lærere behandler dem annerledes enn etnisk norske barn.</p>	<p>I butikker og bakerier selges det bakverk med navnet «Negerboller».</p>

Dembra. (2020). *Hverdagsrasisme*. <https://dembra.no/no/opplegg/4016-2/>

Appendix G: Activity 3 – Facts, opinions, or prejudice?

Fakta, mening eller fordom?

Kryss av for hva slags utsagn du mener dette er: Fakta, mening eller fordom?

Utsagn	Fakta	Mening	Fordom
Norge bør ta imot flere flyktninger.			
Barn blir norske statsborgere ved fødsel dersom far eller moren er norsk statsborger.			
Samer er terrorister.			
Utledninger er mindre intelligente enn nordmenn.			
Norske grønnsaker smaker bedre enn spanske grønnsaker.			
Kinesere arbeider i det skjulte for å ta over verden.			
Alle muslimske jenter blir tvunget til å bruke hijab.			
Det bor flere kristne i Norge enn jøder.			
Det er bedre å ta en sydentur til Spania enn Tyrkia.			
Folk med innvandrerbakgrunn er ofte kriminelle.			

Appendix H: Activity 4 – Idea Jar

(Summary of the 6th grader'' ideas from the idea jar)

Learners' Ideas from the Idea Jar

Task: How can you challenge/reduce stereotypes and prejudice?

- Dont say people cant join because there different
- Stoppe mobberen på skolen og overtale folk at alle er like verdt.
- Don't say people with different food stinks.
- Me kan melde det til politiet.
- Say to them that everbody is different but we all are human.
- Vi kan prøve å overtale noen at fordommene er ikke sanne og at alle er like verdt.
- Hvis noen har fordommer mot islam kan vi si at ikke alle som er fra islam er terrorister eller noe annet.
- Tell people that its wrong and that everbody is just as huaman as they are.
- Ikke snake dårlig om andre folk og forstå at folk er forskjellige.
- Skrive på twitter om hva stereotyper er og det ikke er sant.
- Stoppe å lære barnene at utledinger er terrorister.
- Trenger ikke og diskriminere folk som er annerledes.
- Vi kan bli bedre på å snakke fint om/til folk. Vi kan få alle til å være med på leken.
- People with smaller eyes are pretty.
- Ringe en du stoler på.
- At alle kan ha på hva de vill.
- Snakke mer om stereotyper og fordommer for å lære og lære andre at det ikke er greit.
- Legge ut en video på Tik Tok hvis du snakker om det.

Appendix I: Interview Guide (Norwegian)

Prosjektet

- Hvilke tanker eller ideer sitter dere igjen med etter dette prosjektet?
- Hvilken aktivitet syntes dere var mest interessant og hvorfor? Hva syntes dere var mest interessant å arbeide med i dette prosjektet og hvorfor?
- Hvilken ide la du i «Idea Jar»? Hva inspirerte deg til å skrive denne ideen?

Flerkulturelle bøker

- Hva syntes dere om boken *The Day You Begin*?
- Er det noe dere husker spesielt fra boken? Eventuelt et øyeblikk eller bilde?
- Hva syntes dere om boken *Under My Hijab*?
- Er det noe dere husker spesielt fra boken? Eventuelt et øyeblikk eller bilde?
- Hvorfor tror dere vi leste *The Day You Begin* og *Under My Hijab*?
- Hva føler dere er budskapet i disse bøkene?
- Del en ting du tar med deg etter å ha lest bøkene.
- Noen har sagt at slike bøker kan bidra til å bekjempe stereotyper og fordommer. Hva tenker dere om dette? Hvis enig, hvordan? Hvis uenig, hvorfor ikke?

Stereotypi og fordommer

- Hva tenker dere på når dere hører ordet stereotypi?
- Hva tenker dere på når dere hører ordet fordommer?
- Kjente dere til disse ordene før vi begynte dette prosjektet? Har dere fått en annen forståelse for disse ordene etter prosjektet?
- Hvor tror dere stereotypi og fordommer kommer fra?
- Synes dere det er viktig å snakke om stereotypi og fordommer? Hvis ja, hvorfor? Hvis nei, hvorfor ikke?
- Hvordan kan stereotypi og fordommer påvirke mennesker som er utsatt for det?
- Hvordan kan det påvirke menneskene rundt oss?
- Hva kan vi gjøre for å forbygge stereotypi og fordommer?

Ekstra kommentarer

- Er det noe mer dere vil legge til?

Appendix J: Sikt approval

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

Referansenummer
291207

Vurderingstype
Standard

Dato
20.01.2023

Prosjekttittel

Multicultural Literature and EFL learners' perception of Prejudice and Stereotypes

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Universitetet i Stavanger / Fakultet for utdanningsvitenskap og humaniora / Institutt for grunnskolelærerutdanning, idrett og spesialpedagogikk

Prosjektansvarlig

Silje Normand

Student

Sana Mehmood

Prosjektperiode

29.11.2022 - 01.12.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger

Alminnelige

Lovlig grunnlag

Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 01.12.2023.

[Meldeskjema](#) 

Kommentar

OM VURDERINGEN

Sikt har en avtale med institusjonen du forsker eller studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket.

UTDYPENDE OM LOVLIG GRUNNLAG

Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra foresatte til behandlingen av personopplysninger om barna. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte/foresatte kan trekke tilbake.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

Vi har vurdert at du har lovlig grunnlag til å behandle personopplysningene, men husk at det er institusjonen du er ansatt/student ved som avgjør hvilke databehandlere du kan bruke og hvordan du må lagre og sikre data i ditt prosjekt. Husk å bruke leverandører som din institusjon har avtale med (f.eks. ved skylagring, nettspørreskjema, videosamtale el.)

Personverntjenester legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1 f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER

Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Se våre nettsider om hvilke endringer du må melde: <https://sikt.no/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema>

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

Vi vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Appendix K: Information letter and consent form

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

“Multicultural Literature and 6th grade EFL learners’ perception of Prejudice and Stereotypes”

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å undersøke hvilke oppfatninger EFL-elever har om fordommer og stereotyper etter arbeid med to flerkulturelle bøker. I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Formålet med masterprosjektet er å få forskningsbasert kunnskap om hvilke potensial arbeid med flerkulturell litteratur har på EFL-elevens oppfatninger om fordommer og stereotyper. Forskningsspørsmålene som skal utforskes er: What potential does work with multicultural literature through critical literacy have on EFL learner’s perception of prejudice and stereotypes? What are EFL learners’ perceptions of prejudice and stereotypes following the work with multicultural literature through critical literacy practices? Is any of the principles from the four dimensions of critical literacy present in learners’ reflections on prejudice and stereotypes after the project, and if so in what ways?

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

Dette er et forskningsprosjekt ved Universitetet i Stavanger og Sana Mehmood (masterstudent) og Silje Henriette Amalia Normand (veileder) er ansvarlig for prosjektet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Utvalget for denne forskningsprosjektet er en 6-klasse på min arbeidsplass. Alle elevene i den utvalgte klassen skal delta i undervisningen som inngår forskningsprosjektet. I tillegg vil åtte elever bli tilfeldig trukket for en gruppe intervju mot slutten av forskningsprosjektet.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Dersom du velger at barnet ditt kan delta i forskningsprosjektet, innebærer det at du deltar på en gruppe intervju. Intervjuet inneholder spørsmål knyttet til temaene fordommer og stereotyper og de utvalgte elevens oppfatninger om disse begrepene. Jeg tar taleopptak og notater fra intervjuet.

Dersom du/dere ønsker å intervju-guid kan dere på forhånd ta kontakt med meg. Se kontaktinformasjon på bunnen av papiret.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger at barnet ditt kan delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle personopplysninger vil da bli slettet. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for barnet ditt hvis du/dere ikke vil barnet delta eller senere velger å trekke barnet fra å delta i forskningsprosjektet (Masteroppgaven).

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om barnet ditt til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. Barnet ditt/deres vil ikke kunne gjenkjennes i masteroppgaven.

Opplysningene vil være tilgjengelig for meg (masterforsker) og veileder. Dette samtykkeskjema vil bli låst inne og ikke tilgjengelig for andres øyne. Andre personopplysninger om barnet ditt/deres slik som navn, vil bli erstattet med en kode som lagres på egen navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data. Personopplysninger vil bli anonymisert og kryptert. Dette sørger for at ingen andre enn masterforsker (meg) og veileder vil ha tilgang til opplysningene.

Hva skjer med personopplysningene dine når forskningsprosjektet avsluttes? Prosjektet vil etter planen avsluttes rundt desember 2023. Etter prosjektslutt vil datamateriale med barnet ditt/deres opplysninger anonymiseres og slettes.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra Stavanger Universitet har Personverntjenester vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger vi behandler om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om deg som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å vite mer om eller benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

Silje Henriette Amalia Normand (veileder)
Fakultet for utdanningsvitenskap og humaniora
Universitetet i Stavanger
Tlf.: 51831286. E-post: silje.h.normand@uis.no

Sana Mehmood (masterstudent)
Fakultet for utdanningsvitenskap og humaniora
Universitetet i Stavanger
Tlf.: 45853883. E-post: 250421@uis.no

Marianne Trå (personvernombud)
Fakultet for utdanningsvitenskap og humaniora
Universitetet i Stavanger
Tlf.: 51831517. E-post: personvernombud@uis.no

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til Personverntjenester sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:

- Personverntjenester på epost (personverntjenester@sikt.no) eller på telefon: 53211500

Med vennlig hilsen

Silje Henriette Amalia Normand
(Veileder)

Sana Mehmood
(Forsker/masterstudent)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet «Multicultural Literature and 6th grade EFL learners' perception of Prejudice and Stereotypes», og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker at mitt barn deltar i:

- å delta i gruppe intervju (på lydopptak)

Jeg samtykker til at mitt barns opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

(Signert av forelder/foresatte av prosjektdeltaker, dato)