MASTEROPPGAVE

Film, Culture and Identity: Promoting young learners' intercultural competence in the ESL classroom through the film *Skin.*

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One of my main aims as a teacher, regardless of any subject or level, is to contribute to educating and inspiring young learners to become independent, caring and confident humans who believe in themselves, and believe in standing up for others. Another significant aim in my job is to provide the learners with the academic tools and strategies they will utilize throughout their schooling, and possibly for the rest of their lives. After more than two years as a student in this master's program at Østfold University College, I realize that the teachers and professors I have been so fortunate to meet, have achieved exactly what I aim for in my own work. The various courses have educated and inspired me, and provided me with numerous tools and strategies that I now exploit in my own daily practice.

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Abstract

The issue explored in this master's thesis is to what extent the film *Skin* (Fabian, Hofmeyr & Matheson, 2008) may be used as a tool for promoting intercultural learning among young learners in Norwegian lower secondary school. The film is selected due to the specific topic for this thesis, namely cultural identity, racism, prejudice and stereotypes. Four sequences from the film form the basis of an intercultural teaching project that is carried out in an ESL class. The selected learning objectives for the teaching project aim to promote communicative skills and cultural insights for greater interaction, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2006).

The thesis addresses one leading research question regarding the use of *Skin* considering intercultural theory: **To what extent may *Skin* promote intercultural competence in the ESL classroom?** Further, the thesis investigates how *Skin* may contribute to developing the learners' knowledge about intercultural phenomena.

The research project includes an analysis of four selected sequences from *Skin* in relation to intercultural theories. The findings of the analysis are then implemented into a didactic scheme for the ESL classroom with learners between 13 and 14 years. Through an intercultural teaching project, the study investigates to what extent *Skin* promotes and develops the learners' intercultural competence.

The data shows that when using the film *Skin* together with the viewer-response approach (Teasley & Wilder, 1997), learners actively participate and engage in working with intercultural phenomena. Further, the data indicate that it is necessary to define new terms and words, as well as choosing learner-centered activities that aim to motivate and engage the learners. The study also show that the learners react from a viewpoint of understanding, empathy and reflection when working with *Skin*. These results suggest that the learners already possess a certain degree of intercultural competence, and that the intercultural teaching project increased and promoted the students' intercultural competence.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The reason for writing this master's thesis is to address issues of great significance in society today. Aspects such as ethnicity, cultural identity, and racial issues have played an essential role in deep-rooted conflicts for centuries. However, several current global and local tendencies, such as the increased numbers of refugees and other migrants arriving in Europe, as well as a political polarization worldwide, make it more urgent than ever to address intercultural phenomena in the hope of reaching viable solutions for a functioning and thriving world based on democratic respect.

As early as in 1948 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights ascertained the position of intercultural competence as the fundament of values to promote through any education (1948, Article 26). More recently the inter-European organization, the Council of Europe (COE), clearly states the importance of promoting intercultural competence in all education (2012). To enhance sustainable societal changes in Europe and worldwide, COE stresses that a key element is to integrate intercultural competence to become "the heart of all education" and ensure that learners acquire "necessary attitudes, skills and knowledge" and maintain them throughout life (COE, 2012, p. 6). In today's classrooms, teachers educate learners who will be the citizens and leaders of tomorrow. Rapid developments in modern society, be it cultural, financial or environmental, demand that all education aims at training learners to handle intercultural issues, initially in the classroom and thereafter in the world. In addition to reading, writing, speaking and listening to English as a foreign or second language, it is equally important that learners gain knowledge of and insight into cultures and cultural differences in their own and other societies.

In this thesis, the area of research is the use of film as a tool for promoting intercultural learning in English as second language (ESL) classrooms. Intercultural learning is a widely known term that means "to learn to recognize and deal with the fundamental difference between cultures in perceiving the world" (COE, 2000, p. 28).

To investigate how film may be applied for intercultural learning purposes, the film *Skin* (Fabian, Hofmeyr & Matheson, 2008) has been selected due to its many intercultural aspects. The story takes place in a split South African society during the Apartheid era, where the young, colored girl, Sandra, grows up with her white, biological parents. Both Sandra and her parents face many challenges because of Sandra's skin color. One of Sandra's greatest challenges in life is to find her own identity in a society that does not accept her as she is. The most significant topics in the film, in relation to this thesis, are fortified stereotypes, fundamental prejudice and explicit racism.

1.2 Research question

The main research question is: **To what extent may the film *Skin* be used to promote intercultural competence in the ESL classroom?**

In a recent study, Morten R. Andersen (2015) found that the film *The Gods Must be Crazy* together with the viewer-response approach, successfully promoted young learners' intercultural competence in the ESL classroom. Similar findings were reported by Emel Emiri (2016) in her study of how the film *Crash* can be used to promote intercultural learning in the English classroom at upper secondary level.

My main aim in this thesis is to evaluate to what degree the film *Skin* can be successfully applied in the ESL classroom when working with intercultural phenomena with learners in lower secondary school. Although Andersen (2015) and Emiri (2016) have already gained positive results in their studies of film as a pedagogical tool for intercultural learning, my research will hopefully contribute to expanding the pedagogical field by emphasizing the significance of promoting intercultural competence in the ESL classroom, as well as highlighting the learning possibilities that *Skin* provides.

To investigate the research question, the thesis mainly focuses on how to teach about intercultural phenomena in *Skin* through the viewer-response approach, and examine and evaluate the learners' responses to selected film sequences and to assess to what extent the film promotes intercultural competence in the classroom.

Chapter 2 presents the theoretical framework which forms the basis for examining the research question. The chapter discusses theories of intercultural competence, cultural identity and the concepts stereotyping, prejudice and racism. Additionally, the chapter discusses how using film is a beneficial method in the ESL classroom. The utilized theories are mainly based on research by Michael Byram, Richard Brislin, Gordon Mathews, Ali Rattansi and Paul Connolly. Chapter 3 discusses the research methods exploited in the thesis and provides a detailed description of the group of learners who participated as respondents. In chapter 4, there is a review of *Skin,* as well as an analysis of intercultural concepts found in the film, namely cultural identity, racism, prejudice and stereotyping. Further, the chapter presents and discusses the viewer-response approach by Alan B. Teasley and Ann Wilder. Additionally, the didactic scheme is presented including a detailed teaching plan. Chapter 5 presents and discusses the results of the learners' responses to the learning activities and sequences from the film. Finally, chapter 6 includes a brief sum-up and a conclusion.

2. Theoretical framework

From the very beginning, people have been dependent on togetherness. Culture has united us and provided safety, given us a sense of belonging and guidelines for behavior, beliefs and survival. In the UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) Guidelines on Intercultural Education, culture is defined as:

> the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs. (UNESCO, 2006, p. 12)

UNESCO's definition of the term culture is the one that will be used in this thesis.

Today, there are frequent encounters between people from different cultures in schools, work places, neighborhoods, and in the health care system, to mention only a few. By taking part in an open society people develop *intercultural citizenships* to varying degrees. In this context, intercultural citizenship refers to the competences people possess "to be able to act sensible in

and across political entities" and not as alternatives to national identities (Byram, 2008, p. 157). A challenge for children and adolescents growing up in an intercultural context is to create their own intercultural citizenships, which are not only influenced by their family and friends, but just as much by school, local communities and the media.

This chapter will give a definition of intercultural competence and discuss culture's role in an individual's life and identity. Intercultural concepts such as racism, stereotyping and prejudice will also be presented. In addition, the chapter addresses the use of film as a tool in the classroom with an emphasis on effective and pedagogical methods, along with how to work with film to explore intercultural phenomena in the ESL classroom.

2.1 Intercultural competence

2.1.1 Definitions of intercultural competence

The term intercultural competence is used as a corner stone in significant international organizations' views on human rights and education, such as the UN (The United Nations) and UNESCO. Further, the term serves as part of the foundation in national core curricula for teaching and education in numerous countries, among them Norway. Although intercultural competence certainly has a strong position in educational frameworks, many aspects of this term may seem unclear to the practitioner whose job it is to put theory into practice. What *is* intercultural competence? How does one *promote* and *assess* intercultural competence?

It is problematic to find one precise definition of intercultural competence, as the term is used in multiple contexts. UNESCO states that the main principle of intercultural competence is to study and approach different educational phenomena from a multicultural perspective where diversity serves as a key basis for education (2006, p. 19). When students from different cultures interact, it is important that they develop their intercultural understanding, in terms of being respectful and tolerant in meetings with cultures different from their own (UNESCO, 2006, p. 19). According to Michael Byram, definitions of intercultural competence are complex due to social contexts, suggesting that intercultural competence must be defined according to the situation each learner is in (1997, p. 7).

Additionally, Byram states that successful communication between people from different cultures is not judged solely by the efficiency of information exchange, but intercultural

competence should focus on establishing and maintaining relationships. In this sense, the efficacy of the communication depends on the learners' willingness to use language to relate to others, which often involves the "indirectness of politeness" rather than using a "direct and 'efficient' choice of language full of information" (Byram, 1997, p. 3). Byram refers to this concept as *intercultural communication*. By promoting this concept in the ESL classroom, the learners may practice the ability to use a second language as part of exploring and discussing their own and others' cultures as a part of developing their intercultural competence.

Byram divides intercultural competence into three main components; knowledge, skills and attitudes (1997, p. 34). The three components are closely associated and supplied by the ability to have a critical cultural awareness. Below, Byram's definition of intercultural competence is presented in a table.

Intercultural competence	Factors	Learning objectives
Knowledge	Knowledge of self and other; of individual and societal interaction.	Knowledge of social groups and their products and practices in one's own and in one's interlocutor's country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.
Skills	Interpret and relate; discover and/or interact.	Ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents and events from one's own.
Attitudes	Relativizing self; valuing other	Curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one's own.

Table 1. Factors in intercultural communication and learning (based on Byram, 1997, p. 34 & 50-52)

These three factors enhance the possibilities for successful intercultural communication and interaction. When interacting with someone from another culture, one makes use of "knowledge about social groups and their cultures" in one's own and the interlocutor's

country, and "the processes of interaction at individual and societal levels" (Byram, 1997, p. 35).

The knowledge component consists of, according to Byram, relational knowledge about national cultures and identity "brought to an interaction by an interlocutor from another country" (Byram, 1997, p. 36). Further, this knowledge is acquired within socialization and is often presented as a contrast to one's own national culture and identity (Byram, 1997, p. 36). This knowledge is often prejudiced and stereotyped, at least if there previously has been little or no interaction with the interlocutor's culture.

Further, Byram also highlights the more theoretical kind of knowledge, knowledge about primary and secondary socialization processes (Byram, 1997, p. 35). In short, primary socialization is the initial learning processes in life, when a child learns to interact, behave and talk through the people closest to it, such as parents, siblings and other caregivers. Secondary socialization occurs when the child learns through non-family influence, in kindergarten, school and leisure activities (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 150).

Intercultural skills of interpreting and relating are, according to Byram, built on a person's ability to identify and interpret "a document or event from another culture, to explain them and relate them to documents [or events] from one's own" culture (1997, p. 52). If a person possesses these skills, he or she will be able to "identify ethnocentric perspectives […] areas of misunderstanding and dysfunction in an interaction" and thus "mediate between conflicting interpretations" (Byram, 1997, p. 52). Further, Byram addresses intercultural skills of discovery and interaction and define them as the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills" (1997, p. 52). According to Byram, these skills enable people to understand a new cultural environment and to interact in complex ways with people from unfamiliar cultures.

Byram states that attitudes are concerned with thoughts and actions towards people who are viewed as "different in respect of the cultural meanings, beliefs and behaviours" (1997, p. 34). When interacting with interlocutors from one's own or other social groups, one's thoughts and actions may appear as implicit attitudes, which are commonly referred to as prejudice and stereotypes. According to Byram, prejudices and stereotypes, either positive or negative, may be the cause of unsuccessful interaction. The attitudes that are essential for successful

intercultural interaction consist of "curiosity and openness, [and] readiness to suspend disbelief and judgement" the person may have of other people's opinions, beliefs and behaviors, as well as the willingness to suspend belief in one's own opinions and behaviours (1997, p. 50). By possessing these attitudes, individuals can reflect upon their own cultures from the others' perspectives.

Critical cultural awareness is the ability to evaluate "perspectives, practices and products in one's own and other cultures and countries" (Byram, 1997, p. 63). Byram stresses that foreign language teaching (FLT) as part of general education has an obligation when it comes to "develop a critical awareness of the values and significance of cultural practices in the other and one's own culture" (Byram, 1997, p. 46). Whether critical awareness is accepted in FLT or viewed as too alien to the traditions within a culture's educational system, varies from one part of the world to another. In Western European countries, such as Norway, critical analysis of foreign language and culture, as well as one's own, is not only accepted, but encouraged and valued (The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, 1993, p. 7).

In the didactic scheme in this study (chapter 4), the learners participate in the work with intercultural phenomena, and work with the film, based on Byram's factors of intercultural competence. The learners receive information about the aspects of knowledge that often lead to stereotyping of and prejudice against social groups and other cultures. Through classroom discussions, the learners acquire knowledge of how such aspects may lead to unsuccessful interaction between people from different cultural backgrounds. Additionally, the learners are informed about what attitudes and skills that are usually necessary to understand and reflect upon own and others' cultures.

In the analysis and discussion part of the thesis (chapter 5) the learners' intercultural competence will be investigated and assessed considering Byram's criteria of intercultural competences. The learners' ability to change perspectives and look at issues from different points of view will be emphasized, in addition to a measuring of their knowledge about intercultural phenomena in the film.

2.1.2 Visions of intercultural learning

In a COE report about intercultural competence, Gerhard Neuner (2012) addresses the necessity of engagement and visions concerning intercultural learning. Neuner stresses how

intercultural competence must not only be implemented in a few classrooms by inspired teachers, but as a theoretical foundation in the educational field, involving curriculum developers, policy makers, school heads and teacher trainers (Neuner, 2012, p. 11). Since intercultural learning at the classroom and subject levels requires educational principles, Neuner highlights how two major international organizations, the UN and COE have developed a vision of societal development through intercultural education based on human rights, democracy and the rule of law (Neuner, 2012, p. 12). Among these principles, the three most significant are 1) values-oriented education, 2) citizenship competencies for all, and 3) the direct practice of democracy (Neuner, 2012, p. 15). Values-oriented education provides specific guidelines for educating children and young adults, such as promoting "democratic citizenship, multilingual and intercultural education, critical understanding of history, confidence-building" to mention a few (Neuner, 2012, p.15). The citizenship competencies aim to activate participation of citizens in order to preserve the democratic values in European societies, while the direct practice of democracy should facilitate for the students' "experiential learning, active participation, membership, collective negotiating, critical thinking, role-playing, problem solving and community involvement" (Neuner, 2012, p. 15-16).

In accordance with Neuner visions of intercultural learning, this thesis aims to explore the field of intercultural competence in the ESL classroom. As a step towards implementing intercultural learning into the core of own and other's language and culture teaching, the thesis addresses means and methods that may enhance the students' understanding of national and cultural identities, as well as acquire the ability of critical thinking and awareness. The three most significant principles for intercultural education, according to UN and COE, form the basis for the teaching project that is carried out in this thesis. In the discussion section, the principles and visions of intercultural learning will be assessed in relation to the results of the teaching project.

2.2 Culture and identity

Today, the importance of tribal or national culture in people's lives is questioned on the assumptions that national and ethnical culture is being challenged by a powerful force, namely global culture. Although it is unlikely that people will give up their nationality, it is also highly unrealistic to imagine that it would be possible to keep cultures and nations from

blending into a globalized melting pot where the stream of information and media ensures that it becomes close to impossible to be exposed to only one singular culture.

According to Gordon Mathews (2000), cultural identity has become, for most people living in today's fluctuating world, an intertwining existence between belonging to a national culture and at the same time consuming other cultures from a global cultural supermarket. Mathews argues that previous views on culture must be combined with a more contemporary concept of culture, namely culture shaped by the market as opposed to culture shaped by the state (2000, p. 1).

Further, Mathews illustrates this cultural complexity by comparing it to several dishes on a table where everyone can pick what they like (2000, p. 4). Although culture remains as the way of life of a people in terms of language and ways of thinking and behaving, Mathews addresses cultural identity as the way people experience who they culturally are. The concept of culture as "the information and identities available from the global cultural supermarket" strengthens culture as a matter of personal taste, where people pick and choose who they are culturally through the music they listen to, the food they eat and the religion they practice (Mathews, 2000, p. 5).

However, Mathews stresses that these two concepts, both the traditional national cultures and the global market of cultures, describe aspects of today's world, but they are also equally insufficient, in relation to describing the complexity of people's lives and cultures (2000, p. 6).

The term *cultural identity* is by Mathews defined as "the ongoing sense the self has of who it is […] through its ongoing interaction with others", given that individuals have a "sense of culturally belonging to a given society, or, beyond that, to the global cultural supermarket" (2000, p. 16, 17). This cultural identity is influenced by several levels of cultural shaping, such as national identity, ethnic identity and market-based identity (Mathews, 2000, p. 18). While nationality and ethnicity are natural parts of the culture that we are born into and we then receive through our upbringing, the market-based identity is culture in which we freely make choices in accordance to our class, gender, religious belief, ethnicity and citizenship (Mathews, 2000, p. 18).

In the analysis of the film sequences, the cultural identity of the main character will be addressed to evaluate her position in the society she lives in. It is important to consider that national and global culture, as Mathews describes it, has changed tremendously since the story in *Skin* took place. However, it is relevant to investigate whether lines can be drawn between the identity crisis of the main character and the cultural complexity many adolescents experience today.

In this regard, it is important that the learners understand the terms cultural identity, national culture and global culture as well. In the didactic scheme, Wandel's notions about challenging the learners to negotiate meanings, as well as facilitate for discussions on cultural stereotyping will be emphasized through the viewer-response approach (reference).

2.3 Intercultural concepts

Stereotypes

Brislin defines stereotypes as "beliefs about a group of people that give insufficient attention to individual differences among members of that group" (1993, p. 171). Furthermore, Brislin stresses that all statements that describe groups such as "Blacks", "Native Americans", "Japanese", "career women" and "graduating seniors" are stereotypical unless they clearly recognize the differences among the group members (1993, p. 171).

Further, Brislin emphasizes people's need to organize, remember and retrieve information as an explanation of why stereotypes are part of the human cognitive processes. According to Brislin, these cognitive processes, where people categorize the information they are exposed to, are highly significant in order to cope with the amount of impressions throughout the day, like shortcuts to thinking (1993, p. 172). Further, Brislin claims that if there is a well-formed stereotype about an ethnic or cultural group, people will use that stereotype when they interact with individuals who belong to that group. However, it is crucial to acknowledge that most stereotypes applied to individuals are inaccurate (Brislin, 1993, p. 172).

When stereotypes exist about a labeled group over generations within a society, they become an integrated part of the culture (Biernat, 1991, p. 351). Although the content of stereotypes may include favorable terms for the group, stereotypes more frequently contain very negative content (Brislin, 1993, p. 174). To avoid the negative consequences of stereotyping, Brislin proposes that one differentiates between stereotypes and reasonable generalizations, where

stereotypes lead to unconsciously considering an individual as a member of a homogenous group, while reasonable generalizations allow for constant willingness to acknowledge individual differences (1993, p. 175).

Prejudice

One problem with stereotypes is that very few people put sufficient effort into thinking about other groups, and instead rather oversimplify the group's members by denying individuality and uniqueness due to the inconvenience of separating each person from the group as an individual (Brislin, 1993, p. 179). Brislin claims that in some cultures, negative and pervasive stereotypes are so deeply rooted that they have become a part of people's prejudicial feelings about other groups (1993, p. 179). He defines prejudice as "the emotional component of people's reactions to other groups", and adds that unlike stereotypes, which is a set of beliefs about others, prejudice is a set of deep-rooted feelings about what is considered as good and bad in a culture (1993, p. 180).

According to Robert A. LeVine and Donald T. Campbell (1972), prejudices about other groups that differ from one's own, based on for example skin color, accent, cultural practices and social backgrounds, are a universal aspect of human behavior found in all cultures and throughout history (cited in Brislin, 1993, p. 180). Although one might attempt to change people towards tolerance and acceptance of others, prejudice remains as a persevering cultural trait and is continuously learned by children during their socialization (Brislin, 1993, p. 180). One reason for why prejudicial attitudes remain resistant to change is because they are useful to people and serve one or more of four functions: 1) the utilitarian or adjustment function, 2) the ego-defensive function, 3) the value expression function, and 4) the knowledge function (Brislin, 1993, p. 181-184).

The first function, the utilitarian or adjustment function, involves prejudice used as a reward or as an avoidance of punishment in a society. The second function, the ego-defensive function, uses prejudice as protection from examining own inadequacies and instead puts the blame on other groups for such deficiencies. The third function, the value-expressive function, is a step towards expressing and communicating one's own values as the correct, moral and ethical values. The fourth function, the knowledge function, is closely related to stereotypes, where people organize pieces of information in certain categories. However, stereotypes are mainly bundles of information about a group of people, and when the content

of stereotypes supplies the facts people use when making decisions, then the stereotypes are serving the knowledge function while interacting with people from other cultures (Brislin, 1993, p. 181-184).

Racism

Brislin argues that racism is one of the forms in which prejudice is expressed. According to Brislin (1993), racism centers on the belief that individuals were born into certain groups; that they are inferior to one's own group when it comes to aspects such as intelligence and moral; and that they are unable to interact in a decent society (1993, p. 185).

Paul Connolly (1998) highlights the complexity in the term racism, as more than "just a set of beliefs used to justify one individual or group's discriminatory actions against another" (1998, p. 11). Further, Connolly argues that racism is something that the individual or group internalize, rather than being something external. It creates a framework that guides the way people think about themselves and others, as well as influences and shapes their actions and behavior (Connolly, 1998, p. 11).

Further, Ali Rattansi (2007) stresses that the idea of racism is closely linked to the concept of race and that it is evident that clear definitions of the two notions, race and racism, are more puzzling than they appear (2007, p. 7). As Rattansi explains, the idea of race contains both biological and cultural elements, such as skin color, religion and behavior. Further, the biological and cultural elements depend upon the group and the historical period in question (Rattansi, 2007, p. 8). Rattansi states that the term racism is closely related to social forces and political conflicts, and that this has led to a decrease in the number of people from Western societies who will openly describe themselves as racists. However, Rattansi describes how a new cultural racism is expanding across all Western borders, throughout Europe and North America, with islamophobia as one of the most recent forms of new racism (2007, p. 8).

Rattansi refers to two early labels of the term new racism, firstly, Martin Barker's (1981) appropriation to the sociobiological conception of a natural agreement between cultural and national differences, and cultural and political opposition against those who are obviously different, foreign and alien (Rattansi, 1999, p. 80). Rattansi claims that Barker's utterances have been exploited in an attempt to underwrite segregation in Britain, as well as "legitimize

policies for the repatriation of British Asian and British African-Caribbean populations"
(Rattansi, 1999, p. 80). Secondly, Étienne Balibar (1991) speaks of new racism as primarily
based on cultural differences, which "replaces the earlier and now scientifically discredited
biological theorizations (Rattansi, 1999, p. 81).

Rattansi argues that the conception of a divide between old biological racism and new cultural
racism can easily be exaggerated (Rattansi, 2012, p. 100). Further, Rattansi claims that
although "the taboos against biologically based conceptions have become stronger and
classical racial arguments have lost scientific credibility", they continue to have a major
impact in the debate about immigration, national belonging and citizenship (Rattansi, 2012, p.
101).

When conducting the analyses of intercultural issues demonstrated in sequences in *Skin*, the
presented theories on stereotypes, prejudice and racism will form the basis for investigation
and discussion. Accordingly, the findings of the analysis will be utilized when formulating the
pedagogical outline for the intercultural teaching project.

2.4 Film as a tool in the ESL classroom

Intercultural issues often play implicit roles in people's daily lives, and they may be difficult
to detect and understand as they are integrated into people's cores and cultures. In order to
make such issues explicit, it may prove efficient to take on the perspective of another person
and use their stories to comprehend one's own situation in life. Films serve as useful tools
when the aim is to better understand other people's history and culture, and research and
development of pedagogical strategies have caused the position of film in the classroom to
shift in terms of teaching methods and learning objectives. As Jane King (2002) found in her
study of using feature films in the ESL classroom, film does no longer stand for pure
entertainment value in the classroom, but it is used as a pedagogical tool when working with
several topics in any subjects in school (King, 2002). King argues that the realism of films
provides authentic cross-cultural information and thus is a valuable resource in the classroom
(2002, p. 510).

There is a great variety of topics and films that can be implemented into the different subjects
in school, such as intercultural learning in the ESL classroom. However, the key to
successfully applying film as a tool for educational purposes lies within the *method* the

teacher selects for working with the film (Fisher & Frey, 2011, p. 2). Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (2011) stress the importance of engaging the learners when working with film in the classroom, and of avoiding that the learners step into a passive role as spectators as opposed to active learners. Although there are numerous ways that teachers can bring film as a tool into the classroom, the key element is to disrupt the video or film with discussions, written tasks or vocabulary exercises (Fisher & Frey, 2011, p. 2).

Due to ready access to online video platforms like YouTube and Google Videos, videos and films are shared and viewed much more frequently than ever before (Fisher & Frey, 2011, p. 2). Fisher and Frey argue that it is ineffective use of instructional time to watch full films in the classroom and that it is preferable to only watch short sequences or to assign out-of-class viewing (2011, p. 4). Further, Fisher and Frey claim that although there is "tremendous value in combining words and images to show students how the content of our disciplines is understood outside school walls" it is necessary to use instructional minutes for active teaching (2011, p. 5).

In the teaching project, which is a part of this thesis, the students will encounter a pedagogical method for actively working with film, referred to as the viewer-response approach (Teasley & Wilder, 1997). In accordance with King and Fisher and Frey's arguments for the use of film as a tool in the classroom, Alan B. Teasley and Ann Wilder present a well-documented teaching method that strongly enhances the learners' participation and contribution when working with film.

3   Methods, participants and materials

3.1 Method of research

This study is based on two separate forms of research. Primarily, the intercultural teaching project is based on a close film analysis of *Skin*, with focus on the intercultural concepts and aspects of cultural identity that derive from the film. Secondly, I conduct an analysis of the learners' responses from the intercultural project, mainly focusing on the extent of the intercultural competence the learners show. Both forms of research are conducted in order to investigate and determine to what extent *Skin* may promote the leaners' intercultural competence.

When conducting a close film analysis, it is important to focus on the film as a whole, while investigating the thematic analysis in a narrower manner (Bakøy & Moseng, 2008, p. 107). In this case, the purpose of the film analysis is to explore to what extent *Skin* is useful as a tool to promote students' intercultural competence in the ESL classroom. The aim of the analysis is first to find out whether *Skin* can be used in order to promote intercultural competence, and, second, if it is suitable, to detect ways to use this particular film. To do this, the most suitable sequences for this purpose need to be identified.

The analysis consists of four selected sequences of *Skin* that focuses on intercultural aspects. Further, the analysis is conducted through watching the sequences from the film multiple times, while identifying and closely analyzing their intercultural aspects. First and foremost, the four sequences illustrate how multiple factors in a person's life, such as family heritage, cultural background, nationality, race and society may influence their cultural identity in both negative and positive manners. Second, the sequences also show that people are implicitly affected by societal attitudes, stereotypes and prejudice and further they highlight how racism may influence a culture.

To find out to what extent the use of *Skin* has promoted the students' intercultural competence, the written material produced by the students during and after the viewing of *Skin* is collected and analyzed. A selection of the written responses from the learners is presented and discussed considering intercultural theories presented in chapter 2. When assessing which of the learners' responses to analyze and discuss, I have selected the ones that represent the content of most responses or, the opposite, the ones that emerged as different from most responses. Additionally, the pre-viewing activities that is conducted in class will be presented and analyzed.

The subjective assessment of the responses is likely to have an impact on the results of this study and it is evident that the number of respondents and the amount of data are too limited to provide encompassing conclusion, which in fact was never the intension of the study. However, the teaching outline may be used in other ESL classes in lower and upper secondary school and may provide different results than those presented in this study, depending on factors such as the students' age, cultural backgrounds and interests, as well as the teacher's approach to the project.

3.2 Participants

Twenty-three boys and girls between the age of 13 and 14 participates in the intercultural teaching project, and the learners will actively participate by writing viewer responses and through classroom discussions. The learners' experiences with working with film in the ESL classroom varies since they come from different elementary schools within the same municipality. They live in a city with approximately 30,000 inhabitants and they attend a school with a wide range of nationalities, ethnicities and cultures. Further, the learners have different cultural and national backgrounds and therefore it is highly significant to ensure that they develop their intercultural competence.

Among the participants, there are learners who are strongly influenced by other languages and nationalities, like Eritrea, the Philippines, Iraq, Serbia, Poland and Spain, in addition to learners with a Norwegian ethnic background. This is a significant factor as some of these multilingual learners acquire the English language, not as their second language but as their third or fourth language. It is conceivable that some of the multilingual and multicultural learners who are influenced by more than one national or ethnical culture may recognize and identify with intercultural issues brought up by the sequences in the film to a greater extent than other learners. However, it is feasible to argue that all the participants, multilingual or not, are influenced by more than one singular culture both inside and outside school, and hence possess prerequisites that allow them to recognize and discuss intercultural phenomena in the film sequences.

3.3 Materials

The teaching project in this thesis includes several oral and writing activities for the participants. As a kick-off, the learners will participate in pre-viewing activities, such as creating their own family trees and discussing different intercultural phenomena. After watching each of the four sequences in class, the learners give individual written responses to what they have seen. These responses are related to the viewer-response approach and form the basis for further class discussion of intercultural phenomena in the film sequences. As a closure for the project, the learners will write a personal essay. These written responses are collected, analyzed and discussed in relation to the theoretical framework and the intercultural phenomena in the film. The aim is to investigate to what extent the intercultural project, as well as the film sequences have promoted intercultural competence for the learners.

4 The intercultural teaching project

4.1 The film

Skin is based on real events and tells the story of Sandra Laing and her family who belong to the white Afrikaner society in South Africa in the 1950s. Her parents, Sannie and Abraham Laing, live a seemingly idyllic life with their two children, big brother Leon and little sister Sandra. The only rift in this perfect portrait of the ideal family is Sandra's skin color. Although her parents and brother have light skin, Sandra resembles the house maid or cook in the family more than her own family. Her skin, eyes and hair are dark.

Sandra has reached school age and follows her brother, Leon, to an all-white boarding school. For the first time in her life, Sandra faces prejudice and racism based on her skin color, as the other students ignore her, the teachers mistreat her and the other parents demand that she is expelled due to her inappropriate appearance. A quick medical examination states that Sandra has traits that do not cohere with a person's and she is therefore classified as a black person.

Although Abraham fights his daughter's case in court, and eventually gets her re-classified as white due to a legal alteration in the Population Registration Act, the damage is already done and Sandra can no longer be protected when it comes to the consequences of her skin color. She blames herself for her family's difficulties and as time goes by, she feels more and more alienated from the life she is supposed to live, and from the girl her parents want her to be. Although she is legally classified as a white person, the white Afrikaner society refuse to accept Sandra as anything other than an outsider, a black person, a *Kaffer*.

As a young woman, Sandra falls in love with the local vegetable seller, Petrus. Because he is a black man, their relationship is frowned upon. Sandra cannot accept her own father's disapproval of Petrus and with a broken heart, Sandra leaves her parents and begins her new life together with Petrus in his tribe. For the first time in her life she can be herself without minding the opinions of anyone else.

As time goes by, Sandra cannot forget about her family back home. After leaving Petrus because of his alcohol abuse, Sandra and her two children find their way to Johannesburg. Here she finally reconnects with her mother and their once unbreakable bond is starting to heal. It is now the year of 1994, the Apartheid government has eventually come to an end and South Africa arranges its first free presidential election.

4.2 Intercultural concepts in the film

Although *Skin* portrays the life of one person, it simultaneously highlights the vast cultural divide between racial groups in South Africa in more general terms. There are multiple sequences from the film that illustrate issues like cultural conflicts, abuse of power and law enforcement, as well as segregation of racial groups. Further, the film deals with universal themes significant for all people regardless of nationality, gender or age: e.g. identity, family, love, betrayal, loss and forgiveness. By viewing the film or sequences of the film, several times, new angles and approaches may appear to the viewer.

In this subchapter, where intercultural phenomena in the film are explored, four sequences will be presented. These specific sequences illustrate important events and relations that will influence Sandra's cultural identity throughout life. Each of the four sequences also consists of intercultural phenomena like stereotypes, prejudice and racism.

Sequence 1: "I'm not black" (05:22 – 09:30)
Analysis
The first sequence follows Sandra as she experiences school for the first time. Together with her older brother Leon and her parents, she arrives at an all-white Christian boarding school. Sandra's mother ignores how children, parents and teachers are indignantly observing Sandra's entrance in the hallway, and ensures her daughter that they are only curious about her because she is a newcomer. However, Sandra sees that most of the people at school react to her presence in a negative manner. At night, a girl named Elise talks to Sandra and wants to comfort her by saying that all her friends in Swaziland are black. Surprised by what Elise just suggested, Sandra firmly replies: "I'm not black."

Sandra looks at the white girl in the bed next to her, Elise, and ensures her that she is not black like Elise has just suggested. Sandra comes from a white family and goes to a white school, so why would she look at herself as anything else than white? Although it is clear to everyone else that Sandra has dark skin, eyes and hair, it seems like no one has pointed out to Sandra that her skin is colored, that she is different than other Afrikaners, up to this point in her life as she has grown up in a family where she is loved and valued regardless of skin color. Because of her already established cultural identity as a white person, she convincingly tells Elise that she is not black and Elise does not object to that.

In this shot (09:20), the teacher shows the class two posters while she talks about the differences between white and black people in South Africa. One of the posters has pictures of black South Africans and underlines that they work as farmers and laborers, while the poster with white South Africans shows pictures of doctors and nurses. When the teacher asks questions about the split population in the country, the students eagerly answer and show that they know much about the subject. This shot shows the white teacher together with the white students, while Sandra is placed outside the group and is not seen in the shot. Although she is marginalized and excluded from the white core of the class, the sequence shows that Sandra actively tries to participate in the history teaching by raising her hand to every question. A peer student says that black people have "monkey hands like Sandra". The rest of the class laughs at his joke and the teacher does not reject the boy's racist remark. Sandra looks down sadly (09:25).

The students, including Sandra, are taught that the white population is superior to the blacks and that the Bantu people, a label on black South Africans by the Apartheid Regime that originally derive from the people who spoke Bantu languages in large parts of Africa, is inferior and uncivilized.

Discussion

It is evident that the knowledge the teacher possesses of the differences and similarities between white and black people in South Africa is strongly influenced by stereotypes and prejudice and she has a narrow perspective on diversity and intercultural aspects. As Byram claims, the knowledge one has of another culture is often prejudiced and stereotyped, at least if there previously has been little or no interaction with another culture (1997, p. 35).

Sandra is continuously treated as a misplaced outsider at school and there are several episodes where she is openly discriminated against by teachers and peer students because of her colored skin. In *Skin* the white Afrikaans people of South Africa demonstrate very little intercultural competence in the meeting with otherness. Byram claims that when interacting with someone from another culture, one makes use of knowledge about social groups and their cultures (1997, p. 35). Further, Byram stresses that knowledge about cultures and identity, regional, ethnic and social class, shared beliefs, meanings and behaviors, history and religious values are crucial to establish intercultural competence and communication (1997, p. 36). Due to lack of knowledge, openness, respect and insight into the black population's cultures, identity, and beliefs, the white South African people in *Skin* fail to communicate and interact across cultural differences.

In most cultures, at one time or another, this attitude towards otherness has been not only acceptable, but the norm, and has thus had fatal consequences for those affected, usually political, ethnical or religious minorities. Mainly, these attitudes have had a connection with political, religious, or cultural beliefs. Lack of knowledge has also allowed certain groups of people to discriminate against other groups of people within the same country or culture.

In Sandra's case, her first encounter with the "real world" outside her safe and protective family life, results in a negative experience, which is likely to initiate questioning her own identity and her self-worth compared to the other children. When she starts school, she becomes a victim of the prevailing national and cultural values in white South Africa, which at this point in time, are highly influenced by the political stance of the Apartheid government.

Sequence 2: "Pa, I'm not white" (42:00 – 42:50)
Analysis
Sandra's parents have fought the court system to have their daughter reclassified as a white person, since the state classified her as a black person in her youth. Sandra is now a young woman who attends an all-white secondary school, and she is legally a white person. However, people and society are strongly influenced by the Apartheid system which segregates citizens in terms of racial, cultural and social categories. In fact, people around Sandra struggle to accept her as anything else than a black person, something that her skin

color seems to confirm. People in shops and restaurants, and even the young white men she is dating, will not hide their condescending view of her and her appearance.

In this shot (42:20), the family sits at the breakfast table. Sandra is clearly affected by a terrible incident that happened the night before when she sat in a car with an unpleasant white man. Unmoved by his daughter's gloomy mood, Abraham is annoyed with the fact that Sandra does not seem to like any of the white men she is dating. When Sandra asks her father if he loves her, he ignores her attempt to engage him in a conversation and tells her that it is a stupid question. Provoked by her father's answer, Sandra wants him to look at her and tell her what he sees. When Abraham answers her in a light tone that he sees his beautiful daughter, Sandra has had enough and spells it right out: "Pa, I'm not white!" The sequence ends with Abraham angrily telling Sandra to leave the table before she slams the door on her way out.

Discussion

Earlier, there have been other people outside the family who have told Sandra that she is not white. At this point in life, Sandra herself is the one who questions her identity, who she is and where she belongs. Naturally, young people often experience identity crises regardless of cultural background, ethnicity or nationality, time or place. In this case, Sandra's father is unable to see his daughter's situation, as he is too occupied with preserving everything he has been fighting for, for her being accepted as white. Sandra wants her parents to understand that her life is challenging and complicated, but instead of listening to her, they turn their backs at her and pretend that everything is perfectly fine. By ignoring Sandra's wish for a dialogue regarding her issues and experiences, thinking it is nonsense, her father contributes to building an emotional wall between himself and his daughter. Where the fundament of Sandra's cultural identity and sense of safety used to lie, within her family, there is now a

growing misunderstanding, distrust and alienation. Therefore, Sandra will continue to search for answers regarding her identity somewhere else.

Mathews (2000) describes cultural identity as an ongoing process where a person perceives him- or herself according to the reactions and responses given by other members who culturally belong to a given society (2000, p. 16, 17). In this case, Sandra experiences mixed responses due to her cultural identity and belonging, as her parents and other members of her primary socialization relate to her as a white person, while the responses she continually gets from the rest of society tells her that she is black. The immense racial differences in South Africa during the Apartheid era makes Sandra's situation polarized – is she to live as a white person as her parents want her to do, while coping with the discrimination she experiences whenever she enters the public room where people do not see her family background, only her skin color?

Sequence 3: "I'm pregnant. Do you still want me home?" (54:10 – 55:45)
Analysis
After serving a sentence of three months for illegally entering the Kingdom of Swaziland together with her black boyfriend Petrus, Sandra is released from prison on condition that she returns to her parents. Outside the court house, Sandra is met by her parents on one side, and Petrus and his grandmother Gogo, on the other side of the steps. Sandra is happy to finally meet her boyfriend again, while she hesitates to greet her parents, whom she thinks have been partly responsible for sending her to jail.
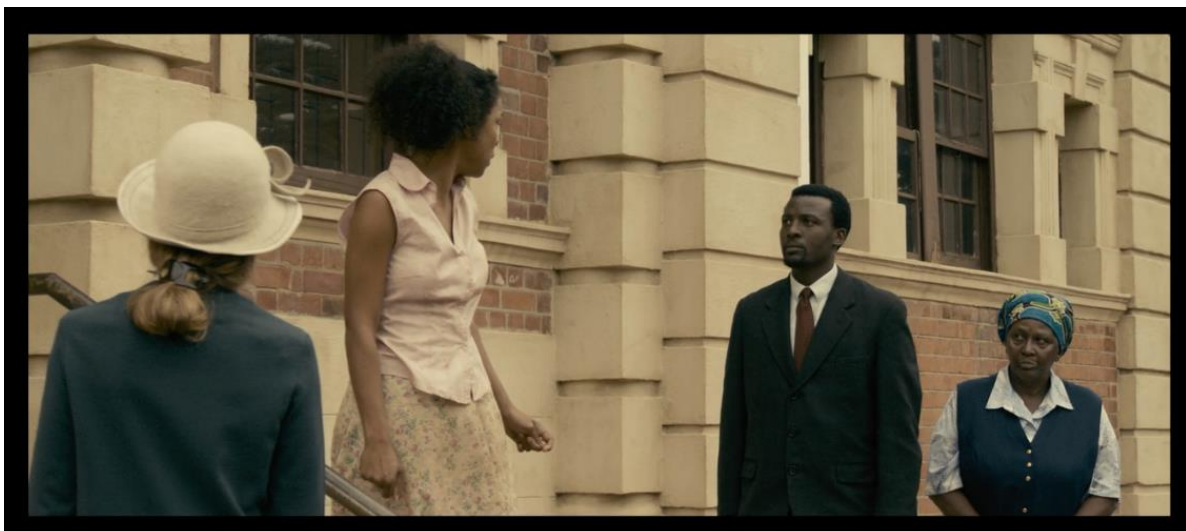
In this shot (55:10), Sannie, Sandra's mother, has tried to beg Sandra to come home with them, pledging that both Abraham and she have made a terrible mistake by creating a conflict between themselves and their daughter. When Sandra staunchly expresses that she cannot come home, Abraham immediately responds with threats, saying that she will never see her family again if she does not follow their orders. Sannie is stunned by her husband's statement and tries to convince Sandra that he did not mean what he said.

Sandra now learns that her father is incapable of seeing the situation from her perspective, as he clearly states that he will punish her for not obeying his orders. Consequently, she puts her parents to the ultimate test, stating that she is pregnant and then asks: "Do you still want me home?" She immediately gets her answer when Abraham turns around and leaves the steps without uttering another word (55:30).

Although Sannie tries to reach out to her daughter one more time for reconciliation, Sandra is clearly hurt by how her parents seem unable to deal with the difficulties she experiences in life. Instead of meeting the needs of their teenage daughter who is struggling with finding her identity and belonging in a split society, they put their own wishes and needs first when they try to pressure Sandra into the role of being a white girl. Sandra clearly demonstrates a shift in their relationship when she calls her mother "Baas", a Dutch word for leader or master used by black South Africans to refer to white South Africans as a symbol of submissiveness, before she turns away and leaves together with Petrus and Gogo.

Discussion

This sequence illustrates the biggest crossroad regarding Sandra's choice of cultural belonging in the film. In another time or context, this situation may not have become as severe and final as it did in Sandra's case. However, when Abraham does not show acceptance of and understanding for his daughter's situation, he forces her to decide without considering any inclusion of Petrus and his family. The fact that Abraham would rather dismiss his own daughter for the rest of his life than acknowledge her feelings, illustrates how little acceptance there was for diversity and blend of races in South Africa at that time. Further, it is evident that the tolerance Abraham and his family have shown in relation to Sandra's skin color, does not apply for other colored people, like Petrus or his family. Especially Abraham demonstrates in this sequence very low intercultural competence in the meeting with people with a different culture than his own. As Byram (2008) claims, negative attitudes towards people who have other cultural meanings, beliefs and behaviors than oneself (prejudice), forms the foundation for unsuccessful interaction and communication (2008, p. 34).

Sequence 4: "I'm happy for the country, but it's too late for me." (1:27:00-1:27:50)

Analysis

The year is 1994, and the first free presidential election has taken place in South Africa. Sandra is living with her two teenage children in Johannesburg where she works in a cosmetic factory. Although they live in a black African neighborhood, South Africa has taken great steps towards becoming a less segregated society by allowing the black population to vote. The black population of South Africa is finally experiencing a positive political and cultural change.

While Sandra is working by the assembly line, a reporter with a camera crew approaches her in order to interview her about the recent events in South Africa. Although she looks hesitant and uncomfortable with the attention, Sandra agrees to answer the reporter's questions.

In this shot (1:27:20), whispering her answer into the microphone, Sandra confirms to the reporter that she has delivered her vote that same day. The reporter follows up by stating that most people remember her story, and so he wants to know what she feels about the changes happening in South Africa. Quietly, Sandra answers that she is happy for the country, "but it's too late for me". She looks dejectedly into the camera and says that she has not seen her parents in nearly twenty years and that she does not know where they are. On the other side of the television screen, in a living room, sits an elderly Sannie who looks pensive at the interview of her daughter.

Discussion

The sequence illustrates the greatest tragedy of Sandra's life, namely that the country's laws which were meant to protect her as a citizen, as well as the segregated culture she grew up in, tore her family apart and never let her to reconcile with them. Later in the film, she is able to meet her mother again, but at this point it seems like she has given up on the thought of ever meeting her family again.

On a joyous day like the election day, where so many black South Africans finally can depict a different and better future for themselves, Sandra seems quiet and grave. The smiling person she used to be has faded after all the challenges, abuse and injustice she has put up with since her childhood. Her positive feelings about the changes happening in South Africa oppose to the bitter fact that she has lost not only one, but two families along the way, because of the country's political and cultural stance at the time of her birth.

According to UNESCO (2006), a part of culture is the value system, traditions and beliefs of a society or social group, and unfortunately for Sandra, she falls in between two contrasting societies and social groups, the white Afrikaans society and the black South African culture. Therefore, she struggles to find her place, as well as her cultural identity. Today, being multicultural, possessing intercultural citizenships and being part of the global cultural market is both common and attractive. Sandra, on the other hand, comes from a culture where homogeneity and an *us against them* mentality is indoctrinated in both the primary and secondary socialization process. In accordance with Mathews' (2000) definition of cultural identity, Sandra's ongoing sense of who she is through her interaction with others forms her cultural identity. However, Sandra must go through many hardships in this process because she is not accepted in the conformal culture of the white Afrikaans due to her skin color, behavior and race, which eventually drives her away from her family.

4.3 The viewer-response approach

Teasley and Wilder (1997) argue that well-established pedagogical approaches to working with film in the classroom often result in works being "treated as fixed content, [and] interpretations memorized rather than created" (1997, p. 48). As an alternative to these disengaging approaches, Teasley and Wilder present the viewer-response approach. Building on their own experience as both learners and, later teachers, of literature and film, they assess the teacher's role, as well as the learners' role when working with literature and film in the

classroom. Rather than being the only source for right answers and the final judge of all interpretations, the teacher should serve as a listener and facilitator when working with film in the classroom. In order to produce empowered learners who define their own interpretations and become respectful of others' opinions, the teacher should let students take responsibility for comprehending films by "decoding" the visual cues, giving the images meaning and creating a coherent and satisfying interpretation (1997, p. 49).

Teasley and Wilder explain how to implement the viewer-response approach as a tool in the classroom, the selected film is viewed while the learners actively participate by making notes on a viewing guide, in addition the learners are at the center of discussions that take place for five to ten minutes after viewing a "chunk" of the film (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 49). Unlike other, more traditional teaching methods, the viewer-response approach aims at minimizing the teacher's role in the classroom discussions in terms of being a supervisor rather than a participant. Through comments and questions, the teacher should encourage learners to think and discuss the given subject beyond their immediate opinions, which will result in more engaged viewers and more confident participants in the classroom discussion (1997, p. 49).

Although the main goal of using the viewer-response approach in the ESL classroom is for learners to develop as empowered viewers, the teacher's role as a "model viewer" is significant (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 49). To promote learners' active engagement with the film, it is necessary that the teacher clears up "obvious misreadings" during the process, and encourages "clear thinking and articulate responses" (1997, p. 49).

The viewer-response approach offers several advantages when taken into use in the classroom. Firstly, Teasley and Wilder highlight that the viewing of a film becomes a collective and shared experience for the learners in the class (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 50). Secondly, unlike solitary reading, viewing a film in class will serve as a guarantee that the learners have had the opportunity to actively participate by paying close attention, writing down their immediate responses, discussing their interpretations with their peer students and finding support for their opinions with evidence from the film (1997, p. 50). Thirdly, Teasley and Wilder claim that the approach allows for "a much richer experience of the film", not only for the learners but for the teacher as well. By allowing the students to freely discuss their own authentic opinions and interpretations of the film, and showing appreciation of their

thoughts and insights instead of giving them the correct answers results in extensive learning benefits for learners and teachers (1997, p. 50).

Teasley and Wilder claim that the most important tool for teaching film using the viewer-response approach is the viewing guide (1997, p. 52). The viewing guide is often a multipage handout where each page is created for a segment or sequence of the film. Since the viewing guide is a significant component in the viewer-response approach, the teacher should put effort into constructing a viewing guide that captures the students' interest and serves as a well-functioning tool during the viewing process. According to Teasley and Wilder, a film should be divided into "meaningful chunks" where each chunk becomes the focus of one page in the viewing guide and functions as a "chapter" in the film (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 55). By creating four or five open questions to each chunk, the teacher facilitates an open discussion where a variety of meanings and interpretations is encouraged (1997, p. 55).

Further, the viewing guide allows the learners to make notes during the viewing and then stop for discussions after a chunk of the film, rather than await the questions and discussions to end of the film (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 52). Additionally, Teasley and Wilder stress the importance of using the guide to include all types of learners, not only the talkative and confident ones, by giving the learners pause to think and then make notes before opening for classroom discussions. In most cases, all learners will be able to contribute orally when they are asked to share something they have already had time to reflect upon and written down (1997, p. 55).

The viewer-response approach is introduced to the learners by promoting the film with a "can do" attitude that will encourage and engage them in the viewing process and in the discussions. The learners are then provided with all necessary information about the plot, setting or other prerequisites that are of significance to fully grasp the essence of the film (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 59). In addition, the learners are introduced to the viewing guide to familiarize them with the structure of the guide, as well as the open-ended questions for discussion (1997, p. 59). As the viewers begin discussing topics in the film, it is essential that the teacher steps out of the teacher role and into the viewer role. The teacher may find it easier to become one of the viewers if he or she fills in his or her own viewing guide and resists being the omniscient authority in the room (1997, p. 60).

As a final activity after viewing, responding to and discussing the film, the learners should be given a written assignment based on their viewing responses, which may be included in the viewing guide, in order to apply the knowledge they have gained through working with the film (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 67). Teasley and Wilder suggest giving the students writing activities such as analytical essays, imaginative and creative pieces, as well as personal essays (1997, p. 67).

Teasley and Wilder's approach to working with film in the classroom forms the basis for the 3-week lesson plan conducted in the intercultural teaching project. The following section presents the competence aims extracted from the national curriculum, as well as the complete teaching plan.

4.4 The Teaching Plan

The overarching principles of all education in Norwegian primary and secondary school is founded in the core curriculum, which states the importance of enforcing clear values and broad cultural understanding (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2006, p. 3). According to the core curriculum, creating an inclusive environment where diversity and multiculturalism are appreciated and respected will enhance the learners' development of their intercultural competence, as well as enable them to participate in a multicultural society. Further, the principles for education stress the importance of an education which can promote intercultural understanding and assist learners in developing self-awareness, identity, respect and tolerance (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2006, p. 3.). Further, the core curriculum states that "education must be based on the view that all persons are created equal and that human dignity is inviolable" (The Royal Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, 1993, p. 7).

In the English subject curriculum (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013) several competence aims focus on promoting the learners' knowledge about the history, geography, literature and film from English-speaking countries (The Norwegian Directory for Education and Training, 2013, p. 10). The teaching plan for the intercultural project is based on the following competence aims:

- demonstrate the ability to distinguish positively and negatively loaded expressions referring to individuals and groups
- listen to and understand variations of English from different authentic situations

- discuss and elaborate on the way people live and how they socialize in English-
speaking countries

- create, communicate and converse about own texts inspired by English literature,
films and cultural forms of expression

(The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2013, p. 10).

Week 1	1st lesson	2nd lesson
Topics for the lesson	**Introducing the project:** What is culture and what does it mean? What influences our culture the most? How does culture influence our identities?	**Introducing intercultural terms:** How do we describe different national cultures like Sweden, Denmark, England, Spain, USA, etc.? Why do we create stereotypes? How can we describe cultural differences without stereotyping? What is the difference between stereotypes, prejudice and racism?
Learning objectives	The students will: 1. Learn about culture, culture's role in their lives and gain knowledge about Norwegian and South African culture. 2. Learn about how different aspects of culture may influence their identity.	The students will: 1. Learn about the terms stereotyping, prejudice and racism and how people from other cultures often are stereotyped and prejudiced against. 2. Demonstrate the ability to identify positively and negatively loaded expressions referring to individuals and groups.

Methods and activities	1. **YouTube**: Mr. Bean Middle Finger Hello. What happens to Mr. Bean in the clip? Why does he misunderstand the biker's hand gesture? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mn6L4mpq1E
	2. **Mind-map:** What do you think *culture* is?
	
	3. **PowerPoint:** Culture and identity.
	
	4. **Individual writing and drawing:** Write a short text about a time you met a different culture (a person, country, football team etc.). You may also create an illustration to your text.
	
	5. **Discussion in class**:
	
	   - Present and discuss some of the texts written by the students.
		1. **Summary from last lesson:** Short presentation of the family trees. How many students have relatives from different places in Norway and around the world?
		
		2. **Work in pairs:** Pick a country and describe what you think of this specific country and its culture.
		
		3. **Discussion in pairs, then in class:**
		
		   - What are stereotypes and prejudice?
		   - Is your description of the country a stereotype?
		   - How do you think Norwegians are stereotyped by people from other nations?
		   - What is racism?

Assessment/ homework	**Homework:** Create a family tree where you find out more about your background *(appendix).*	**Homework:** You meet a person who recently moved to Norway. Write down at least five sentences about what he or she should know about Norwegian culture in order to make fitting in easier for him/her.

Week 2	1st lesson	2nd lesson
Topics for the lesson	**Introducing the film:** What do you know about South Africa? What is Apartheid? What is the Population Registration Act?	**Racial issues in S*kin*:** What difficulties does Sandra experience because of her skin color? How does it affect her sense of identity?
Learning objectives	The students will: 1. Gain knowledge about aspects of Apartheid, such as the Population Registration Act. 2. Gain knowledge about racial issues in South African schools and local communities through watching sequences of *Skin* and discussing Sandra's situation.	The students will: 1. Gain knowledge about racial issues in South African schools and local communities through watching sequences *Skin* and discussing Sandra's situation. 2. Gain better insight to how Sandra may experience an identity crisis.
Methods and activities	1. **Short discussion** of what the learners want to tell foreigners about living in the Norwegian culture. 2. View **the first chunk** of the film (5:22-09:30) 3. **Individual writing:** viewer-response pt. 1. *Appendix* 4. **Discussion in pairs, then in class:** - How do you react to the way Sandra is treated in school by the students, teachers and other parents?	1. **Summary from last lesson:** key points on the blackboard. 2. **Short discussion:** What do you think will happen next? 3. View **the second chunk** of the film (42:00-42:50) 4. **Individual writing:** viewer-response pt. 2. *Appendix* 5. **Discussion in pairs, then in class**: - Why do you think Sandra acts differently when she is with Petrus compared to when she is at home with her family?
Assessment/ homework	**Homework:** Write a short paragraph about what you think will happen next in the film. There is no right or wrong answer, so just use your imagination.	**Homework:** Write a short paragraph about what you think will happen next in the film. There is no right or wrong answer, so just use your imagination.

Week 3	1st lesson	2nd lesson
Topics for the lesson	**Themes and characters from *Skin*:** Describe the characters in the film. What do they tell us about the South African culture during the Apartheid regime? **Identity and belonging:** Where does Sandra belong, in the white or the black community?	**Summarize the film:** What did you learn from working with *Skin*? **Summarize the intercultural teaching project:** Does Sandra's story have significance for Norwegian culture?

		How do stereotypes, prejudice and racism affect people's lives today?
Learning objectives	The students will: 1. Gain knowledge about the way people lived and how they socialized in South Africa during the Apartheid regime 2. Gain better insight into how the cultural differences in South Africa may affect Sandra's identity.	The students will: 1. Demonstrate the ability to put a story from a film into a wider context, both historically and in coherence with own and other's life situation. 2. Demonstrate the ability to discuss intercultural phenomena with a partner and/or a whole class, with emphasis on displaying respect and tolerance for other's opinions and meanings as well as articulating one's own.
Methods and activities	1. **Summary from last lesson:** what do you think will happen next? 2. View **the third chunk** of the film (54:10-55:45). 3. **Individual writing:** viewer-response pt. 3. *Appendix.* 4. **Discussion in pairs, then in class:** - Why do you think it is difficult for Sandra to belong in the black community, as well as the white community?	1. **Summary from last lesson:** what do you think will happen next? 2. View **the fourth chunk** of the film (1:27:00-1:27:50). 3. **Individual writing:** viewer-response pt. 4. *Appendix.* 4. **Discussion in pairs, then in class:** - How did Sandra's life develop from the second to the fourth chunk of the film? - Why do you think she told the news reporter that it was too late for her when South Africa finally had its first free election? - Does Sandra's story have significance for Norwegian culture? - How do stereotypes, prejudice and racism affect people's lives today?
Assessment/ homework	**Homework:** Write a short paragraph about what you think will happen next in the film. There is no right or wrong answer, so just use your imagination.	**Final assignment: Reflective writing** Have you ever felt as if you were different and didn't fit in, in your family, at school or with your friends? Write 2-3 paragraphs about how it may feel to be on the outside.

Week 1

When introducing the intercultural project to the learners, the first two lessons focus on what

knowledge the learners already possess on topics, such as culture, identity and stereotypes,

and introduces several terms that may be unfamiliar to some of them. To create a good

foundation for an efficient learning outcome during the project, it is very important that the

learners feel included and motivated for working with the topic from the beginning. In class,

there are open classroom discussions about what the learners think that culture is and what it

means to them. Further, there are activities in pairs where the learners discuss what they think

influences their culture the most, for instance traditions, religion, media or globalization. The

learners will also be introduced to how we usually describe different national cultures and asked why we create stereotypes.

Firstly, the learning goals for week 1 aim for the learners to learn about what culture is and how different aspects of culture may influence their identity. Secondly, the learners will gain knowledge about the terms stereotypes, prejudice and racism and how people from other cultures often are stereotyped and prejudiced against. Finally, the learners should be able to demonstrate the ability to identify positively and negatively loaded expressions referring to individuals and groups.

The content and learning activities for the first two lessons vary with emphasis on activating the learners' foreknowledge. Tools such as YouTube, mind-maps and a PowerPoint about culture and identity form the basis in class for the learners' following individual writing, where the learners will write a short text about a time they experienced a different culture than their own, e.g. when they were on vacation in a different country, or met a person with another cultural background. The learners will also be able to create their own family trees at home and present them to the rest of the class. The purpose of the family tree is to highlight the number of students in class who have relatives who live in different parts of Norway or abroad. Further, there will be classroom discussions regarding the learners' opinions on stereotypes and prejudice and whether they think Norwegians are stereotyped by people from other cultures.

Week 2

During the first lesson in the second week of the project, *Skin* is introduced. Before the viewing begins, the learners discuss what they already know about South Africa and Apartheid. Most likely, some learners have some knowledge about the topic, while others have little or no knowledge about it. To ensure that the learners understand the purpose of viewing the film, it is important to educate them about the backdrop of the story in advance. They are also introduced to the Population Registration Act, which forms the basis for Apartheid as portrayed in the film. As suggested by Teasley and Wilder, the film is divided into "meaningful chunks" where each chunk becomes the focus of each lesson (Teasley & Wilder, 1997, p. 55). By creating four or five open questions to each chunk in the viewing guide, the learners are encouraged to contribute in an open discussion.

Through watching sequences of *Skin* and discussing Sandra's situation, the learning goals for week 2 aim for the learners to gain knowledge about Apartheid and racial issues in South African schools and local communities. Further, the learners will gain better insight into how Sandra may experience an identity crisis.

The main content in the lessons in week 2 is the film and the viewing guides where the learners make notes of their instant responses to what they have seen in sequences of the film. There are also discussions in pairs and in full class with the questions in the viewing guide as a starting point. The learners' thoughts and opinions are in focus, while the teacher aims at interfering as little as possible. As homework, the learners write a short paragraph about what they think will happen next in the film until next lesson. This will help the learners to reflect upon what they have already seen in the film and hopefully motivate them to imagine what they wish, or what they think is most likely to happen next. At the beginning of each lesson, before the film viewing, the learners are asked what they remember from last time and what they think will happen when the story continues.

Week 3

In week 2, the learners have come to know some of the topics and characters from *Skin* and have already discussed their opinions on several occasions. Week 3 is fairly similar to week 2 in the sense that the main activity for the learners is to view the film in the two final parts, as well as write down and discuss their responses to what they have seen. The questions in the viewing guides facilitates for discussion around the topics identity and belonging, as well as the racial differences and attitudes among the characters in the film.

The learning goals for week 3 aim for the learners to gain knowledge about the way people lived and socialized in South Africa during the Apartheid regime. Further, the learners should be able to put parts of the film's story into a wider context, both historically and relation to their own and others' life situation. The learning goals also aim at promoting each learner's ability to discuss intercultural phenomena with a partner and in class, with emphasis on displaying respect and tolerance for others' opinions and meanings as well as articulating his or her own.

The questions in the viewing guides are mainly designed to help the learners reflect on their own thoughts and opinions, instead of only retelling what they have seen in the film. Most

learners in the Norwegian classroom are trained to retell what they have read, heard or seen to demonstrate levels of knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, in this intercultural project, the most significant aspect of the learners' understanding of the topic is their own reflections regarding the topic and the film. In order to grasp the learners' own reflections, many of the questions in the viewing guides are formulated to help the learners to express their own opinions and feelings regarding the topic, for instance: *How do you react to…?* If the learners manage to reflect on their own thoughts and feelings, and can express their opinions in their viewing guide answers and in the classroom discussions, the foundation has been created for the learners to develop their intercultural competence. Allowing the learners to have a moment alone with their own thoughts before they discuss with a peer, gives room for reflection in each learner. When the individual reflection is followed up by a classroom discussion, the learners are also exposed to different thoughts and opinions than their own, which may lead to a wider view of the topic.

As a final activity after viewing the film, the learners are given one written task that aim to help the learners reflect around the situation of people who experience marginalization due to race or cultural differences of any kind.

5   Findings and discussion

In the findings and discussion chapter, the responses from the learners are presented and discussed in light of the theoretical framework presented in chapter 2. As many of the learners had quite similar answers, and some learners had incomplete answers in their viewing guides, only a selection of the responses from the learners is presented and discussed in the following sup-chapters. The learners who gave incomplete responses had difficulties expressing themselves in written English in the viewing guides and regrettably their oral responses were not recorded or written down and cannot be presented or discussed.

5.1 Pre-viewing activity

The pre-viewing activities aim to motivate and include the learners in the teaching project, by focusing on their foreknowledge and own experiences with cultures and identity. By engaging the learners and including them in student-centered activities, I want to stir their curiosity and interest in intercultural phenomena.

One of their first tasks is to create their own family trees, which proves to be a popular activity among the learners. The main aim for the task is to illustrate how everyone is influenced by more than one single culture and to let the learners reflect about their own background and cultural stance. In accordance with Mathews (2000), the pre-viewing activities clarified the substance of the importance of the learners' understanding of the terms cultural identity, national culture and global culture. By investigating their own cultural heritage before learning about others' cultures may contribute to successfully equip the learners with the necessary attitude, openness and curiosity they need when they continue working with intercultural phenomena. After each of the learners present their family trees, the class concludes that they have relations to 49 different places in Norway and 16 different countries around the world.

Additionally, the learners watch a YouTube clip of Mr. Bean[1] that illustrates how cultural differences easily lead to misunderstandings. Mr. Bean, a British comedy character, has traveled to the USA where he is culturally confused. When a biker shows him the finger as a gesture to get Mr. Bean to back off, Mr. Bean, who is a man well known for his silliness and many misunderstandings, mistakes the biker's finger gesture for a greeting gesture. Consequently, Mr. Bean continues to show several Americans the finger as he passes them by, thinking he is greeting them. This clip is quite humorous and the learners seem to enjoy Mr. Bean's goofiness, and more importantly, it gives input to address and discuss the challenges that derive from cultural differences and how people may easily be misunderstood when it comes to their behavior with the class.

As a follow-up, the learners create mind-maps about what the term culture means to them. The learners are encouraged to cooperate with their peer student and discuss their thoughts and opinions about what culture is. After a brief sum-up and sharing of mind-maps, the learners are presented with a PowerPoint presentation that provide more information about what culture is and how culture may influence a person's identity (appendix 6). Many of the learners actively participate with questions and thoughts during the presentation. As Mathews (2000) claims, cultural identity is influenced by several levels of cultural shaping and it is an ongoing process each and every one go through as we interact with other people. By addressing this concept with young learners who are amid discovering the world outside their

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[1] Mr. Bean Little Finger Hello: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-mn6L4mpq1E

familiar sphere, the teaching about intercultural concepts can provide a sense of both culturally belonging in class or in school, as well as facilitate for the experience of having a free choice when it comes to the development of their own cultural being (2000, p. 18).

Accordingly, the classroom conversation that follows the PowerPoint allows the learners to negotiate meanings and respect others' opinions. As a summary of the pre-viewing activities, the learners write a short text about an experience they have had when meeting people from different cultures than their own. Many of the learners choose to write about a vacation abroad. The lesson is closed after the learners read their text to a peer.

5.2 Learners' responses to the four sequences

The following sub-chapters present several responses from the learners' viewing guides in conjunction with the film. To investigate what the learners have gained from watching the four sequences that were analyzed in chapter 4.2, I have selected learners' responses that explicitly relate to the four sequences.

Sequence 1

In the first hand-out from the viewing guide, the learners are given four questions from the first selected sequence of the film to answer. The questions vary in form and are designed to let the learners not only demonstrate their knowledge of the film's content, but also facilitate for individual reflection of issues portrayed in the film, such as racism and intolerance.

The five selected examples below show learners' responses to the question: **How do you react to the way Sandra is treated in school by the other students, teachers and parents?**

Alex	*I get really sad and angry.*
Belinda	*I think it is just so stupid because the color on your skin has nothing with how you are as a person.*
Camilla	*It's idiotic how people treat her.*
Damian	*She gets treated really bad. They're looking at her like she doesn't belong there at all. The students are rude, but I think the adults act worse. They forget that she's a child like all the other.*
Emma	*I think it is bad but it's completely normal at the time.*

The five different responses show that the learners clearly feel sympathy for Sandra and her negative experiences at school. The learners also demonstrate the ability to reflect around the significance of skin color, and especially Belinda emphasizes that there is no connection between a person's skin color and behavior. In this case, it is evident that Belinda has taken a clear stance against stereotypes, prejudice and racism.

Further, the learners find the other characters' behaviors to be negative and undesirable and react with both anger and sadness. However, one of the learners, Emma, points out that the bad treatment Sandra experiences is "completely normal at the time" and thus enables to put what happens into a wider, historical context, in the sense of understanding *why* the people at school act the way they do. This perspective may have been influenced by the previewing activities that have been conducted in class. However, Emma is seemingly the only learner who has answered this, and thus it is likely that she has been able to make the reflection based on own experiences or knowledge.

<u>Sequence 2</u>

Around the breakfast table, Sandra confronts her father by saying: "Pa, I'm not white". Her father gets upset. These responses show what the learners responded to the question: **Do you think the relationship between Sandra and her parents change in this part of the film? Explain why/why not?**

Filip	*I think they get upset because they have wanted so hard to get her "white".*
Georg	*He doesn't seem to care about her own opinion. It's so important for him that she's classified as white that he's oblivious to what she's going through and feels.*
Hanna	*I think it changes because she gets older and she understands a lot more.*
Isak	*Because Sandra likes a black man, and her parents say that it's not something good in black people.*
Julia	*She falls in love with a colored man and realizes her parents are racists.*

According to these responses, the learners demonstrate the ability to reflect around the growing conflicts in Sandra's family. Filip and Georg explain that the fact that Sandra is classified as white is very important for her parents, especially her father. This may indicate the learner's ability to switch perspectives and not only look at the conflict from the protagonist's point of view. Further, Isak and Julia include Petrus, the black vegetable seller, as a significant factor for Sandra's difficult relationship to her parents. This implies that the learners have identified the second conflict in the story, namely the impossible love between two people from different ethnical and cultural backgrounds. Hanna points out a third argument for the increasing tension between the characters, namely that Sandra is maturing into a reflective young woman with strong opinions in regards to her own life. It is getting more difficult for Abraham to rein in Sandra and to make her play by his rules, hence the growing tensions between father and daughter.

Sequence 3

Sandra is released from prison and must make a significant decision. These responses show how the learners reacted to the sequence where Sandra is confronted by her parents and Petrus outside on the steps. Her parents want her to make a choice and her father put great pressure on her by swearing that she will never see her family again unless she does what he wants. Sandra opposes her father's demands by choosing the opposite direction.

Kristian	*It was very sad that she had to choose.*
Leo	*I think she must be with her family, that will be easier. But I think her father does so she is not coming home again.*
Mira	*Difficult to say but she made that choice so they can be a family because she is pregnant. Abraham looks angry.*
Nora	*I would do the same thing.*
Olivia	*At the time I was really happy that she chose Petrus instead of her parents. I really dislike her father and the choices he has made and I'm happy she got away from him.*

The responses show that the learners are engaged in what happens in the sequence. Some of them even put themselves in Sandra's position and imagine what they would have done in her place. Although the five learners have responded to the same sequence, it is intriguing to detect how differently they respond to what they have seen. Olivia sees the issue from

Sandra's point of view and feels happy that she has made a choice that leads her away from her father, while Leo believes that the best outcome for Sandra would be to stay with her family although Abraham makes it very difficult for reconciliation. Mira is more split when it comes to viewpoint, as she believes that Sandra bases her decision on the fact that she is pregnant and hence it is the right thing to do. Nora shows empathy with Sandra and claim that he or she would have done the same thing, while Kristian feels sympathy for Sandra and notices the painfulness in the situation, namely that she was forced to choose.

Sequence 4

When the political and cultural climate in South Africa is finally beginning to change in the 1990s, Sandra is approach by a news reporter who remembers her unique and dramatic story. The following responses show how the learners interpret Sandra's answer, when she tells the news reporter "I am happy for the country, but it's too late for me".

Alex	*I think that she means that she is too old now. It should happen before.*
Emma	*Because she couldn't meet her parents because of her color. Or it's because she's been treated badly because she's black and it changes when she is old but that was too late for her.*
Sara	*Because she lived nearly her whole life with being picked on of white and colored so she in a way didn't feel it.*
Leo	*She maybe means that the country have developed better but it's too late for all the things that have happened.*
Filip	*That her time of happiness is over.*

The learners put Sandra's answer in context with the difficulties she experiences throughout her young life. Alex, Leo and Filip express that Sandra has reached a point of hopelessness in her life, where she might feel that her chance of a happy life has already past and that the changes happening in South Africa came too late. Emma emphasizes that Sandra faces two major challenges in life, the emotional and physical separation from her parents and the discrimination and racism she has experienced from a young age. From Emma's perspective, both factors may be responsible for Sandra's saddened utterance. Further, Sara agrees with Emma that Sandra's lack of enthusiasm on her own behalf is a consequence of the bad treatment she got from both white and colored people in her society.

5.3 Discussion of results

The findings in the learners' responses suggest that the four sequences from the film have promoted knowledge about intercultural concepts and issues such as racism, stereotypes and prejudice, as well as the South African culture from the 1950s to 1990s, to various degrees. Since each of the learners has his or her own individual standpoint when it comes to competence, maturity and learning abilities, the varied results in the viewing guides are expected. However, although the ESL learners express themselves very differently both orally and in writing, the whole group was given the opportunity to increase their intercultural knowledge and understanding when they were watching sequences of the film and reflecting over the questions in the viewing guide. According to Byram's (1997) model of intercultural competences, knowledge is one of the three significant factors in successful intercultural communication and understanding (1997, p. 35). After viewing sequence 1, one of the learners, Emma, explains that although she reacts negatively to society's treatment of Sandra, she also understands that this was a common reaction to people with colored skin during the Apartheid era and hence she demonstrates the knowledge component in Byram's (1997) model that emphasizes knowledge about national cultures and identity, regional, ethnic and social class, shared beliefs, meanings and behaviors, history and religious values (1997, p. 36).

Further, Byram claims that this sort of knowledge is often prejudiced and stereotyped, especially when there has been little or no interaction with the culture in question (1997, p. 36). In that case, it is highly significant to have the learners not only focus on the immense contrasts and contradictions in South African culture, but also enable them to find and discuss the nuances in the story. For any teacher, there is a great responsibility to ensure that the content of the teaching is treated with as little prejudice and stereotyping as possible, and in this case, it concerns all characters in the film sequences, and not only Sandra. Since there is only one learner, namely Emma, who expresses explicitly that the bad guys in the story act according to normal and accepted norms at the time, it can be argued that the focus when working with the film has not been very nuanced. However, the viewer responses show that the learners possess an overall ability to immerse themselves in other people's situations, as well as acquire new knowledge about people from different cultures through watching and discussing film sequences.

5.4 Reflective writing

In accordance with Teasley and Wilder's (1997) notion of implementing a written assignment as a final activity to round off the viewer-response approach, the learners in this project are given a written assignment that aims at helping them to reflect around the situation of people who experience marginalization in any form. As Teasley and Wilder suggest (1997), the assignment is a personal essay where the learners are asked to write two to three paragraphs about an experience that made them feel left outside or like they did not fit in.

Excerpts from five texts are analyzed in order to investigate to what extent the learners can demonstrate their intercultural attitudes in relation to their own experiences and in in relation with the completed intercultural project of this thesis

Peter	*I had friends there, but I didn't have a lot of friends. Almost all the boys in my class liked football and I was one of the few boys in this class who didn't like football. If my best friend was ill, I sometimes felt lonely. Sometimes I played football to avoid loneliness although I didn't like it.*
Robin	*I have never felt this way, but I can imagine how it can be: It must be sad not to have no one to be together with. You may start thinking about this things "Why am I living?", "Is it something wrong with me?". Maybe you feel vulnerable standing all alone.*
Sara	*It feels horrible to be on the outside! You cry yourself to sleep and it feels like people fake that they are your friends. You don't want to go to school and you hoping that someone really cares. You feel like your the fifth wheel on the wagon. You are a little person in this big world, just try to don't be fake. Be a person who really cares!*
Tina	*Of course I have felt like an outsider to the society. I think that everyone has felt outside at some point. Of course it's not fun to be excluded from things, but in the end you'll learn who's there for you at any time.*
Ulrik	*Sometimes I feel like I don't fit in my family because I feel that they are different. It is the same with friends sometimes and you feel a little bit useless in the group you are in.*

All five learners express their opinions and feelings about what it may feel like to be excluded from the majority. Peter bases his text on a previous experience that made an impact on his

early life, when he had few friends in elementary school and at times felt lonely when the other boys played football. Robin, on the other hand, cannot recall ever feeling left out. However, he easily puts himself in the specific situation and demonstrates empathy with those who experience social exclusion.

Further, Sara writes vividly about the negative emotions she has experienced when feeling left out. She urges the reader to be "a person who really cares", because that may help everyone to feel more included. Tina also writes that she has felt like an outsider at times, but at the same time she claims that everyone feels left out at some point, which makes being an outsider less harmful and intimidating. Further, Tina is certain that experiencing exclusion will eventually grow into a learning experience where one will discover who genuinely cares. In the final excerpt, Ulrik explains that he feels different from his family and friends at times, and he points out that he feels "a little bit useless", which is not uncommon for teenagers.

5.5 Discussion of results

The results of the final written assignment suggest that the learners possess the ability to reflect upon a significant part of being human, namely experiencing and coping with negative emotions linked to exclusion. Whether the learners have experienced it themselves, their texts imply that they strongly empathize with individuals who are left out from the majority. It is difficult to declare to what extent this intercultural project has promoted the learners' positive attitudes, and it is unlikely that the three weeks of working with this project have established such positive attitudes all by itself. However, it is likely to believe that the project at least has reinforced already established attitudes among the learners and given support to thoughts and opinions that go in the direction of intercultural competence.

Byram (1997) claims that the attitudes that are essential for successful intercultural interaction consist of "curiosity and openness, [and] readiness to suspend disbelief" that a person may have of other people's opinions, beliefs and behaviors, as well as the willingness to engage with otherness, discover other perspectives, willingness to question established values and presuppositions and to engage in verbal and non-verbal communication and interaction (Byram, 1997, p. 50). Throughout the project, the learners have been exposed to various opinions and behaviors through working with *Skin*, which has also challenged them to express their own opinions and feelings. To succeed with such a project, and reach the learning goals, both openness and curiosity are required from the learners. Identity and culture are topics that

engage most of the learners in a way that may enhance their willingness to suspend their beliefs in their already established opinions. The learners' age, 13 and 14, may also be a significant factor when it comes to their willingness to suspend disbelief and judgement, as they are at a stage in their lives where more independent thoughts and opinions are starting to form. Further, as Byram (1997) claims, the learners will be able to reflect upon their own cultures when they possess intercultural attitudes, and in accordance with the learners' responses, this intercultural project has facilitated the development of the learners' knowledge about and positive attitudes towards identity, cultures and intercultural phenomena.

Byram (1997) emphasizes the three aspects of intercultural competence, knowledge, skills and attitude, as equally significant (1997, p. 52). The project has successfully contributed to promoting intercultural competence among the learners. However, the aspect of intercultural skills is less prominent. However, Byram (1997) defines intercultural skills as the ability to identify ethnocentric perspectives, areas of misunderstanding in an interaction and thus mediate between conflicting interpretations (Byram, 1997, p. 52), and to some extent the learners have demonstrated intercultural skills in their viewing responses where they address the perspectives of the different characters in the film.

Further, Byram (1997) defines intercultural skills as the "ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills" through discovery and interaction (1997, p. 52). Although the learners have not interacted directly with a new culture, they have been given the opportunity to discover and acquire new knowledge about cultures and cultural practices presented in the film. By letting the learners explore and develop these skills will enable them to understand new cultural environments and consequently to interact in complex ways with people from unfamiliar cultures.

6 Summary and conclusion

6.1 Summary of findings

The findings from the pre-viewing activities show the value of preliminary work when introducing a new project to a class. The necessity of defining new terms and words, as well as choosing learner-centered activities that aim to motivate and engage the learners, is clear

when the goal is to develop the learners' intercultural competence. These findings were discussed in light of Mathews' (2000) theory about cultural identity and concept of culture.

The results from the learners' responses to sequences from the film show that the learners react from a viewpoint of understanding, empathy and reflection. These results suggest that the learners already possess a certain degree of intercultural competence as defined by Byram (1997). Further, the findings suggest that *Skin* had promoted intercultural learning, and thus increased the students' intercultural competence.

The purpose of the post-viewing activity, writing a personal essay, is for the learners to reflect about the issues they had explored in the pre-viewing activities and the viewing guides and then attempt to draw parallels to their own lives. The findings from this part of the project suggest that the activity facilitates the learners' reflection and growth.

6.2 Conclusion

In this thesis, I have explored to what extent the film *Skin* may promote intercultural competence in an ESL classroom at lower secondary school level. The main reason for investigating this specific topic has been the rapid development of intercultural issues in today's globalized society, which demands an increased focus on intercultural competence among young learners, the citizens of tomorrow. Intercultural learning is without doubt a natural part of the English as a second language subject, and in lower secondary level, the learners are at the age of great development, with open and curious minds, willing to discover the world around them in a more independent manner. The mandate of the ESL teacher is to facilitate for the learners' development, learning and growth, both in language and cultural competence. To become well-functioning citizens, the learners should possess democratic values, intercultural competence and a worldview that is founded on human rights, and as an outlook into the world, the ESL subject provides numerous opportunities to accentuate this mandate of the education.

By implementing an intercultural teaching project that aims at promoting young learners' attitudes, skills and knowledge about cultural identity, racism, prejudice and stereotypes, I have collected, analyzed and discussed the learners' responses to sequences in *Skin,* in addition to the learners' personal essays about their experiences of exclusion. The findings show that using film as a pedagogical tool, complemented by the viewer-response approach,

provides an effective and varied method for the learners to respond to and reflect on intercultural phenomena. Further, the findings suggest that if the learners are open and curious about intercultural phenomena, they willingly engage in classroom discussions and written activities.

Additionally, I have shown that the analysis of the learners' written responses alone is not sufficient to conclude to what extent the film and the intercultural project have promoted intercultural competence in each learner. Although Byram's model of intercultural competence have been a helpful tool in the analyses and discussions of the learners' responses, it cannot provide concrete results that are assessable for the teacher.

In accordance with Byram (1997), one can safely argue that intercultural knowledge, skills and attitudes cannot be assessed as a finished result, but rather seen as continuous work towards new discoveries and horizons within each person (Byram, 1997, p. 75). In line with such a claim, the findings suggest that the teaching plan, learning objectives, activities and film were appropriate for the selected group of learners and successfully embraced topics that aroused interest and involvement in most of them.

This thesis has accounted for the significance of intercultural competence, the use of film as a pedagogical tool and the use of *Skin* in an intercultural teaching project. The findings show that *Skin*, together with the intercultural teaching project, has promoted intercultural competence among the learners.

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Appendix 1: Information letter

⦿ Høgskolen i Østfold

<div align="right">16.02.16</div>

Forespørsel om godkjennelse for bruk av elevtekster i forbindelse med en masteroppgave.

Som masterstudent i fremmedspråk i skolen ved Høgskolen i Østfold, holder jeg nå på med den avsluttende masteroppgaven. Temaet for oppgaven er hvordan film kan fremme interkulturell læring i engelskfaget, og jeg ønsker å undersøke hvordan filmen *Skin* (2008) kan benyttes i engelskundervisningen for å utvikle elevenes interkulturelle kompetanse.

For å finne ut av dette, ønsker jeg å gjennomføre et undervisningsopplegg der hele eller deler av filmen blir vist i undervisningen. Deretter ønsker jeg å samle inn skriftlig arbeid som elevene gjør umiddelbart i klasserommet. Spørsmålene vil dreie seg om hva de har sett i filmen og tanker og meninger om temaet som filmen omhandler.

Innsamlingen av data vil være anonymisert og elevene skal ikke oppgi navn på det skriftlige arbeidet sitt. Opplysningene vil bli behandlet konfidensielt, og ingen enkeltpersoner vil kunne kjenne seg igjen i den ferdige oppgaven.

Dersom du/dere godkjenner at tekster skrevet av ditt/deres barn kan benyttes i undersøkelsen, er det fint om du/dere skriver under på den vedlagte samtykkeerklæringen.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste A/S.

Med vennlig hilsen
Linn M. Rise

Samtykkeerklæring: Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien av film som verktøy for interkulturell læring og gir tillatelse til bruk av elevtekster skrevet av mitt barn i dette henseende.

Signatur ………………………………….

Appendix 2: Viewing guide 1

Viewer-response: *Skin* part 1

1. How do you react to the way Sandra is treated in school by the students, teachers and other parents?

2. Describe Sandra's relationship to her family (mother, father and brother).

3. How do Sandra and her parents react when they are confronted with the problems of Sandra's skin color?

4. Give an example of how the South African culture is divided between the white and the black people in the film.

Appendix 3: Viewing guide 2

Viewer-response: *Skin* part 2

1. How do you react to the way white people in the village treat Sandra?

2. Do you think Sandra changes her view on herself when she meets Petrus? Explain why/why not.

3. Around the breakfast table, Sandra confronts her father and says "I'm not white". Her father gets upset. Do you think the relationship between Sandra and her parents change in this part of the film? Explain why/why not?

Appendix 4: Viewing guide 3

Viewer-response: *Skin* part 3

1.   How do you react to the scene where Sandra is released from jail and she meets her parents and Petrus outside on the steps?

2.   Use at least 3 words to describe the relationship between

Sandra and her father:

Sandra and her mother:

Sandra and Petrus:

3.   How do you react to the scene where Petrus and Sandra's village is destroyed?

Appendix 5: Viewing guide 4

Viewer-response: *Skin* part 4

1. How do you react when Sannie (Sandra's mother) does not want to meet Sandra and the children after many years apart?

2. What do you think Sandra means when she tells the news reporter "I am happy for the country, but it's too late for me"?

3. Abraham (Sandra's father) said that he wanted to meet his daughter before he died. Imagine that he wrote a note or a letter for Sandra. What do you think he would have written to her?

Appendix 6: PowerPoint – Culture and Identity