

# *MASTEROPPGAVE*

Promoting Intercultural Competence in  
the English Classroom by Using the Novel  
*Does My Head Look Big in This?*

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*16.05.18*

*Master Fremmedspråk i skolen*

*Avdeling for økonomi, språk og samfunnsfag*



## ABSTRACT

This thesis looks into if it is possible to use the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* to promote intercultural competence among students in Norway in their last year of lower secondary school in the English as a second language classroom. We live in a multicultural society, and the students need to develop intercultural competence. Among other things, this includes to be aware of stereotyping and the effects of stereotyping. In addition, the students need to understand what it is to be an immigrant and what challenges immigrants may face. The students who participated in this project were given summaries of *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, they read parts of the book, participated in discussions and completed written and oral tasks which they were given, with the purpose of promoting intercultural competence. Through the project, the students showed traits of developing intercultural competence and some students expressed that they had learned a lot from the novel, *Does My Head Look Big in This?*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This paper is written as an honor to my Grandmother. She was a very intelligent woman who wished to go to university but was told that it was a waste of money, because she was a girl. She decided that when her children grew up, she would go to university.

Unfortunately, she became sick and almost blind before the last child moved out. Since she could not herself go to university, she always encouraged her children and grandchildren to get an education.

I would like to thank Eva Lambertsson Björk and Jutta Eschenbach, my supervisors at Østfold University College for help and support through this process. They have challenged and pushed me, believing more in me than I do myself.

This thesis would never have been written if it had not been for my husband and children. They have supported me when I wanted to throw in the towel. My husband has been the one driving the children to and from activities, and he has entertained the children, so I could have time to work on my studies. I look forward to finishing this thesis, so I can spend more time with my children and husband, playing cards and just have time to listen to them, which I enjoy, and they deserve.

These last three years have been challenging, but I have learned a lot. It has helped me develop as a teacher, which was the purpose of starting this process. Working on this project has not only promoted intercultural competence among the students, but it has also made me more aware of intercultural difficulties and the psychological processes a person may go through when migrating to another country.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION AND AIM

In 2017, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research issued an over-arching curriculum that includes the steering guidelines for all curricula in the Norwegian school-system. The aim of this over-arching policy document is to cover the most important issues that today's children and young people need to learn while growing up, preparing for the future. The document covers themes such as sustainability, democracy, humanitarian values, critical thinking and creativity. The curriculum clearly states that teachers should teach their learners about identity and cultural diversity (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 6). In addition, the Norwegian school system is expected to help students develop languages so that they are capable of communicating, of building relationships with others, and of thinking. Further it is an aim that students should experience that knowing several languages is a benefit, both in school and in society in general (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p. 6).

At present, the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research is revising the curricula. In the suggested curriculum in English as a second language, one of the core elements is competence in relation to culture and cultural diversity. Through the subject English as a second language, the student will meet cultures from all over the English-speaking world. The student should be prepared for encounters both with the people and their cultures (2018). One of the purposes in the over-arching curriculum, is to give students insight into how to live in a society where people have different attitudes and perspectives. In addition, they should be able to compare other cultures with their own, to become more aware of their own culture and identity (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2017, p.6).

The English teacher, naturally enough, aims to teach English as a language. However, teaching a foreign language is more than teaching linguistics. In classes, the language teacher also prepares learners for meeting with people from other cultures. To be able to understand other people, cooperate with, and live with people from different cultures, it is necessary to have knowledge about cultures, and to develop an attitude of openness and tolerance. It is difficult to bring students to English-speaking countries, due to costs and resources, so teachers have to find other ways of introducing foreign cultures in their

classrooms to increase their students' intercultural competence. Teachers can introduce foreign culture to the students using literature, films and newspapers. When using literature, there are two choices. On the one hand, there is non-fiction literature like newspapers or textbooks stating facts about countries. There are textbooks that introduce a country along these lines: In England they drink tea, and the Queen's name is Elizabeth II. Others will tell about the history and teach about "Spinning Jenny" and "The British Empire and the Commonwealth of Nations". On the other hand, there is also fiction literature. By inviting the reader into a story, one provides students with a means of travelling to another world and into someone else's life.

In this thesis I have invited students into another world – namely into the world of the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* (Abdel-Fattah, 2014). Through *Does My Head Look Big in This?* the reader encounters intercultural settings, incidences of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. In addition, the novel describes a variety of characters of immigrants and shows their strategies of acculturation. My research question, then, is:

To what extent may the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* be used to promote intercultural competence in the English Classroom?

First, the theoretical framework will be presented, defining intercultural competence, acculturation, stereotyping and ethnocentrism. Second, the study will be presented. This chapter will include a synopsis of the *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, a short analysis of the novel and the teaching plan. Thereafter, the method will be presented, followed by an analysis of the outcome of the project. Finally, there will be a sum-up and a conclusion of the entire project.

## 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework will cover intercultural competence, acculturation, and stereotyping and ethnocentrism.

### 2.1 INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

According to Michael Byram, Bella Gribkova and Hugh Starkey, “intercultural competence” is the “ability to ensure a shared understanding by people of different social identities, and [the] ability to interact with people as complex human beings with multiple identities and their own individuality” (2002, p. 10).

Martyn Barrett, Michael Byram, Ildikò Lázár, Pascale Mompoin-Gaillard and Stravroula Philippou, in *Developing Intercultural Competence through Education*, claim that intercultural competence is having knowledge, and through the understanding of this knowledge, to develop skills. The skills which show intercultural competence are understanding and respecting people different from oneself, responding with tolerance, establishing constructive relationships and the ability to understand oneself and one’s own multiple culture (2014, pp. 16-17).

In *Assessing Intercultural Competence: More Questions than Answers*, Lies Sercu turns to Chen and Starosta (Sercu 2010, p. 22) and describes the concept of “the effective interculturalist”. Sercu says that, according to Chen and Starosta, the effective interculturalist possesses three qualities: affective (intercultural sensitivity), cognitive (intercultural awareness) and behavioral (intercultural adroitness). The affective component deals with being able to have a positive self-conception, to be tolerant and to be able to deal with social interaction in a relaxed manner (Sercu, 2010, p. 22). The cognitive component expects the effective interculturalist to show cultural awareness and to be culturally self-aware. The last component, behavioral, contains flexibility and social skills (Sercu, 2010, p. 22). Sercu further finds that, according to Kealey and Ruben, personal traits which need to be developed in order for a person to become an effective interculturalist are “empathy, respect, interest in cultures, flexibility, tolerance, open-mindedness, initiative, sociability and positive self-image” (Sercu, 2010, p. 22).

Intercultural competence is therefore a competence that encompasses many different areas. According to Kealey and Ruben (Sercu, 2010, p. 22), intercultural



competence deals with attitude, behavior and knowledge. In the same vein, Byram has developed a model for interculturality that includes five aspects. This model has influenced policy decisions for the last few years when it comes to intercultural issues in Europe. The five aspects are attitude, knowledge, skills to interpret and relate, skills to interact and education (Byram, 1997, p. 34). As do Kealey and Ruben, Byram emphasizes that attitude plays an important role in intercultural competence. The attitude should be influenced by openness and respect of others' meanings, beliefs and behaviors.

When it comes to the aspect of knowledge, there are different areas which need to be covered. One thing is to have knowledge about social groups and cultures in other countries, but there is also a need of knowledge about one's own culture. In addition, it is necessary to have the ability to interact with other cultures than one's own. The skill to interpret and relate, is a skill which makes it possible to see what is common for cultures and what differs, and the skill of discovery means to build new knowledge in relation to a culture. Finally, there is a need of being aware of one's own and other's culture, and willing to revise one's own beliefs, opinions and behaviors (Byram, 1997, pp. 31-38).

Teaching intercultural competence is making sure that students learn for life and "develop a global mind and intercultural skills in a self-managed and goal-directed process" (Sercu, 2010, p. 21). The definition of "interculturalist" may vary, and what qualifications such a being must possess are difficult to pin-point.

When promoting intercultural competence in an English classroom, the language itself can be an obstacle. If the students are not good at expressing themselves, it is difficult for them to express and show their intercultural competence although they may have the competence. The students might not understand their tasks, or they may misinterpret the tasks given, with the result that the answers they give are not relevant to the tasks (Sercu, 2010, p. 27).

Although there are obstacles when assessing intercultural competence, this is not an impossible task. When assessing tasks which may serve to promote intercultural competence, it is necessary for teachers to be aware of the cultural background of the individual learners, the individuals' backgrounds and the difficulties that may arise when trying to communicate in a foreign language (Sercu, 2010, p. 28).

## 2.2 ACCULTURATION

Acculturation is a concept that describes a process an immigrant goes through when leaving a home country to settle in a host country. Several matters can influence in what way and to what extent the acculturation takes place. Among these aspects are the differences between home and host country, the feeling towards the home country, the reason for immigrating to a new country and education and economic situation. Salman Akhtar, in *Immigration and Acculturation* (2011) has covered several difficulties immigrants encounter when living in the host country, and this thesis aims to unravel some of the reasons for intercultural difficulties.

First, Akhtar states that the leaving of a home country can be quite traumatic. There are different reasons for leaving a home country. Some people leave because of war or oppression. Others may leave because they have a dream of a better life. When arriving a new country, one of the difficulties an immigrant encounters is the change of environment. People miss their mountains, the beaches, the trees, the plants, the food, or also the smell of spices (2011, p. 6). For people moving from a rural environment to an urban environment it can be hard not to have contact with animals and nature. In this context it is worth pointing out that many immigrants lose their personal possessions when moving (2011, p. 7). People gather small things for memory's sake. When travelling to a new country, they have to choose the most important things to bring. Refugees cannot bring much. However, people tend to miss a bookshelf their father made, or a blanket sewn by a mother. These items are personal, and often connected to family and loved ones.

For immigrants there is also an obstacle with the encounter of new utensils when it comes to cooking and eating, for example. For instance, a lady from Thailand, who moved to Norway because her husband was Norwegian, was not used to using a fork. She would use the spoon. Every time she sat at the table together with her Norwegian family, she would feel uncomfortable – she had no manners, at least no manners when it came to Norwegian customs. The day she cooked Thai food for the same family and set the table with the utensils she was used to, she had a smile on her face, and felt more comfortable (anonymous, personal communication, 2013).

As mentioned earlier, one of the reasons for people to emigrate, is the dream of a better life. The dream can be to have individual freedom, to live a safe life, to obtain a better job, or to improve the economic situation. Akhtar claims that when moving from a developing country to a developed country, the immigrant will find that there is a shift of focus to material things, and they find a need to own more things. Suddenly they need to have a television, a car, and more things which they did not need in the home country. This is a way of coping with the new way of life. People try to adjust and succeed in the new country. According to Akhtar, some of these people come with a plan of saving money for going back to the home country to start a new life there. Since their needs increase when arriving to a country with a focus on material goods, it gets harder to save up the intended money, and the date for return is put further and further into the distant future (2011, p. 50).

The area of sex and marriage can also be confusing and difficult for immigrants, especially if the home country and the host country have very different attitudes towards sexuality. One example Akhtar mentions, is that the everyday language in the United States frequently contains the word “fuck”, while the topic sex or female and male genitals is not discussed in the Arabic world. In Hindi there is a lack of words covering this topic even for doctors to use (2011, p. 56). The different views of women and sex in the traditional Islamic cultures, and in the West are described by Akhtar:

But wherever conservatism prevails (e.g., Saudi-Arabia, Kuwait, Yemen, Afghanistan), women are buried in vestimentary tombs that choke the display of their feminine contours. This is polar opposite of the West, where women’s clothing (and now even men’s) is designed specifically to display and emphasize sexual characteristics. In some societies, even cosmetic surgery to enhance the body’s sexual features is commonplace. Both extremes represent a kind of cultural neurosis to exert control over the inherent sexuality of the woman’s body: one valuing puritanism and the other valuing sensual exhibition (2011, p. 56).

According to Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede and Michael Minkov in *Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind* (2010, pp. 384-387), a person goes through different

phases when emigrating to a new country. They have made an illustration to show this process, the so-called acculturation curve:

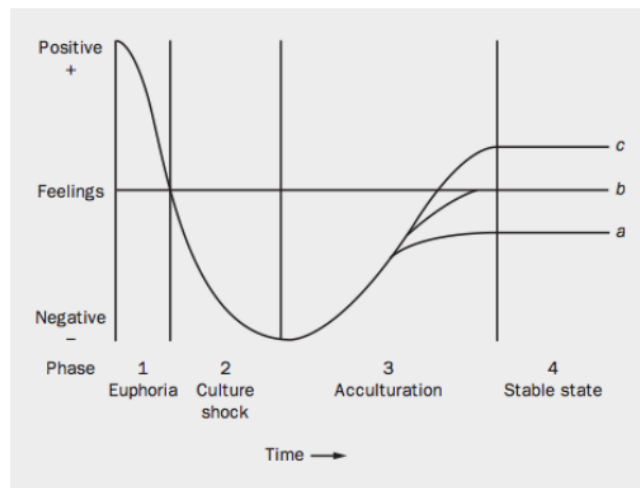


Fig.1 The Acculturation Curve,

Source: (Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010, p. 385)

The acculturation curve describes the feelings of the expatriate over time. The curve is divided into four phases. During the first phase, called the *Euphoria*, the expatriate is often positive. This is also called the honeymoon phase. When arriving to the new country, everything feels exciting and new. The person is filled with hopes and dreams about the future.

After some time, the immigrants find that there are difficulties adjusting to the host country. Many things that are different from the home country, which used to be interesting, suddenly becomes challenging. It may be difficult to find a job. Suddenly they find that the skills that they were accepted by in their home country are not needed in the new country, or they need to go back to school for a license to practice their profession. If they get a job, they might find different values and rituals difficult to handle when cooperating with co-workers. Things like what time to arrive at work can be different. Is there cultural habit, for example, to come half an hour early to work, so you can talk with each other and have a smooth start? Is the custom to come on time, or is time not so important? Rituals, heroes and symbols are also different. When living in a new country,

one must almost become as a child and learn everything over again. This phase is called *Culture-shock* and can be frustrating for the expatriate, leading to distress, feelings of helplessness and hostility.

After some time, the residents start to accept their new life, and work on how to adjust to everything that is new. This phase is called the *Acculturation* phase. There are many decisions to be made. The person must find out how to combine the two worlds. During this phase people tend to choose among three strategies. The first strategy is to assimilate. The immigrant tries to become as the native people in the hosting country. There is an idea that this is now his or her country and its new culture. The person tries to assimilate and reject the old ways of doing things. The second strategy is to try to integrate the culture in the host country with the culture of country of origin. The person will try to hold on to his or her culture but tries to adjust and learn so that there will be a mix of the two cultures. The last strategy is to stick to the culture of the origin country. It becomes important to conserve the original culture, and to reject the culture of the new country. Reasons for not wanting to change the culture can be the hope of going back one day, fear of losing one's identity or a strong feeling of being different and not accepted in the new country. Hofstede et al. call this final phase the *Stable state* (Hofstede et al. 2010, pp. 384-387).

### 2.3 STEREOTYPING AND ETHNOCENTRISM

One of the areas that the project will look into is stereotyping. Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary defines stereotype as "image, idea, character etc. that has become fixed or standardized in a conventional form without individuality (and is therefore perhaps false)" (1993, p. 1259). Hofstede et al. say that a manner of stereotyping is judging a person uncritically depending on his or her background (2010, p. 39).

Chris Barker, also defines the concept of stereotype in *Cultural Studies Theory and Practice* as "vivid but simple representations which reduce persons to a set of exaggerated, usually negative character traits" (2008, p. 488). An example of stereotyping can be that if we have learned that the custom is that women stay at home to raise their children, and do not have a career outside the home, it is easy to jump to the conclusion that all women from that country will be working at home, raising their children.

Larry A. Samovar, Richard E. Porter, Edwin R. McDaniel and Carolyn S. Roy, in *Communication Between Cultures*, describe the concept of stereotyping as “a means of organizing your perceptions into simplified categories that can be used to represent an entire collection of things or people” (2013, p. 222). Samovar et al. also talk about how stereotypes are learned. They claim that no one is born with stereotypes, but that they are learned. Often, children are taught stereotypes by their parents, and later in life by their peers in school. Religious and social groups are also carriers of stereotypes. Finally, stereotypes are learned from media. The influence of the media is described like this: “When the media highlights incidents of crime committed by illegal immigrants, an image is created that all immigrants are engaged in criminal activities” (2013, p. 223).

Barrett et al. say that “awareness and understanding of one’s own and other people’s preconceptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination” is a part of intercultural competence (2014, p. 19). Therefore, it is important for teachers to make the students aware of stereotyping in their lives.

Another area the project will touch upon is ethnocentrism, Samovar et al. define ethnocentrism as: “a conviction that one’s own culture is superior to all other cultures” (2013, p. 13). Not only do immigrants have their phases which they go through when arriving a new country, but the people of the hosting country also have their thoughts and feelings towards the newcomers. According to Hofstede et al., when a country receives newcomers, people of the hosting country are curious of the people arriving. If the immigrants decide to stay, the people of the hosting country will start to evaluate the immigrants according to their own standards. The people of the hosting country have their set of ideas of how things are done and will judge according to their own cultural perspective (2010, p. 387). This can again be illustrated by the situation with the woman from Thailand, mentioned earlier. Many Norwegians find it common to use knife and fork when eating dinner, and the woman using only the fork as utensils may be perceived as having a lack of manners and not knowing how to do things, in their opinion, correctly.

Hofstede et al. emphasize the responsibility in professions such as teachers, police, social workers and doctors. These professional groups have the opportunity to facilitate integration for migrant groups. The mentioned professions are those the migrant people

often first meet when arriving to the new country and they have a lot of influence. However, Hofstede et al. claim that these professions also tend to “fall victim to ethnocentric and racist philosophies” (2010, pp. 398-399). To avoid “ethnocentric and racist philosophies”, teachers, police, social workers and doctors should gain intercultural competence and be aware of their power to influence and enhance integration.

### 3. THE STUDY

The study will first give a synopsis of *Does My Head Look Big in This?* before analyzing the novel with an emphasis on intercultural competence. At the end of the chapter, the teaching plan will be presented.

#### 3.1 A SYNOPSIS OF THE NOVEL

The story of *Does My Head Look Big in This?* is told by the main character Amal. She is 16 years old, a Muslim, born in Australia with Palestinian parents. Her parents are highly educated people, and work as a doctor and a dentist, respectively. Amal's mother, Jamila, wears a hijab. Amal used to go to a private Muslim school, but now goes to another private school, since the Muslim school only had classes up to 10<sup>th</sup> grade. She has friends from her old school, Yasmine and Leila, who are both Muslims, and from her present school, Eileen, Simone, Josh and Adam.

Through the book there are several stories. The main story concerns Amal reflecting on and deciding to start wearing the hijab full time. We follow her process from thinking about it, to a firm conviction that it is the right thing to do. The first day of school she goes to the principal's office to tell her that she has decided to wear the hijab. The principal is negative, believing that she is forced by her parents. She reminds Amal that they have a school uniform, and by wearing a hijab with the school uniform, she is making adjustments to the uniform. She expresses that she is worried that Amal will give the school a bad reputation. This is the first time Amal has to defend her decision, but not the last. The narration continues throughout the school year, showing, among other things, how people react to her wearing the hijab, and how she copes with it.

Not only does *Does My Head Look Big in This?* deal with the story about Amal and her experience of starting to wear the hijab, but the novel includes a variety of typical challenges which teenagers may have to cope with. We get to read about how teenagers handle difficulties such as eating disorders, culture clashes and for example, falling in love. The story also shows how the friends support each other.



Throughout the novel, we see how people make choices based on their original or new culture. We get to know Leila's mother, an immigrant from Turkey, Ms. Vaselli, an elderly lady who has immigrated from Greece and Yasmine's mother, and a British woman who has converted to Islam and married a Pakistani. In addition, we get to see how some of the children of immigrants integrate their new country's culture with their parents' original culture.

At the end of the novel, it is also at the end of the school year. Amal is given the award for best speaker at the debate competition. The principal changes her attitude. From being afraid that a student wearing the hijab with the school uniform would give the school a bad reputation, to showing that she is proud of Amal, and she says: "you have made this educational institution proud" (2014, p. 349). Towards the end of the school year, Amal reflects upon the year that has passed:

All this time I've been walking around thinking I've become pious because I've made the difficult decision to wear the hijab. I've been assuming that now that I'm wearing it full-time, I've earned all my brownie points.

But what's the good of being true to your religion on the outside, if you don't change what's on the inside, where it really counts?

I've been kidding myself. Putting on the hijab isn't the end of the journey. It's just the beginning (2014, p. 324).

### 3.2 AN ANALYSIS OF THE NOVEL

Many of the characters in the book are immigrants. Most of them are parents to the teenagers in the book. The teenagers were all born in Australia and feel that they are parts of both cultures. Jamila, Leila's mother, Amal's uncle, Joe, and Mrs. Vaselli are all four immigrants in Australia. Jamila and Joe are both from Palestine, Leila's mother is from Turkey, and Mrs. Vaselli is from Greece. Although they are all immigrants, their lives differ. Leila's mother does not have an education and trusts her traditions from the countryside in Turkey. She says that when she arrived in Australia, it became essential to her to pass on the customs and traditions that she was brought up with. Her parents found a husband for her, and she was married at a young age. We can see that she is trying to conserve the tradition, obsessed as she is with getting a husband for Leila. As she says, the best way to make sure

that Leila will have a happy life, is to get her married. She is scared that Leila will become like Australian girls and has a very negative attitude towards Australian culture. Leila has to follow very strict rules, is not allowed to go places where her mother is afraid that she will meet with boys or do other things which might ruin her reputation. She explains why like this:

You think my culture is just throw away? It is my culture. It is me. All I know is how I grow up and what my mum taught me. It is my village culture and my family culture and my home culture. If you losing your culture, you becoming nothing. Are you wanting have no culture? (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 322).

She clearly shows that her culture is a strong part of her identity. So, she believes that if she lets go of her culture, it will be as if she would stop existing. Hofstede et al. have studied what they call uncertainty avoidance, which deals with if a country is open for change or if there is a culture of not liking change or uncertainty. In this study, Turkey had an index of 85 of 100 (2010, p. 192), which indicates that there is a strong uncertainty avoidance. When looking at a country which has a strong uncertainty avoidance, family life is described as “tight rules for children on what is dirty and taboo”, “what is different is dangerous” and “aggression and emotions may at proper times and places be vented” (2010, p. 203). This can explain why Leila’s mother is so persistent in conserving her culture. She is afraid of what is different, and the safest is to stick to how things have always been. This is what she knows and can control.

Leila also has a brother. As he is a boy, he does not have the same rules as Leila. He has a girlfriend and is often out partying and drinking. He does not help with chores in the house, and orders both his mother and sister around to fixing his laundry and meals. Hofstede et al., describe Turkey as a feminine country. Hofstede et al. explain this cultural dimension this way:

A society is called masculine when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.

A society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender and concerned with the quality of life. (2010, p. 140).

In their analysis of data, Turkey is feminine. This indicates that there should be the same expectations for both girls and boys. However, Hofstede et al. did their research among employees at IBM around the world, and people working at IBM in Turkey live in the cities. Tahire Erman (1998) has studied Turkish women migrating from rural areas to urban areas, and their views on gender roles. In her article, *The Impact of Migration on Turkish Rural Women: Four Emergent Patterns*, she describes how women react when moving to the city. When describing second-generation migrants, she quotes one of the women she interviewed:

Men can do anything they want, but women cannot. Women do not have any rights. Why cannot I go out by myself? To me, going out alone is normal, it is for everybody- people go out, walk around, explore their environment, yes, but as a woman, I cannot do this.... Men always have their own way. A woman cannot talk back to her husband. She cannot behave as she likes.... Women absolutely have no rights. (1998, p. 157).

This is very much how Leila feels is the case in her family. Another group of women described by Erman is women in families from rural areas, with low income and little or no education. These families are often dominated by high patriarchal control. Life is controlled by strict sunni beliefs, and women are often not allowed to walk outdoors by themselves. Many of the women are satisfied with their lives, socializing in their neighborhood with other women with the same background. They enjoy an easier life, not having to do the rural tasks (1998, p. 154). It is as if Erman is describing Leila's mother. Although Leila's mother did not move to a city in Turkey, but to a city in Australia, it is very similar, maybe even a stronger reason to be conservative of one's culture due to even greater differences. She is pleased with how things are, and want them to stay that way. Erman says that although the city brings new possibilities to migrating women from rural areas, the people who migrate tend to gather in the same neighborhoods forming "a community of their own that exerts control over individual" (1998, p. 159).

Joe has chosen a totally opposite strategy to Leila's mother when moving to a new country. He believes that when a person chooses to immigrate to a new country, it is important to assimilate. It is time to let go of the old traditions and customs, and become, in this case, a complete Australian. Amal describes her uncle and aunt like this:

They're not into Islam or Arabic culture like we are. They're more into changing their names, peroxidizing their hair and acting like they were born in Wagga Wagga and not Jerusalem. They're always freaking out about us being "fanatics". For example, in Ramadan, we're "mad" to fast. When it's prayer time, they ask us why we bother. When we buy halal food, we're "too extreme" (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, pp. 97-98).

Joe invites Amal with her parents together with his Australian friends to demonstrate how Australian he is. Amal describes their lounge:

[it] is decorated with little stuffed toys, koalas and kangaroos wearing T-shirts in the colours of the Australian flag. There's a holder on the coffee table that's filled with toothpicks with miniature flags stuck to their ends. The coasters are green and gold with the words *Sydney 2000* written on them. I've never dared to ask where the Crocodile Dundee beanbag came from. I have a sneaking suspicion it's handmade. I don't think any free market would have the nerve to sell something so lame. The hands-down most hideous item in the room is the large oval mirror on top of the artificial fireplace with the metal frame. Every last inch of it is filled with magnets with messages such as, *I'm a too right Aussie Sheila* or *Strewth, let's have a shrimp on the Barbie*. The room is like a holy shrine for those craving fairdinkumness and identity salvation (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 179).

Joe's way of assimilating is extreme, and is what Hofstede et al. call "becoming more Roman than the Romans" (2010, p. 385).

In some ways, we can say that Jamila's strategy is somewhere in between Joe's and Leila's mother's. She keeps some of her customs and traditions, but still she sees positive sides in her new country. Her religion is important to her, so she keeps the traditions which are connected to her religion, by wearing a hijab, praying five times a day and fasting in the month of Ramadan. She cooks the food from her home country, but also eats Australian dishes, as long as the food is permitted by her religion (Halal). She raises Amal by teaching

her about their religion, but also wants her to fit in with her Australian friends. Amal's friends are shown respect and are always welcome in their home, no matter what religion they have or nationality. When Amal tells her that she wants to start wearing the hijab full time, Jamila is anxious that Amal will be bullied and not be an integrated part of the social life in school. Although she wears the hijab herself, she does not feel that Amal needs to wear it. She says:

You see how people react and look at me, at my age! You're still young and starting out. You've got university and then looking for a job. Have you thought all of it through? (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 51).

In addition to illustrating the topic acculturation, *Does My Head Look Big in This?* deals with stereotyping in many areas. When Amal tells her parents that she wishes to start wearing the hijab full time, Jamila invites her to go for a “test-run” at the shopping-mall. Before leaving for the shopping-mall, Amal is terrified of how people will react when they see her with the hijab. To her surprise, she notices that people really don't react at all. She says:

But as I browse through the shops I realize how uncomfortable and irrational I'm acting because it feels like most people really couldn't care less. I mean, sure there's staring, but it's not enough to rate in my fears list. There are the occasional goggle-eyes but most people give me the once-over top to bottom, which I can deal with. I'm just one more late-night shopper, one more person to bump shoulders with, negotiate a crowded queue with (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, pp. 27-28).

Although she sees that some people do look at her, she must admit that to most people, her wearing a hijab is not a big deal.

One of the first challenges of stereotyping that Amal is confronted with is that she is forced to wear the hijab by her parents. The first time this happens is when she approaches the principal, Ms Walsh.

'Hmm...now let me see.' She presses her fingers down on her temples. 'So your parents have made you wear the veil permanently now? Starting from today? Your

*first* day of term three. Couldn't it wait until tomorrow? After they'd spoken to me? (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 38).

The principal immediately jumps to the conclusion that when girls wear a hijab, they are forced to do so by their parents. Amal is surprised by this, and tries to convince Ms Walsh that this is not so:

I stare at her in shock. 'My parents? Who mentioned my parents?'

'The veil, dear.' Her voice is annoyingly phony. 'So you've been made to wear it from today?'

'Nobody has *made* me wear it, Ms Walsh. It's my decision.' I shift in the chair, my bum numb from the hard wood.

'*Your* decision to cover yourself up?' she asks with the faintest hit of scepticism (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 39)

Not only does Ms Walsh think that Amal is forced by her parents. Her aunt and uncle also suspect that she is forced by her parents. We read about their reaction when they hear that she has decided to wear the hijab full time:

'But why?' my aunt wails.

'Yes, Jamila, why would you go and make her do that?' Uncle Joe shouts. 'Isn't it enough you wear it, so you have to force your daughter to as well?' (Abdel-Fattah, 2005, p. 99).

Mrs Vaselli, her neighbor, also suspects that Amal is forced to wear the hijab, she says:

'Your dad? He hitting you wiz ze belt if you no wearing it?' (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 164).

In the same way people in *Does My Head Look Big in This?* jump to the conclusion that girls wearing hijab are forced to do so by their parents, we see this happening our society as well. According to ADL (2018), Anti-Defamation League, it is a myth that women who wear hijab are forced to do so. There are countries which force women to wear hijab, but in most cases in countries as e.g. the United States, the women who wear hijabs do so voluntarily.

Another way characters in *Does My Head Look Big in This?* stereotype Muslims is that they are violent and terrorists. One day, a student in Amal's class, Tia, comes to her and says:

'Hey Amal, did you watch that interview with those girls who were raped by those Lebo Muslims? You must feel so ashamed' (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 151).

Another day, Adam asks Amal if she saw the documentary on September 11<sup>th</sup>, supposing that she would be interested in the matter, being a Muslim. Furthermore, a girl at school asks her to come to give a talk to explain why terrorists do what they do, guessing that Amal understands the terrorists, being a Muslim.

Amal has another experience of this kind of stereotyping when taking the bus, chatting with a lady. The bus driver is listening to a radio program, and he turns up the volume while he is watching Amal:

A voice on the early-morning talkback shouts words of outrage about 'Muslims being violent', and show how 'they're all trouble', and how 'Australians are under threat of being attacked by these Koran-wielding people who want to sabotage our way of life and our values' (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 157).

According to ADL (2018), it is a myth that Muslims are violent and that they support terrorism. Although there are, as in all other religions, some people who are extreme and support violence and terrorism, a huge study made in 2015 by Pew Research Center found that an overwhelmingly number of Muslims had negative views of ISIS (ADL, 2018).

Samovar et al. described the concept of stereotyping as "a means of organizing your perceptions into simplified categories that can be used to represent an entire collection of things or people" (2013, p. 222). This means that people tend to judge groups according to how they judge a represent from that group. *In Does My Head Look Big in This?* Adam tries to explain why Tia jumps to the conclusions she does about e.g. Muslim:

'You know, you shouldn't pay any attention to Tia' he says. 'She's just a bitch. Rich, spoilt brat, obsessed with her looks. Fits the profile kind of story.'

'Racist?'

‘Yeah, that too. But, well, you can’t really blame her. It’s what she hears at home. I know ‘cause my dad knows her dad. They’re not friends but they used to bump into each other at the golf club. That was ages ago but even then her dad would see somebody Asian or dark-skinned and he’d hail them over assuming they were a waiter or something. They don’t really mix with anybody outside their circle. You’re probably the first Muslim’ (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 143).

Amal has a very good answer to stereotyping:

You don’t judge people. We’re not a plural, or some big bloc, all acting and feeling the same things. You judge individuals. Anyway, it goes both ways. I’ve got family friends, who think all Anglos are drunk wife-bashers slumped in front of Springer with a stubby in their hands (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 143).

Although we see several incidences of people stereotyping Muslims as terrorists and violent people, we also see people defending Amal. Amal’s friends defend her from Tia in school, and the lady who was chatting with Amal on the bus, tells the bus driver to turn the radio down, turns to Amal and says:

‘I am sixty-seven years old. And, dear, in my sixty-seven years I’ve never let politics tell me how to treat people’ (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 158).

The kindness the lady on the bus shows Amal, makes Amal think, and we read:

Sometimes it’s easy to lose faith in people. And sometimes one act of kindness is all it takes to give you hope again (Abdel-Fattah, 2014, p. 158).

### 3.3 THE TEACHING PLAN

During the week there are two lesson periods. One lesson lasts 45 minutes, while the other lasts 90 minutes. The first week only has one lesson of 45 minutes, due to a school trip.

<b>Week/ Lesson</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Learning Aims:</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Why</b>
<b>1/1</b>	Task 1 (appendix 1)	I can express my opinion	The students will do Task 1 (appendix 1) individually during class and hand in.	To see what attitudes, knowledge and thoughts the students



	Pictures (appendices 2-4)	I can discuss things happening in society  I can reflect upon my own stereotyping and discrimination.	Hang up two pictures (appendices 2-4) in the classroom. Ask the students to discuss what they see, and then talk about it all together.	have towards hijab in school and acculturation before the project.  To start the process of working on intercultural competence.
<b>2/1</b>	Chapters 1-3	I can use text to observe incidents of stereotyping and discrimination	Reading of 1st chapter to the students Giving a summary of 2nd chapter to the students Reading of an excerpt of 2 <sup>nd</sup> chapter (pp. 14-15) Listening to 3rd chapter on the audio book	To introduce the protagonist Amal and her thoughts about wearing a hijab
<b>Home-work</b>	Chapter 4	I can use text to observe incidents of stereotyping and discrimination	Read at home.	To prepare for the discussion in Task 2 (appendix 5) in class.
<b>2/2</b>	Chapter 4 Concept of prejudice Chapters 5-8	I can use text to observe incidents of stereotyping and discrimination	Discussion of Task 2 (appendix 5) in smaller groups Giving a summary of chapters 5-7 Listening to chapter 8 on the audiobook	To make the students think about different attitudes toward Amal's decision to wear a hijab.

				To make the students familiar with the content of the book.
<b>3/1</b>	Chapters 9-10	I can use text to observe incidents of stereotyping and discrimination	Let students listen to chapter 9 and 10 in the audio book.	To make students observe incidents of stereotyping and discrimination
<b>3/2</b>	Chapters 11-15	I can discuss stereotyping I can reflect upon stereotyping in my own life	Give a summary of chapters 11-14. Listen to chapter 15 in the audio book. Divide class into discussion groups. Hand out Task 3 for discussion (appendix 6).	Make students more aware of different points of view and reflect upon their own opinion about stereotyping.
<b>4/1</b>	Chapters 16-19	I can reflect upon different strategies of fitting in in a new country I can reflect upon prejudice	Give a summary of chapters 16-19. Read out loud pp. 153-154 and 157-158, which show Amal confronted by accusations of terrorism and her religion. Read pp. 162-166.	Through literature give students examples of different strategies of adjusting to living in a new country.
<b>Homework: Read chapters 21-23, going through uncle Joe's and Mandy's home, a situation in Leila's home and Mrs. Vaselli's immigration story.</b>				
<b>4/2</b>	Chapters 21-23 (read at home) Chapters 24-27	I can reflect upon different strategies of fitting in in a new country	Divide students into discussion groups and give Task 4 (appendix 7). Give a summary of chapters 24-27.	To make students aware of strategies of fitting into a new country.

			Listen to chapter 28 and 29 in audio book.	
<b>5/1</b>	Chapters 30-36	I can reflect upon stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and ethnocentrism.	<p>Listen to chapter 30 in the audio book, and together as a class discuss how the characters react to terrorism. Ask the students if there has been a recent terrorist attack, and how they reacted when they heard about it.</p> <p>Ask students to write down their thoughts about terrorism as a task in skooler.</p> <p>Give summary of chapter 31-36.</p>	To make students aware of feelings around terrorism and how people stereotype and prejudice.
<b>5/2</b>	Chapters 37-45	I can reflect upon stereotyping, prejudice, discrimination and ethnocentrism.	<p>Give summary of chapters 37-41.</p> <p>Listen to chapters 42-45 in the audio book.</p>	To give the students a closure and a conclusion.
<b>6/1</b>	Articles about <i>Faten tar valget</i>	I can reflect upon attitudes in our society about the wearing of hijab	Hand out a booklet with articles gathered about the program <i>Faten tar valget</i> (appendix 8).	To give students insight in what attitudes there are in our own society about hijab.

	(appendix 8)		Give students time to start reading the articles. Tell students to read and reflect upon what they read as homework.	
<b>6/2</b>	Written Task (appendix 9)	I can write an article stating my opinion.	Hand out the Written Task (appendix 9)	To make students reflect upon and express their opinion and arguments.
<b>7/1, 7/2, 8/1,</b>	Presentation Task (appendix 10)	I can make a presentation inspired by the novel.	Hand out the presentation task  Supervise and tutor the students while they are working  Tell students to hand in the script on Skooler before the presentations start.	To make students choose a topic to show what the novel tells them and draw lines between the novel and their own life.
<b>During teacher's office hours</b>	Presentation Task (appendix 10)	I can give a presentation inspired by the novel.	Make room for presentations, use office-hours for individual presentations.  Assess presentations  Give feedback  Assess scripts handed in.	To make students choose a topic to show what the novel tells them and draw lines between the novel and their own life.

## 4. Method

This chapter will introduce the participants, the material and the method.

### 4.1 PARTICIPANTS

The students who participated in the project, are students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade in a Norwegian school, the final year of lower secondary school. There are 23 students in the class, with one teacher. The school has 92 10<sup>th</sup> graders, and in English classes, they are mainly divided into groups according to their achievements. This class is directed to students who do well in English as a second language, and most of them are very motivated for learning. In addition, there are some students who have chosen to be included in this group due to a good relationship with the teacher and a need of clear boundaries. There are 8 boys and 15 girls in the group, and the grades vary between 3 and 6. One of the students needs to have an adjusted plan for homework, and easier texts in class. During the project, this student has been allowed to listen to the novel in Norwegian at home but has listened to it in English at school. When possible, the teacher has sat down to explain what happened in the chapter in simpler words, to make sure the student is still following what is happening.

All the students in the group were positive to join in the project, and 100% of the students accepted that their responses could be used for analysis. Some of the students have even asked if they can read this thesis when finished.

### 4.2 MATERIAL

The project was initiated with giving the students Task 1 (appendix 1), where they are told to express their opinion on hijab in school. In addition, they had to answer what they think Norwegians expect from immigrants to Norway and what immigrants to Norway think is important to do when arriving in Norway. This task was answered individually by the students. Through the students' answers to Task 1, we get an idea of what the students think individually about these topics before starting the project. The next task, Task 2 (appendix 5), was given in groups for discussion and reporting to the teacher. During Task 2, the students discussed the principal's attitude and reaction when Amal came to tell the principal that she had decided to wear the hijab and that her teacher allowed her to pray in school. The last task given to the students to discuss and answer in groups is Task 3 (appendix 6), in which the students discussed the quote by Amal.

The discussion about the quote led to a discussion about stereotyping in different contexts, and the groups handed in reports on what they had concluded. The students have also, in groups, discussed and reported on task 4 (appendix 7) about how characters in *Does My Head Look Big in This?* adjust when arriving in a new country.

At the end of the project, the students were given two major, individual, tasks. In the first, they were given several newspaper articles treating the subject of a girl wearing a hijab while leading a Norwegian television program (appendix 8). They had to write a newspaper article expressing their opinion on the matter (appendix 9). The other task was to make an oral presentation about a topic inspired by the novel (appendix 10). The script for this presentation was also handed in. In addition to the tasks given to the students, a student wanted to hand in some comments on her reactions and thoughts she had had during the project. Task 3 was only notes taken while doing homework, so very few handed it in. Only 6 students handed in all the tasks, but all students handed in the two major tasks and gave their presentations. An excuse for not submitting all the tasks were connected to problems with the wi-fi system at school so that the students lost what they were writing. In addition, there were students who were absent due to illness or travels, and a couple of the students did not hand in very much because they had distractions in their life which make them little motivated for school work.

All the tasks have been answered in English by the students. However, due to time pressure, the students were given more time to discuss than writing. Therefore, the students were told to focus on content more than spelling and grammar in their writing. This has led to more language mistakes than usual. However, their language has not been altered, and the language errors in quotes are the errors of the students.

#### 4.3 THE METHOD OF ANALYSIS OF THE MATERIAL THE STUDENTS HAVE PRODUCED

The outcome of the tasks has varied. Some of the answers are very short. The two final tasks have been done individually, and these papers have more content. Sometimes the answers are very typical answers for what is politically correct, although it has been emphasized that it is wanted that the students should be honest and share their thoughts. This problem with political correctness will always be an issue when dealing with these matters as long as the students are handing in with their names. One possibility to avoid this problem, could have been to let the students hand in anonymously, but for the teacher to

be able to give feedback to the students and give the students grades during the semester, the teacher needed to know who submitted the tasks.

There are three kinds of material produced by groups (tasks 2, 3, and 4), and these will be analyzed in regard to

1. Respect, Tolerance and Empathy
2. Stereotyping
3. Acculturation

Further, the material produced by two students (task 1, newspaper article and presentation) will be analyzed in regard to tolerance, respect and empathy. Lastly, I will analyze the reflections one student had and wrote down.

## 5. ANALYSIS

### 5.1. THOUGHTS OF STEREOTYPING IN GROUP WORK

The students were asked to discuss incidences of stereotyping in the book, and also other situations of stereotyping. In the answers, I am looking for evidence of intercultural competence. As mentioned earlier, an effective interculturalist needs to have the personal traits: empathy, respect, self-awareness, interest in cultures, flexibility, tolerance, open-mindedness and initiative (Sercu, 2010, p. 22). Task 3 (appendix 6) deals with discussing a quote from *Does My Head Look Big in This?* and several questions about stereotyping. The answers can tell what the students have focused on, and what has been in focus in the classes.

In Task 3, question number one (appendix 6), the students discussed the following quote by Amal, the main character of the book:

You don't judge people. We're not a plural, or some big bloc, all acting and feeling the same things. You judge individuals. Anyway, it goes both ways. I've got family friends, who think all Anglos are drunk wife-bashers slumped in front of Springer with a stubby in their hands (2014, p. 143).

The students interpreted this quote differently. Some concluded that it meant that people should be treated individually. They wrote:

It means that it is wrong to judge people by their race or gender. You should know the individual person, to know how someone is.

It is interesting to see that the students comment on gender and race, something which is not mentioned in the quote. Could this be because they relate what Amal says to their own society? If this is so, it is what Barrett et al. claim is a part of intercultural competence, namely: "awareness and understanding of one's own and other people's assumptions, preconceptions, stereotypes, prejudices and overt and covert discrimination" (2014, p. 19).

Another group interpreted the quote in much the same way as the first group but focused on religion. They wrote:



I think that she means that we are not the same. You shouldn't judge people because of their religion.

By interpreting the quote this way, the students show that they have discussed the issue of being open-minded and to not haste to conclusion on only information about which religion the person belongs to.

Two groups concluded in another way, that everybody should be treated in the same way, writing:

[...] that we should treat everyone the same and don't after sex, culture, skin color, hair color or clothes.

Here it seems like as if the students have discussed the quote and taken it a step further. Not only have they thought about what the quote means in the given situation, but also about how it can be used in their own lives. Students often feel treated differently according to what they wear and what they look like. One of the groups also gave an example of the meaning of this quote from daily life:

Amal means that it's a difference between people and individuals. You shouldn't judge a person out of where it comes from or how they look. For instance, some employers choose their workers based on names and nationalities. Instead, they should mind to look at their proficiencies to see what they can offer.

Although the students have interpreted the quote from different views, they agree that a person should not be judged according to his or her religion, gender, race or nationality. All the answers show that the quote has encouraged the students to discuss stereotyping and that the character of Amal finds stereotyping wrong and intimidating. By discussing the quote related to stereotyping, and by seeing how people are treated differently due to religion, gender, race, color of hair or skin, the students may feel empathy, and develop tolerance and understanding, and become more open-minded.

When students were asked to discuss stereotyping as a phenomenon, all the groups except one concluded that it is not ok to stereotype no matter what. The last group said that:

So, we think that there are positive and negative ways of stereotyping. However, it should never be used to offend or hurt people. Thinking that a group of people are nice is what we look at as a positive way of stereotyping.

However, some students admit to stereotyping themselves, but also claim that it should not be done. The task has made the students aware of stereotyping, and when the task was done after reading parts of the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, the students were also able to see how stereotyping can influence people who are victims of the stereotyping.

In Task 3, question number three (appendix 6), the students were asked how they would react if a boy came to school wearing a dress or makeup. The focus was moved away from what happened in the book, and over to things that can happen in the students' own lives. Are they aware of their stereotyping and presumptions? Do they have their own conventions of how things should be? Most of the students did admit to stereotyping, expecting a dress and makeup to be properties of girls. Still, many of the students also claimed that after a while they would get used to it and accept it, as one group writes:

Some people would think it would be weird at first and other people think that it wouldn't make a difference.

This shows tolerance and that people just need to adjust their stereotyping and move from judging the person as a part of a group to judging the person as an individual, just like Amal said in the mentioned quote. One of the groups had problems agreeing and started arguing. The students therefore did not know what to answer, since they could not agree. Therefore, they asked the teacher what to do. The teacher told them that they should write down the different opinions, and they wrote:

In our society, boys have an opinion which declares that boys should be stronger than girls, and more physical strong. If a girl beats a boy in something, the other boys make fun of him and tells him that he lost against a girl. People also believe that all Muslims are terrorists because IS believe that they are Muslims and connected to Islam though they aren't. Some also mean that a person that has a mental disorder is weaker and less clever than a person without a disorder. They are seen as less capable of doing everyday things. If a boy came to school in a dress or wearing

makeup, we would probably see it as weird. On this theory we have split opinions. Some mean that they are weird and that there is something wrong with them. On the other side, the others mean that it would something we need to be accustomed to, but that it is good that they are themselves and express themselves in their way.

The whole group shows that they have a tendency to stereotype, and some of them admit that their opinions would not have changed after a while. The students who claim that they would not change after a while but considered that there had to be something wrong with the boy, are children of immigrants from countries which Hofstede et al. call masculine (2010, pp. 141-143). Can this be an explanation of why these students had more difficulties accepting a boy in a dress? Norway is a very feminine country according to Hofstede et al., and feminine countries tend to value gender equality between sexes, while very masculine countries have different rules for boys than girls.

One thing the students learnt through the discussion, is that it is easier to stereotype when one does not know the person. When one gets to know the person and the person's personality, it is easier to judge the person individually and not as a part of a group. One group expressed it like this:

There is stereotyping in our society. It's easy for some people to think that boys are better than girls in certain subjects (like P.E. for instance) [Physical Education]. If a boy showed up in a dress and makeup in school, we would all have been surprised. Two of us would have loved it, because he got the courage to do it. It's brave to be yourself. The other two of us think that they would have made assumptions about him without really knowing him or why he is doing what he does (appendix 11).

Although this task was group work, and students submitted a common answer, one of the students chose to hand in an individual answer, and the answer was as follows:

This is my personal one, Here I tell my own experiences: I don't really care. It's just clothes.

The person writing this could not see why there was a reason to discuss this and shows no sign of stereotyping in these circumstances.

When discussing stereotyping, one of the groups brought in the term “afraid”, and this is interesting. They wrote:

Gender roles. We would be surprised, but not mad at the person. Some people get afraid when they see Muslims. Homosexuals guys are often seen as very feminine, and lesbians are often stereotyped as women with short hair, boyish clothes and masculine hobbies. Does this show that we tend to stereotype and make negative assumptions when we are scared? Is what is different, dangerous?

Most of the groups conclude that they would be surprised if a boy in class turned up in a dress or with makeup. It is something different, and also, in the beginning, they would think it was a big joke. Some of the students also conclude that after a while, they would accept and get used to the boy wearing dresses and/or makeup.

## 5.2 THOUGHTS ABOUT ACCULTURATION IN GROUP WORK

Task 4 told the students to: “Compare Mrs. Vaselli’s, Leila’s mother’s, and Amal’s uncle’s way of handling a life in a new country. Write down what the group comes up with and hand in on Skooler [The school’s e-learning platform].” (appendix 7). The groups find that the character of Uncle Joe has an easier time adjusting to a new country. The groups describe him like this:

Amal's uncle puts his religion on the side, trying to blend in with the Aussies. It's not that hard for him coping with living in a new country because he doesn't feel like he needs to have his religion, so he thinks it's easier because he wants to be like the Aussies.

When Amal's uncle arrived Australia, he fully turned Australian by changing his name, accent and acting.

All groups recognize the strategy of assimilation. One group brings this a step further, and finds an explanation to the character of uncle Joe’s behavior towards Amal:

[...] Amal’s uncle tried very hard to fit. That’s why he was so stereotyping and skeptical about Amal wearing the hijab fulltime. He thinks that they should assimilate and act like Australians. It is very important for him to ‘fit in’ the society.

The students have used what they read about the character of uncle Joe to learn about the strategy of assimilation.

When discussing the character of Amal's mother, Jamila, the students find that her strategy differs from uncle Joe's. One group describes her like this:

Amal's mother: She was very open about her own culture, but still adjusted to fit in to the Australian society. She gives Amal the freedom to choose if she wants to wear the hijab or not which means that she is open for both the Palestinian and the Australian culture. She could speak a little English but not enough to understand the context of the society. She was actually shocked that she ate hot dogs, especially not hot.

The students recognize that Amal's mother uses the strategy of integrating the two cultures. In addition, they notice that it can be difficult when arriving a new country not mastering the language completely and not understanding the new culture. Another group compares the strategy of Amal's mother to Amal's uncle, stating:

Amal's mother is the opposite of her brother, she wants to keep her culture and religion. She doesn't care about what everybody else thinks about her. [...] She must think it's a challenge adjusting to the new country and how they live because people have prejudice about her. So, it's hard to keep her religion when the other has their own culture.

The group sees that her culture of origin is important to her and that although she wants to adjust, she also wishes to stick to her culture. They see that adjusting to a new culture at the same time as trying to keep some of your own culture can be difficult.

The students describe the strategy of Leila's mother as wanting to stick to her culture of origin:

Leila's mother already wants Leila to quit school and get married. Arriving to a new country didn't affect her way of thinking which role girls are supposed to have.

They see that Leila's mother is not affected by the new culture. Most of the groups agree with this opinion. One group, when describing the strategy of Leila's mother, also express their opinion about the strategy she uses:

She wants to marry her daughter away at an early age. She's religious and wants to keep the traditions going. She hasn't coped with the society in Australia very well.

The students claim that Leila's mother is conserving the culture of origin and that it is difficult for her to adjust to the culture of the hosting country.

By reading about the immigrants in the book, and discussing their strategies in groups, the students have discovered the strategies which Hofstede et al. mention in the acculturation-curve, namely to assimilate, integrate and to stick to the culture of the original country (2010, pp. 384-387). Some of the groups have also reflected upon which strategy they would have chosen themselves if they would move to another country. All students claim they would try to follow the same strategy as Amal's mother, integration, except one. The group with the student who does not choose integration writes:

Three of us wants to be more like Amal's mother, but one of us wants to be like Amal's uncle.

This shows that in the group, the most accepted strategy is to integrate, trying to keep your traditions at the same time as adjusting to the new culture. One group describes this:

All of us would, if we were arriving to a new country, try to keep our Norwegian traditions. Still, blending in to the people and the society is something we would try to do. Somewhere in between.

The person who chose to assimilate did not explain why that strategy was chosen. The interesting part was that no student chose the strategy of sticking to the culture of origin and not adjusting. This shows that they find it important to be able to be a part of the society that they live in, although many of them wanted to keep the Norwegian traditions.

Taking it a bit further, one group described their thoughts on how it must be to move to a new country:

I think that many people that comes to a new country gets lonely. The reasons for this, can be that they can't speak the language or that they miss their home too much. It is especially hard for adults to make new friends. In my opinion, should everyone who comes to a new country learn something about it. They should get some classes, where they can learn the language and something about the culture.

Remember: ‘Sometimes it’s easy to lose faith in people, and sometimes one act of kindness is all it takes to give you hope again’.

Although the answer is written in the first person singular, the answer is based on what the group discussed. The group shows understanding and empathy. They also have thoughts on how important it is to be able to communicate with others in addition to learn about the culture of the hosting country. Barret et al. say that one of the attitudes that build intercultural competence is “being willing to empathise with people who have different cultural affiliations from one’s own” (2014, p. 19).

Immigrant students in the class agreed that it is important to hold on to traditions and culture, but at the same time, learn about the culture in the new country and try to integrate it into becoming your own personal culture.

### 5.3 ANALYZING INDIVIDUAL STUDENTS’ WORK

In the previous chapter the analysis looked at groups of students. This part of the analysis will look at two students’ individual work throughout the project to see how the chosen students have developed during the project. When selecting the two students, I have chosen students who handed in all the tasks, who have written more thoroughly than others, and who’s English is of such a character that they are capable of expressing their thoughts freely. What thoughts of stereotyping and acculturation have the book and the project promoted? Do the students show the traits of an interculturalist; empathy, tolerance, respect and open-mindedness? Further, an additional student has volunteered to express her thoughts on the character of Amal and these thoughts will also be discussed.

#### 5.3.1 STUDENT NUMBER ONE

The student answered Task 1 (appendix 1) before starting to read the book. This is where the students express their opinion about hijab in school, what they think people, who consider themselves Norwegian, expect of immigrants to Norway, and what immigrants to Norway think is important to do when migrating to a new country. Her answers (appendix 13) to Task 1 show that the student already from the beginning is a tolerant person, by accepting people to be different and admitting Muslims the right to wear hijab in school. We also see that she respects other people although they may be different from herself. She tries to see both sides, both the politicians trying to deny Muslims wearing hijab, and

Muslims choosing to wear hijab, and claims that Muslims should have the right to wear hijab in school because:

Some religions do have rules, in this case it's Islam, that tells women to wear hijabs. I understand why the politicians wants them to stop wearing hijabs in school, but in their religion it's written in the Koran that woman will wear hijabs. So in their eyes they are just doing what they feel they need to do.

This shows that she is open-minded and tolerant to things that are different, which according to Chen and Starosta are some of the traits which define an interculturalist (Sercu, 2010, p. 21). Furthermore, the student claims that people in Norway expect those coming to Norway to

[...] adjust to our believes and our religion, even though their religions or believes are different. Basically, the majority wants the minority to convert into our living. I also think that the majority expect that they learn our language and speak it.

This shows that she thinks that there are expectations to immigrants, and that people who consider themselves Norwegian want immigrants to change. She believes that immigrants first of all think about safety and getting a firm foundation in life:

For the minority it may be important to get a stabil home for their family, and also getting their children in school. Another thing I think is important to them is not being thrown out of the country that they have escaped or moved to.

In the following quote, we see that she that she appreciates kindness and tolerance. Her attitude includes: "respecting people who have different cultural affiliations from one's own", and "being willing to empathise with people who have different cultural affiliations from one's own" (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19). When answering what she thinks about Mr. Pearse's decision to let Amal pray in a storage room, she thinks that he is kind and respectful. Nevertheless, she writes:

However, letting her pray in a storage room? Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that she should have gotten a dedicated room to pray. I think that she at least could have gotten an available classroom. I think that Muslims should get to pray in school, if that's what they want to.



Although she admits Muslims the right to pray in school, she shows her ability to see different points of view. On the one side, admitting students to pray in school and keep up with their culture, and on the other side, stating that the school in *Does My Head Look Big in This?* is a secular area where we are all the same, so prayer is not a part of the school. In addition, she sees that when the school does not have experience with Muslim students, it is difficult for the principal to understand why the character of Amal wishes to wear a hijab. She writes:

I also get that the school might not 'want' them to pray. I interpret this as if the school haven't had any Muslims to wear the hijabs, so they might not know how to deal with it.

During the project, the students were told to note down incidents of stereotyping or discrimination in the book. The student reacts to people making fun of others, due to their religion and being different. She writes:

In the start of chapter eleven, I found a situation of discrimination and stereotyping. Amal stood in the girl's bathroom to clean her feet before she prayed, then Tia and Rita came in, and Tia said 'you actually wash your feet? Just so you can pray?' This is the sentence I reacted on, because Tia is making fun of Amal's tradition to wash her feet before praying which is completely right to do in her religion. Tia is not just judging, stereotyping, but she is also discriminating Amal and her beliefs/religion.

The student recognizes stereotyping in the book. She also expresses her thoughts on terrorism:

I think terrorism is stupid, why do people do these horrible things against other. In all the cases I have read, it seems like those who wrote the article, blames the whole religion for the terror. They don't write that the people/group who did the terrorism had done it, they almost every time blame it on the religion. An example, from the book the girl who asked Amal to speak up for what had happened in Bali (the terror) for her "people". So, for me it seems like this girl thinks that all Muslims are alike, and that all are terrorists. I don't understand what makes people do terror. How can they do this to other persons? I don't get it. I don't get how people want to hurt other. How can somebody be so against the humanity, that they blow up a building

or drive a car in the streets that hits and kills people. I also don't understand how they mean that what they have done, is the right thing to do. For me, killing is wrong, and I know many thousands of other agrees with me. So, as you may have already noticed, I am against terrorism. I do not think that terrorism is ok, in fact I think it is horrible.

Her text shows that she may well support and respect others' perspectives, but she also draws limits as to what she can accept. This shows that there are limits to what can be accepted. She shows that she reflects upon what is happening in the world, and also reflects upon the story of the book.

In the end of the project, the students were given two major tasks. One of them was to read a series of newspaper articles about a girl, Faten, in hijab leading a television program, called *Faten tar valget*, in Norway. Many in Norway reacted to this and tried to stop it from happening. The task related to this incident was for the students to write an article stating their opinion on the issue. Through her text, the student shows that she accepts women wearing hijab. She writes:

I don't really care about if she is wearing a hijab or not. She is just following what she believes, and I completely understand that.

Later, she reflects on the focus on religion and cultures. In her opinion, people focus too much on religion instead of focusing on the individual. She sees that there is prejudice when it comes to religion and that people tend to stereotype when it comes to religion. She writes:

I believe we think too much about cultures and religions. We have all different religions, and different opinions about other religions. Somehow, we think it's ok to hate on other religion. When people hate on our religion, then it's supposed to be wrong?

Through her text, she shows that she has the attitude described by Barrett et al. as "respecting people who have different cultural affiliations from one's own" (2014, p.19). In her quote, she brings up the issue of ethnocentrism, stating that we tend to do dislike other religions and think it is ok, but that when other people hate our religion, then it is wrong.

In addition, the student admires Faten for standing up for her beliefs, her human rights and her identity:

The world is so obsessed with dragging people down and making them feel bad about their religion. Faten, on the other hand, stands up. She is not afraid to show who she is, including her hijab.

Choosing a topic for a presentation inspired by the book, the student decided on the topic *Racism and discrimination*. In the presentation, she talked about racism through history, mentioning segregation between white and black people in the southern states in the USA and about the holocaust during the Second World War. In her opinion, we have learnt through history, but we still have much to learn. In addition, she distinguishes between people who think racism is a problem and those who do not. She sees that it can be harder for people who have not been discriminated against to understand how it feels to be discriminated against. During her presentation, she says:

We have certainly become more aware of racism, and on the damages that it has done. Even though we have gotten more aware, we are not close to where we would like to be. There are people who don't think that racism is a problem, and other's do. I believe those who don't get discriminated, don't know how it's like or doesn't think it's such a big problem. I think that all of us have a hope that one day there won't be any type of racism or discrimination in this world. Unfortunately, I don't think it will happen in many decades or even years.

During the project, one of the topics in focus was stereotyping, and in the presentation, the student shows that she has reflected upon the topic, describing what stereotyping is and what her thoughts about stereotyping are. She expresses that she does not think it is correct to jump to conclusions about a person before knowing the person. She says in her presentation:

Both discrimination and racism could be a result of stereotyping. We have learned by this book that stereotyping is to have an opinion about a person or religion before knowing them. For an example, if someone has a bad day and you see that person, you may think certain things about their personalities. You have to let them get a chance to show who they are. My point is that, there are so much we don't know

about people. So, jumping to conclusions about others isn't the best thing to do, especially if you don't know the person.

Through her presentation she gives examples of stereotyping in *Does My Head Look Big in This?*. The first example she mentions is not in relationship to religion or nationality, but something which she can easily relate to:

For an example in chapter eight (page 83), Simone, Eileen and Amal goes to the café. Simone says "shit, everyone here is so skinny" and I interpret that as stereotyping. What Simone didn't think about is that those who were "so skinny" may have problems which have made them skinny. Maybe they have difficulties with putting on weight? They might have anorexia or bulimia.

By finding examples of stereotyping which she is familiar with in her daily life, she can also relate to how it is when people stereotype and can easier empathize with people being stereotyped due to religion, race or nationality.

There is also an example of stereotyping due to religion which she comments on. She writes:

Also in chapter thirty (page 250), Amal gets asked by the school captain, Lara, if she would be willing to hold a speech on the topics Islam and terrorism. Prior to this, a nightclub in Bali was bombed by a group of Muslims. I also interpret this as stereotyping, because Lara connected Amal to this terror just because she has the same religion as the terrorists. It doesn't mean that Amal supports this. In fact, she throws Lara a huge speech on how people can have the same religion but they don't support each other in their actions.

She expresses that when people believe that just because a person is a Muslim, the person understands the terrorist, they are stereotyping. When reading *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, she claims that only knowing that a person is a Muslim is not enough evidence for knowing what the person thinks about terrorism.

When reflecting upon what she has read about stereotyping in the book, she relates stereotyping to the *golden rule*, saying that people should treat others the same way as they would like to be treated. By saying this, she shows empathy, which Barrett et al. describe as

“the ability to understand and respond to other people’s thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings” (2014, p. 20). She says:

Somehow, we think it’s ok to have prejudice and be discriminating towards others? But as soon as we are the ones getting discriminated it’s supposed to not be okay? Why is it that we feel the need to descend others just so we look better? It doesn’t help you in any way shape or form, because all you do is hurting people. The golden rule says ‘Don’t do against others what you don’t want others doing to you’. I think this rule fits perfectly with what I just said, because if you are the one discriminating, why should you get treated better when you deserve just the same? (appendix 18).

This student showed traits of intercultural competence already from the beginning of the project. This we could see in her first task, allowing women to wear hijab in school, and that she has an understanding of how life can be for refugees who come to Norway (appendix 13). She showed open-mindedness, tolerance, respect and empathy during the project in her writing of texts, in discussions in class and in her presentation. Through the project, she has discussed and focused on areas as stereotyping, racism, discriminations and ethnocentrism. There has also been an increase in her knowledge about religion and about the way in which people interact. She concludes in her presentation:

This book taught me that being yourself and standing up for your beliefs isn’t always easy. It requires courage and support from those around you. I have also learned more on how strong my opinions were on certain topics, like racism. I am very happy that we got the opportunity to read this book.

This shows that the student has increased her intercultural competence through reading the book and reflecting on certain parts of the book. She has also developed a more positive self-image and has become aware that she actually has opinions of her own.

### 5.3.2 STUDENT NUMBER TWO

When starting the project, this student also said that it was perfectly ok for girls to wear hijab in school. He also gives a reason:

they are not disturbing anybody while they’re learning and receiving information from the teacher. Also, in school the Christians are celebrating their religious

holidays like Christmas and Easter, so everyone else should be allowed to show which religion they are from.

This shows that the student is reflecting upon the right to show which religion one has. He claims that people who have a religion other than the main religion in Norway, Christianity, should have the same rights as the Christians. He accepts and respect other religions, having the attitude “respecting people who have different cultural affiliations from one’s own” (2014, p. 19) which according to Barrett et al. is a component of intercultural competence.

When answering to what the majority of the people in Norway expects of immigrants to Norway, he shows tolerance. He focuses on what is generally assumed to be the original culture of Norwegians and their language, saying:

I think that the majority expect that the minority is going to bring a lot of their own culture, and use their language while they are in Norway. Obviously the minority doesn't have Norwegian as their first language so they will be bad at it, but I think the majority expect that.

It is interesting that this student argues that immigrants’ first focus is finding shelter and to cover other basic needs for survival. Thereafter, they will look for schooling and jobs.

I think that the minority are probably going to stick together and firstly find some shelter and other essentials when they arrive in a new country. After that they will focus on finding schools and jobs in order to make a stabile living.

This student, just like the previous student, equals immigrant with refugee. This could also be because the project was done a short time after a period of many refugees coming to Norway.

When reflecting upon the principal's attitude towards Amal wearing the hijab, he finds that the principal, Ms. Welsh, is negative about the outfit, and he says that Amal should be allowed to wear the hijab. He argues that living in a modern society, which is more globalized than ever, it should be allowed, writing:

Even though the school had a long history with students wearing the school uniform without anything more or less than it, they still live in a modern society where it should be allowed.

The student's answer shows that in a modern society, people travel and move from one country to another. Customs and traditions are no longer homogeneous and most of us live in multicultural societies, which forces us to think differently than we used to do. Although Amal's school in *Does My Head Look Big in This?* has a tradition of wearing a school uniform, the school has to open up for different cultures with different values.

Regarding praying in school, the student shows that although he tries to be open-minded and tolerant, it is not the same thing as accepting and saying yes to everything. Both sides should be able to adjust. He writes:

I think that it was nice of Mr. Pearse to let Amal pray in the storage room. He obviously respects her religion, and her decision to wear the hijab at McCleans. The thing is though she used to pray at home after school before she started at McCleans, so I just think it's a bit much to ask for when she is at school where she is supposed to learn, but she was allowed so it is fine.

He can reflect and be critical about other cultures and has "skills in critically evaluating and making judgments about cultural beliefs, values and practices [...]" (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 20).

This student expresses his opinion about Faten wearing a hijab in the television program *Faten tar valget* by writing an article in the writing task (appendix 9). Through the article, he describes what the program is about, and that people have been criticizing the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation for permitting Faten to wear a hijab when leading a program on national TV. He writes:

I believe that Faten is being brave for standing up to what she believes in after all the controversy, and that she is being helpful by showing what all the big political party in Norway thinks about different topics, but not everybody agrees with me and I do understand why. The arguments about her wearing the hijab on TV are strong and supported by a lot of people, but the discrimination and criticism should be about

the show. At the end of the day I believe that Faten isn't trying to express her religious thoughts. She is simply just trying to understand the politicians thought and opinions.

Through his answer he shows the ability to reflect on other peoples' opinions and their reactions. He is able to see things from different points of view.

When making a presentation on a freely chosen topic influenced by *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, this student chooses the topic of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. He starts by explaining the concepts of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination before he puts the words together and shows how they are connected. He describes stereotyping as

[...]thoughts, set ideas or generalization of a particular group. Stereotyping are based upon almost any type of characteristics, and can be about things like race, ethnicity, gender age or even about what you eat. Stereotypes can be either positive or negative, and not necessary always wrong, but in all cases, it is usually an exaggeration of beliefs of what a group is like. A lot of stereotypes are linked to largely negativity towards a group, but positive stereotypes can also be harmful. For instance, if you think that someone is really good at a certain attribute, then you may limit your thoughts to think that that person is only good at that specific attribute and nothing else. Stereotyping still has its advantages. It's a tool to categorize large amounts of information and make quick decisions.

He continues, defining prejudice:

[...] a pre-judgement which means to have opinions, thoughts, feelings or attitudes about people who are linked to certain types of groups. A prejudice is not based on any experience, but it is to make up an opinion about someone and prejudice someone usually with lack of knowledge about them. Prejudice can be related to lots of different reason, and the most know one is racism

and discrimination:

Discrimination refers to differential treatment and actions towards a group of people due to their membership in a group. Stereotypical belief combined with prejudicial attitudes and emotions can result in discrimination. There are different types of



discrimination, and they can be both intentional and unintentional. Two examples are individual and institutional discrimination. Individual discrimination is discrimination between at two individuals or one individual against a group of people. Institutional discrimination is discrimination which happens by an entire institution or organisation against certain groups in the society.

His definitions of the concepts of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination are thorough and show understanding. He is able to give examples and see that even stereotyping by thinking positively about a person, can be limiting. He connects the three together and says that one can lead to another. When referring to the book, he says:

Both stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination were all things which appeared in the book "Does my head look big in this", and sometimes one thing led to the other. Most of the stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination were based on racial and religious reasons, and all of these things took part in developing Amal throughout the book. At the start Amal was quite scared and self-conscious about beginning at McCleans and to make the decision about wearing the hijab full-time. She expected that people would bring up prejudices and discriminate her. Although throughout the book she grew more confident about herself and her religion. She wanted to represent her religion regardless of what people thought (appendix 23).

The student has reflected upon the concepts of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. He sees how one can lead to the other, and he can recognize incidences of these concepts in *Does My Head Look Big in This?*. One thing that he notices is that several characters in the book have the presumption that Amal has been forced by her parents to start wearing the hijab. He writes:

Ms Walsh was led to believe in the stereotype that Amal was forced to wear the hijab

and

Aunt Mandy was also led to believe that Amal's parents forced Amal to wear the hijab and wasn't really supportive about it (appendix 23).

He recognizes the stereotyped presumption that girls who wear hijab are forced to wear it by their parents or male members of the family. This is a stereotype and an idea which also exists in our own society, and the student has also read about these presumptions in the articles he was given in the preparation material to the written task.

He also recognizes the stereotypical thought that all Muslim are terrorists. He writes about this:

Lara asked Amal to talk about the bombing in Bali, because she thought Amal knew about it and supported the terrorist attack. A lot of kids in the classroom also generalized muslims as terrorists. Some of them shouted 'Those bloody Islamic terrorists! Has to be them!'.

In addition to seeing prejudice about and stereotyping of Muslims by non-Muslims, he notices that also Muslims stereotype Muslims. He sees this in Leila's mom:

Leila's mom thought that the traditions she learned while growing up were the only right way to live as a muslim, and that anyone who disagreed were "bad" muslims. She thought all muslim girls were destined to get married and be housewives, but the thing is that Leila's mom hasn't even read the Koran.

The student understands that all Muslims are not the same and that they do not all have the same opinions. He is "understanding the internal diversity and heterogeneity of all cultural groups" (Barrett et al., 2014, p. 19).

While going through the book, this student has noticed several incidences of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. He notices that some people, when they see a girl with hijab, believe that the girl is forced to wear a hijab. In addition, he reacts to the assumption that Muslims are terrorists. Not only does he notice attitudes and actions against Muslims but sees that Leila's mom has her own thoughts and stereotypes of what a Muslim is like. She finds her way to be the correct way, and those who think differently, are wrong. He shows what Barret et al. call "awareness and understanding of one's own and other people's assumptions, preconceptions, stereotypes, prejudices, and overt and covert discrimination" (2014, p. 19).

In conclusion, he sums it all up, saying:

Prejudice and discrimination are things which caused negativity in Amal's life, and even though Amal got used to it and it helped develop her character, it is something we should avoid. We can use stereotyping in a smart way without causing controversy, and we also have the ability to prevent prejudice and discrimination. Lastly I wanted to show a quote which says: 'Judging a person does not define who they are, it defines who You are'. I think most of you understands the meaning behind it and why it is important. Thanks for listening.

Through all his work, he has shown an attitude to accept people who are different from himself, an ability to empathize with others and knowledge about strategies of acculturation. He has reflected upon intercultural topics and shown personal traits characteristic for an interculturalist, like open-mindedness, tolerance and respect (Sercu, 2010, p. 21-22)

#### 5.4 STUDENT WISHING TO EXPRESS THEIR OPINION ABOUT THE PROJECT

During the project one student has said she had strong feelings about the main character Amal. She was therefore asked to express her feelings about the character of Amal. The student found that Amal was in fact stereotyping other people on a large scale, in addition to prejudicing the people surrounding her. She claims that Amal thinks too much about what other people will say or think, while most people do not care about what she is wearing (appendix 24). Actually, she says that Amal is the one prejudicing and stereotyping the people in her school, she writes:

I think this shows a bit how she put some sort of stereotype over the people at her school, that they would be disgusted or angry or negative, maybe even bully her, just because of her choice to wear a hijab.

The student does discover stereotyping, but lacks the ability to empathize with the character of Amal and see that this is difficult for Amal, and that she is scared. Barrett et al. claim that empathy is "the ability to understand and respond to other people's thoughts, beliefs, values and feelings" (2014, p. 20).

Still, the student empathizes with Tia, a character several students found discriminating and something of a racist. She writes:

She seems to be this normal girl, but she always thinks that everyone means things negatively, as seen when Adam told Amal about how Tia was brought up, Amal didn't even care to listen to it! Of course, she might have had it bad because of it, but that doesn't mean that the person suddenly gets the knowledge. She could have tackled the situation more maturely, she could have given the knowledge that Tia needs to understand her.

The student does not react to the fact that the character of Amal wears hijab in school, and she says that other students do not care if she wears a hijab or not. This shows that she accepts other cultures, but still, she lacks the ability to see how it can be difficult to look or be different than the majority in a society.

Through the project, this student showed that she empathized with the character of Ms. Vaselli and that she was touched and pleased when she read that Ms. Vaselli had been in contact with her son. This shows that this student does have the ability to empathize with others, but it seems like it was harder to empathize with the character of Amal.

The student did not like the book, she found the plot terrible, but her comments show she has been aware of the topics stereotyping and prejudice which the project wanted to emphasize on. It shows that the book has inspired her to reflect upon the topic and become aware of her opinions.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

During this project the students have become acquainted with several characters of immigrants through the novel *Does My Head Look Big in This?* and have been reflecting upon topics which according to Barrett et al. (2014) and Byram (1997) promotes intercultural competence. The students have read about incidences of stereotyping, ethnocentrism and acculturation. They have also discussed what happens in *Does My Head Look Big in This?* and compared it to their own lives and in their society. They have looked at strategies of acculturation, how people can be afraid of prejudice and stereotypes that are also common in their own lives.

Using literature in this process has also helped the students develop their empathy and understanding of other people and cultures. Often in school, there is just not enough time for all the things that one wishes to do. During classes the students enjoyed discussing intercultural topics more than writing about them. At the end of the school year, the students were asked what they had enjoyed the most in their English classes during the year, and what could be improved. Many of the students said that the best was that we did other things than reading in the English textbooks, and that there was more focus on discussing than writing. They also agreed that the book project lasted too many weeks. Therefore, the conclusion is that if the project was to be repeated, it should be shortened, with less tasks, focusing on discussion, and maybe only have the final tasks as written assignments. The outcome in attitudes and awareness would still be the same.

To conclude, I will claim that the novel, *Does My Head Look Big in This?* promotes intercultural competence in class. It is difficult to assess progress among the students, but both Muslim students and the others benefitted from their experiences. It is clear that the project has put intercultural topics on the agenda in class. Some students have become more aware of their opinions and what happens in society. We see this in the conclusion of student number one's presentation, when she says:

This book taught me that being yourself and standing up for your beliefs isn't always easy. It requires courage and support from those around you. I have also learned more on how strong my opinions were on certain topics, like racism. I am very happy that we got the opportunity to read this book.

The project has been successful, and the conclusion is therefore that the novel, *Does My Head Look Big in This?*, has served to promote intercultural competence in the English as a second language classroom.

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# Task 1

Think about these questions and answer according to your opinion. Remember to write YOU think, and not what you think is the correct answer. Your answer is the correct one.

Answer the following questions:

1) Should pupils be allowed to wear hijab in school? Why? Why not?

During this project, we will call immigrants to Norway the minority, and those who consider themselves Norwegian the majority.

2) What expectations do you think the majority has to the minority when arriving to Norway?

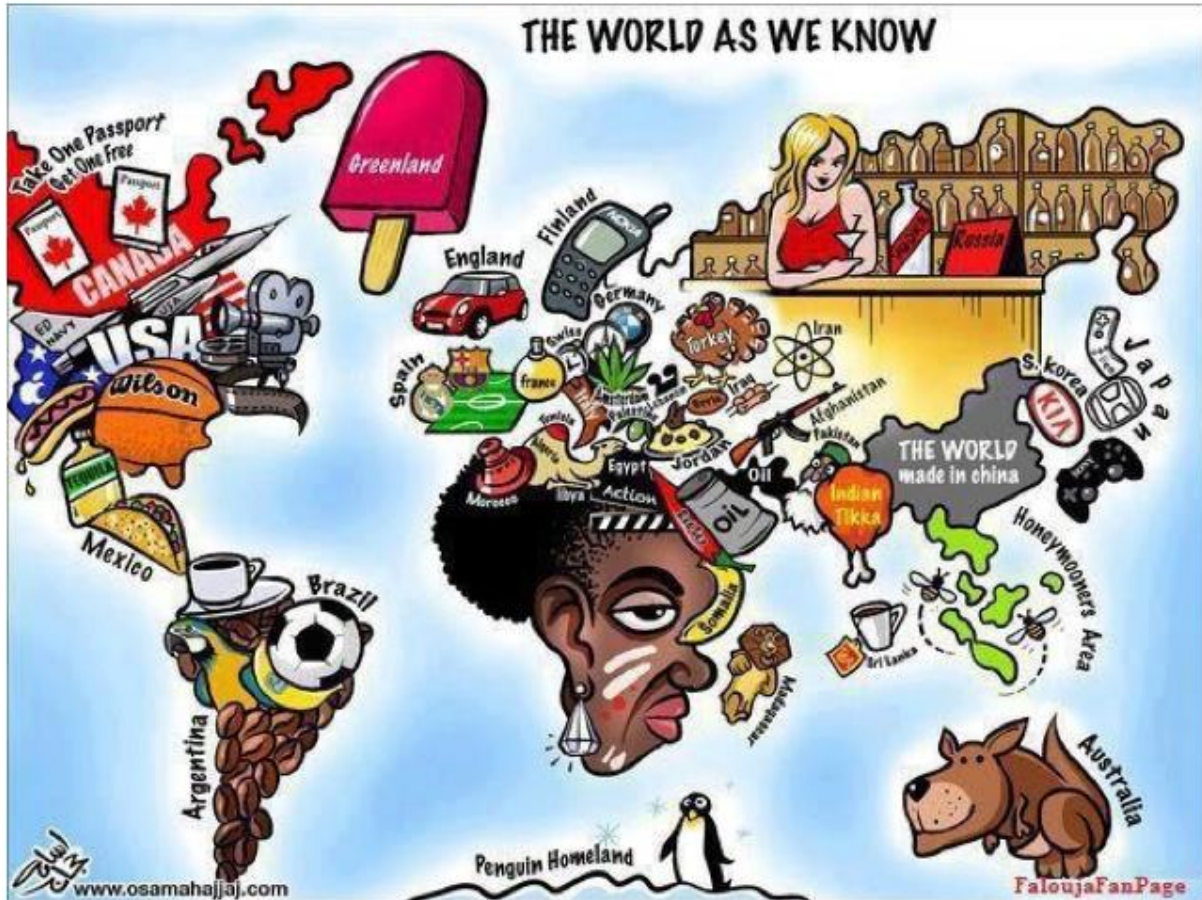
3) What do you think the minority think is important to do when arriving in a new country?

Hand in on Skooler during class.



Appendix 2

Pictures to hang in class:

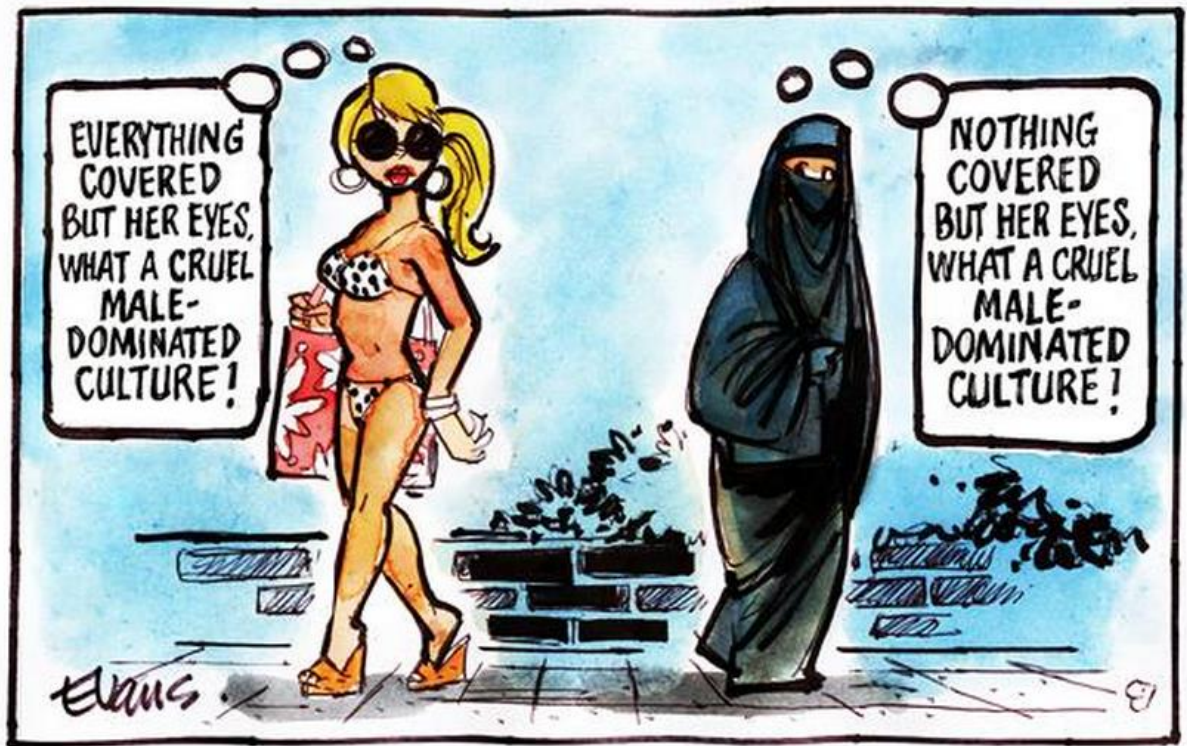


<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/56/32/f2/5632f27c08a3c3b82c3bfb54ef6aa0f8.jpg>

Appendix 3



[http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-So3sC7ck7rl/Tb\\_hib\\_4Cbl/AAAAAAAAADk/LE2\\_kow43os/s1600/ethnocentrism101.jpg](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-So3sC7ck7rl/Tb_hib_4Cbl/AAAAAAAAADk/LE2_kow43os/s1600/ethnocentrism101.jpg)



<http://www.themuslimpost.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/bikini-burkini.png>

## Appendix 5

# Task 2

Discuss the following two questions:

1) What do you think of the principal's attitude when Amal came to ask for permission to wear hijab in school? Explain your opinion.

2) What do you think of Mr. Pearce's decision to let Amal pray in a storage room? Is it ok for Muslims to pray in school?

## Task 3

Discuss the following. Write down your answers and hand in individually on Skooler:

1) What does Amal mean by what she says in the quote:

You don't judge people. We're not a plural, or some big bloc, all acting and feeling the same things. You judge individuals. Anyway, it goes both ways. I've got family friends, who think all Anglos are drunk wife-bashers slumped in front of Springer with a stubby in their hands (2205, p. 143)

2) Are we, in our society, afraid of what other people will think of how we dress or look like?

3) Do we stereotype in other ways in our society? How would you react if a boy came to school wearing make-up or a dress?

4) How would we react if a person, who usually does not wear a hijab, suddenly comes to school wearing one?

5) Is it ok to stereotype? If no, could there still be some occasions where it is ok to stereotype? If yes, are there still some occasions when it is wrong to stereotype?

Appendix 7

## Task 4

Compare Mrs. Vaselli's, Leila's mother's, and Amal's uncle's way of handling a life in a new country.

Write down what the group comes up with, and hand in on Skooler.



## Appendix 8

<https://www.aftenposten.no/amagasinet/i/eVpky/-Faten-Mahdi-Al-Hussaini-22-For-engasjert-til-a-holde-kjeft>



Hvilket norsk parti passer for en ung kvinne som står i konstant spagat mellom to kulturer? Det skal Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini (22) finne ut – direkte på TV.

INGUNN RØREN

OPPDATERT: 15.AUG.2017 09:50

PUBLISERT: 11.AUG.2017 21:15

Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini var bare 19 år da hun braste inn i norsk offentlighet. I august 2014 stilte hun seg opp foran Stortinget, grep mikrofonen foran flere tusen mennesker og [tok et flammende oppgjør med ekstrem islamisme og voldshandlingene til IS](#). Den hijabkledde tenåringsen var sint. «Dere følger ikke islam. Dere følger djevelen!» ropte hun.

Fra den dagen var Faten en offentlig person folk hadde sterke meninger om. Hun ble [hyllet og drapstruet](#), kalt «jævla hore» og heltinne. Truslene gjorde at hun måtte ha politibeskyttelse, men Faten lot seg ikke stanse. Isteden opprettet hun organisasjonen JustUnity, der hun frem til nå har jobbet fulltid med å motarbeide ekstremisme.

Faten mener sterkt og mye, men er helt blank på én ting: hva hun skal stemme i stortingsvalget. Det skal hun finne ut i en ny serie på NRK, *Faten tar valget*, der hun selv er programleder.

– *Nå får vi se deg i en helt ny rolle?*

– Nå kommer Blondie-Faten frem! Det blir så gøy å vise frem en helt annen side av meg enn den alvorlige, seriøse som offentligheten har sett før. Dette blir den Faten vennene mine kjenner, som stiller dumme spørsmål og sier ting jeg garantert kommer til å angre på. Samtidig er dette viktig, fordi det er mange unge som ikke aner hva de skal stemme. Jeg håper å kunne hjelpe dem med å finne ut av det. Ungdom er fremtiden, de må engasjere seg nå for å kunne påvirke hvordan Norge skal bli.

- **[Se video av appellen som høstet jubel foran Stortinget og hylles i sosiale medier her.](#)**



– Jeg blir den første programlederen med hijab på NRK, så jeg vet jo at det blir en del oppmerksomhet rundt det, sier Faten.

Stein Bjørge

FAKTA: FATEN MAHDI AL-HUSSAINI (22)

– **Jeg står i konstant spagat**

– *Kommer det til å bli bråk igjen?*



– Uten tvil, men jeg står i det. Jeg kommer til å få kritikk fordi jeg håndhilser på menn, fordi jeg stikker meg frem, fordi jeg går med hijab, fordi jeg mener mye. Jeg er for norsk for minoritetsmiljøene og for mye utlending for det norske miljøet, jeg passer ikke helt inn noen steder. Jeg står i konstant spagat mellom to svært ulike kulturer, og det er mange som meg. Finnes det noe parti som kan representere en som meg? Det skal jeg finne ut gjennom denne serien.

– *Hvordan skal du gjøre det?*

– Hver episode skal ta for seg en sak eller et tema som mange unge er opptatt av; miljø, integrering, forsvar og utdanning. Jeg skal møte folk som er glødende opptatt av ting jeg kanskje ikke kan så mye om, i tillegg skal jeg møte alle partilederne. Etterpå tar jeg en prat med Fredrik Solvang, NRKs ekspert på politikk, så skal han forklare meg mer om forskjellen på hva de ulike partiene mener.



Det verste Faten vet, er vage politikere som snakker rundt grøten. - Jeg vil ha klare svar, med ord jeg og andre ungdommer forstår, sier hun.

Stein Bjørge

– *Hva engasjerer deg mest politisk?*

– Integrering. Her har alle partiene mye å gå på, mener jeg. Det er mange av dem som har vært lenge i Norge som det ikke går så bra med. Mine foreldre burde ha fått bedre integreringstilbud da de kom hit fra Irak på 90-tallet. Noe av det viktigste som kan gjøres, er å la de høyt

utdannede flyktningene som kommer hit, få bruke kompetansen sin, få være en ressurs istedenfor en utgiftspost.

– *Og minst?*

– Jeg sliter med å engasjere meg skikkelig i miljø. Jeg vet jeg burde det, men jeg tar taxi istedenfor å sykle, jeg kildesorterer ikke nok. Så hvis noen av partiene klarer å få meg oppriktig engasjert i miljøspørsmål, så får de bonus for det!

### Første NRK-programleder med hijab

– *Hva sier familien din til at du stikker deg frem i offentligheten igjen etter alt bråket sist?*

– De støtter meg, men er spente på hvordan dette vil bli. De vet at de ikke kan stoppe meg, jeg er altfor engasjert til å holde kjeft om hva jeg mener. Pappa pleier å si «Jeg sier nei, men jeg vet jo at du kommer til å gjøre det likevel». Jeg blir den første programlederen med hijab på NRK, så jeg vet jo at det blir en del oppmerksomhet rundt det.

– *Hva mener du om barnehijab-debatten som har rast i det siste?*

– Jeg har selv brukt hijab siden jeg var åtte år. Det var mitt valg, jeg syntes hijab var så fint på mamma og ville ha det selv. Nå er den blitt en del av identiteten min. Jeg er sterkt i mot et forbud, men også sterkt i mot barnehijab og tvang. All bruk av hijab må være frivillig.

<https://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/i/82BqA/Hijab-klagestorm-mot-NRK-far-kringkastingssjefen-til-a-reagere-kraftig--Jeg-blir-opprort-og-lei-meg>

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**Hijab-klagestorm mot NRK får kringkastingssjefen til å reagere kraftig: – Jeg blir opprørt og lei meg.**

ROBERT GJERDE

OPPDATERT: 21.AUG.2017 11:26

PUBLISERT: 20.AUG.2017 19:13



Kringkastingssjef Thor Gjermund Eriksen forteller at han reagerer sterkt på klagestormen NRK har fått i forbindelse med «Faten tar valget», der programlederen bruker hijab.FOTO: Terje Pedersen, NTB scanpix

## **Kringkastingrådet har mottatt over 3000 klager på at Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini får bruke hijab i NRKs valgprogram for unge.**

– Jeg blir både veldig opprørt og ganske lei meg. De siste dagene har vi fått inn over 3000 klager, og i tillegg mottar vi e-poster som du nesten ikke kan ha på trykk, forteller en lei Thor Gjermund Eriksen.

– Det utløses av at en ung, norsk, muslimsk jente er synlig på den offentlige arenaen. Jeg ser at det er sterke og mørke krefter som ønsker at muslimsk ungdom ikke skal være synlig, sier Eriksen.

Flertallet av klagene trekker inn en sak fra 2013, da NRK-programleder Siv Kristin Sællmann ikke fikk bruke kors på TV som nyhetsreporter. Kringkastingssjefen beskriver innholdet i mange av e-

postene som hatefulle. Han sier at mange beskylder NRK for å ville fjerne kristne symboler fra TV-skjermen.

### **Det synes Thor Gjermund Eriksen er en absurd anklage.**

– Nyhetsopplesere skal være nøytrale og ikke stå i veien for nyhetene. Dette har ingenting med diskusjonen om hvorvidt nyhetsopplesere kan bruke kors, hijab eller en grønn lue, sier Eriksen.

FAKTA: «FATEN TAR VALGET»



Kulturminister Linda Hofstad Helleland (H) mener at diskusjonen om hijab på TV går rett inn i verdidebatten vi har hatt de siste ukene.

VALENTIN FLAURAUD, TT / NTB scanpix

### **– Går rett inn i verdidebatten**

Også kulturminister Linda Hofstad Helleland synes det er trist å se de sterke reaksjonene, spesielt fordi det kan svekke debatten.

– Vi vet at mange vegrer seg for å delta i den offentlige samtalen fordi de er blitt møtt med hetsende, sjikanerende eller trakasserende ytringer. Dette gjør at viktige stemmer stilner, sier Helleland.

Hun støtter NRK i å slippe til Al-Hussaini med på TV med hijab og tar avstand fra de hatefulle ytringene.

– Dette går rett inn i verdidebatten vi har hatt de siste ukene. Vi må tørre å stå opp for det vi tror på, så lenge det er innenfor lovlighetens grenser, slik som Al-Hussaini gjør.

### **Nest flest klager**

[Klagestormen mot NRK begynte torsdag](#), og Kringkastingsrådet fikk inn over 1000 klager det første døgnet. Klagen kommer fortsatt, og det er til nå den saken NRK har fått inn nest flest klager om, rett bak intervjuet Fredrik Skavlan gjorde med Jimmie Åkesson i Sverigedemokraterna i 2015. Da fikk de inn 3600 klager.

Thor Gjermund Eriksen mener det er latterlig at mange av klagerne mener NRK prøver å fjerne de kristne symbolene og verdiene. Senest søndag ble det sendt gudstjeneste på radio, forteller han.

– *Faten tar valget* er ikke et religiøst program, men et valgprogram som skal oppfordre unge til å delta. Av enkelte blir det oppfattet som et program som skal skyve norske kulturer og verdier til side. Ingen har sett programmet ennå, men mange er alltid på vakt mot at noen som tilhører en annen religion, skal synes i den offentlige debatten.

Etikkredaktør i NRK, Per Arne Kalbakk, [fortalte til Medier24](#) tidligere denne uken at han ser at slike saker vekker følelser hos folk.

– Vi ser også at det er en del nettsider, blant annet Document.no, som har lagt ut en sak med lenke til Kringkastingsrådet klageskjema. Disse er mye delt. Det bidrar selvfølgelig til et høyt klagetall, sier han.



Arild Grande (Ap) i familie- og kulturkomiteen synes det er veldig trist at NRK mottar så sterke reaksjoner på at Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini bruker hijab på TV.

Terje Bendiksby, NTB scanpix

### – **Jeg hadde håpet at vi var kommet lenger**

Arild Grande (Ap) i familie- og kulturkomiteen på Stortinget synes det er veldig trist å se reaksjonene.

– Det virker jo nærmest organisert. Jeg hadde håpet at vi var kommet lenger, og at det var rom for folk med ulike religiøse og kulturelle preferanser på TV.

Mistanken om at dette er organisert, begrunner han med at klagen kommer så samlet og på så kort tid.

– Noen vil dra opp et konfliktbilde som jeg ikke føler det er grunnlag for. At det kommer så mange klager på så kort tid, er overraskende. Det er vanskelig for meg å vite hvem som eventuelt står bak, men her er det noen som ser sitt snitt til å sette opp motsetninger mellom religioner, sier Grande.

Han legger til at han har et inntrykk av at et overveldende flertall i Norge synes at dette er en fin utvikling. Han mener også at det er en logisk brist når klagen trekker frem saken med korset fra 2013.

– En sak handler om et nyhetsanker som representerer NRK og skal være objektiv, den andre saken handler om et program der programlederen kun representerer seg selv.

Geir Bekkevold (KrF) sier han synes det er helt fint med en programleder med hijab og at han gleder seg til å se programmet.

Bekkevold var uenig i NRKs «korsnekt» for en nyhetsjournalist.

– Jeg forventer, og er trygg på, at NRK også ville ment det var ok med kors for en annen i tilsvarende rolle som Faten – altså som seg selv!

**– Det oppleves som at NRK sier nei til et lite kors og ja til en svært synlig hijab**

Espen Ottosen i Norsk Luthers Misjonssamband forstår at folk reagerer i saken.

– Jeg tror dette oppleves veldig symbolsk av mange. Det oppleves som at NRK sier nei til et lite kors og ja til en svært synlig hijab, og da trykker du på følelser. Folk klarer ikke å forholde seg saklig og avdempet, dessverre.

Selv understreker Ottosen at han ser forskjellen mellom at et nyhetsanker ikke får gå med kors og at Al-Hussaini får gå med hijab i *Faten tar valget*, men han mener det er forståelig at folk ser dette i sammenheng.

Det er også en forskjell på å ha et kors rundt halsen og å bruke hijab, mener Ottosen.

– Det handler om synligheten, men hijab er også et mye mer omstridt plagg enn et kors. Et kors kan brukes av alle kristne. En hijab signaliserer, litt avhengig av hvem du spør, et sterkt tradisjonsbevisst islam.





22 år gamle Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini skal lede serien «Faten tar valget» på NRK. Der skal hun finne et politisk parti som passer for henne.

Stein J. Bjørge

## Medhold fra Likestillingsombudet

I denne saken ble NRK også klaget inn til Likestillingsombudet, men de ga NRK medhold, [skriver VG](#). Grunnen er, som både Grande og Eriksen påpeker, at det er snakk om to ulike programlederroller.

Thor Gjermund Eriksen synes også at reaksjonene er overraskende i lys av at Iman Meskini brukte hijab i rollen som Sana i *Skam*.

– Er det virkelig slik at vi skal regne med at dette er kontroversielt? Det er jo helt utrolig, i så fall. Men vi kan ikke slutte likevel. Det er en del av vårt allmennkringkasteroppdrag å vise det flerkulturelle. Det skal vi fortsette med.

<https://www.aftenposten.no/kultur/i/223El/Hijab-striden-rundt-NRK--Tanken-om-at-hijab-er-undertrykkende-far-folk-til-a-reagere>

## Hijab-striden rundt NRK: – Tanken om at hijab er undertrykkende, får folk til å reagere

ANDERS VEBERG





31. august er det premiere på «Faten tar valget» på NRK1. 10 dager før det har kanalen mottatt over 3500 klager på at programleder Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini bruker hijab. FOTO: Bjørge, Stein

### «Faten tar valget» har nå ført til klagererekord i NRK.

– Det måtte altså en hijab til for å få det politiske topplaget til å kaste seg inn i en debatt rundt en sak i Kringkastingsrådet, sier Elin Ørjasæter.

Hun sitter selv i Kringkastingsrådet, og er blant dem som reagerer på uttalelsene til kringkastingssjef Thor Gjermund Eriksen, kulturminister Linda Hofstad Helleland (H) og andre politikere søndag kveld.

– Jeg noterer at kringkastingssjefen uttaler at 3500 klager til rådet representerer «mørke krefter» og at disse folkenes argumenter er «latterlige», sier Ørjasæter, som også reagerer på at politikere fordømmer klagen.

– Når det gjelder selve saken, synes jeg at det er vanlig folkeskikk å lese klagen før man uttaler seg om dem, sier Ørjasæter.

### Hijab er blitt vanligere

Bruk av hijab har satt sinnene i kok også tidligere. Og det er blitt Appendix

vanligere med hijab de siste tiårene, forteller Berit Thorbjørnsrud. Hun er professor i Midtøsten-studier ved Universitetet i Oslo (UiO).

Hun sier at det er mange grunner til å bruke hijab i dag.

– Én ting er felles, og det er ønsket om å uttrykke en muslimsk identitet. Det er ofte tanken om at hijab er undertrykkende som får folk til å reagere, sier Thorbjørnsrud.

– Generelt ser vi en økning i antiislamske holdninger som er knyttet til kvinner og undertrykkelse, forklarer Thorbjørnsrud.



Berit Thorbjørnsrud er professor i Midtøsten-studier ved Universitetet i Oslo (UiO). Hun sier at det er mange grunner til at kvinner bruker hijab i dag.

Universitetet i Oslo

Thorbjørnsrud, som selv ikke ser problemer med at Al-Hussaini bruker hijab på TV, forteller at hijabens symboltyngde har endret seg mye gjennom årene. I dag ser vi en videreføring av «den moderne hijaben» som dukket opp i Midtøsten på 70- og 80-tallet. Flere kvinner tok høyere utdanning, og brukte hodeplagget som en reaksjon mot motepress.

Det, sammen med en ny islamistisk ideologi, bidro til å gjøre den nye hijaben til et nytt og sterkt symbol.

### **Klagerekord til NRK**

[Kringkastingssjefen sier at](#) han blir både opprørt og lei seg når han ser klagestormen NRK har mottatt de siste dagene.

Kanalen har tatt imot [over 3500 klager](#) på at Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini bruker hijab i programmet *Faten tar valget*. Det ligger dermed an til å bli den saken Kringkastingsrådet har fått mest klager på noen gang.



Elin Ørjasæter sitter selv i Kringkastingsrådet. Hun reagerer på at kringkastingssjefen blir oppgitt over klagene i forbindelse med «Faten tar valget».

Rolf Øhman

## Listhaug om hijab-saken: – Forstår at folk reagerer

<https://www.aftenposten.no/norge/politikk/i/RWrVx/Listhaug-om-hijab-saken--Forstar-at-folk-reagerer>

ALF OLE ASK JOURNALIST

OPPDATERT: 22.AUG.2017 11:48

PUBLISERT: 22.AUG.2017 11:32



Statsråd Sylvi Listhaug FOTO: Gorm Kallestad / NTB scanpix



FOTO: Julia Naglestad / NRK

**«Jeg forstår at folk reagerer på at en nyhetsanker hos NRK blir nektet å bruke kors, mens man lar en programleder bruke hijab», skriver statsråd Sylvi Listhaug på Facebook.**

Striden rundt programleder Faten Mahdi al-Hussainis bruk av hijab i et av NRKs valgprogrammer har vakt sterke reaksjoner. I en kommentar i Aftenposten [etterlyser politisk redaktør Trine Eilertsen](#) integreringsminister Sylvi Listhaugs reaksjon.

– Flere av dem som hater at Faten Mahdi al-Hussaini får delta i denne NRK-serien, oppfordrer nettopp integreringsminister Sylvi Listhaug til å «reagere» overfor NRK, skriver politisk redaktør Trine Eilertsen i dagens Aftenposten.

### **Listhaug: Faten er først og fremst en jente**

– Skulle Listhaug gå ut mot haterne og forsvare NRK og Faten Mahdi al-Hussaini i denne saken, ville hun ha markert en kjærkommen grense i integreringsdebatten, konkluderer Eilertsen.

Aftenposten har bedt Listhaug om en kommentar. Hennes politiske rådgiver Espen Teigen sendte den samme oppdateringen som statsråden tirsdag morgen la ut på sin Facebook-side.

Her skriver hun:

**«Jeg ser at Trine Eilertsen i Aftenposten etterlyser meg. Jeg mener vi må behandle hverandre med respekt selv om vi er uenige i sak. Det er ikke akseptabelt at unge jenter får hatmeldinger og blir trakassert for å ha på hijab. Uansett hva hun har på hodet, eller hvilke uttalelser hun har kommet med før, er Faten først og fremst en jente.»**



Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini leder programmet Faten tar valget på NRK.

Terje Pedersen / NTB scanpix

### **Forstår reaksjonene**

«Jeg forstår at folk reagerer på at en nyhetsanker hos NRK blir nektet å bruke kors, mens man lar en programleder bruke hijab. Som politiker er det ikke min oppgave å styre NRK», fortsetter Listhaug. Hun avslutter slik:

«Hijab skaper sterke følelser hos mange fordi mange oppfatter at det er et kvinneundertrykkende plagg. Det er flere sekulære muslimer som har tatt kontakt med oss og gitt beskjed om at dette ikke representerer deres verdier. Jeg er mot barnehijab, niqab og burka, og mener det skal forbys. Det betyr ikke at hatmeldinger er greit. La oss holde oss saklige, så vil vi vinne denne debatten til slutt og sørge for at vi får forbud mot disse kvinneundertrykkende plaggene. Ha en riktig fin dag!»

### **Ikke flere kommentarer**

Aftenposten har forsøkt å få en utfyllende kommentar fra Listhaug, blant

annet svar på spørsmålet om det ikke er forskjell på dem som skal formidle nyheter og andre programledere i NRK, slik både institusjonen selv og diskrimineringsombudet har pekt på.

Men politisk rådgiver Teigen skriver i en sms at hun i svaret skriver «at det som politiker ikke er hennes oppgave å styre NRK.»

Teigen skriver også at dette «er nok hennes kommentar i første runde i denne saken.»



# Writing Task.

You have read various newspaper articles discussing the issue that Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini is going to be leading a program about what to vote in the Norwegian State Election, on the Norwegian broadcasting channel NRK, wearing a hijab.

Write your own entry in the newspaper where you state your opinion on the matter, and explain why you think the way you do. You may also express doubt in knowing what is right or show that there are different points of views on the matter. No matter what your view is, it is important to use good arguments, and to show that you have reflected upon the matter.



The text should contain 300-500 words.

Header: your name, the name of your teacher and the date

Footer: page number of total pages

Text size: 14

Font: Times New Roman

# Presentation

You have now read the book *Does My Head Look Big in This?*. Reflect upon what you have read, and choose a topic that you would like to present to your classmates. The presentation should:

- Be inspired by the book
- Refer to quotes in the book.
- Include in what way it affected you.
- Show how the topic can be related to our own world/life

Format:

- A PowerPoint presentation
- The oral part should last 5-10 minutes
- A script for the presentation should be written, and handed in with the PowerPoint on skooler.
- Make keywords to use during the presentation, or have the keywords on the PowerPoint.

Dates to notice:

Hand in on Skooler: October 17<sup>th</sup>

Be ready to give your presentation: October 20<sup>th</sup>

<https://scoopempire.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/hijab.png>



## Appendix 11

### Groups' answers to Task 3.

#### Group 1:

1. She thinks about how white people thinks about her when she wears hijab like her parents made her and this is like her assumption to how they are always drunk every day and beat up their wives.
2. probably as a society we care about what others think, but individuals are different so there might be some people that don't care.
3. we do stereotype in some ways. It would be weird if some boy came in wearing a dress.
4. some people would think it would be weird at first and other people think that it wouldn't make a difference.
5. no, it's not ok to stereotype.

I think there aren't supposed to be any situation that its ok to stereotype. It's never ok to stereotype.

#### Group 2:

1. Amal means that it's a difference between people and individuals. You shouldn't judge a person out of where it comes from or how they look. For instance, some employers choose their workers based on names and nationalities. Instead, they should mind to look at their proficiencies to see what they can offer.
2. We don't think it's a big problem in our society, but there are certain people who cares about how they look because they feel pressured to use the right clothes to socialize with others. This is probably a bigger problem for girls, but there are some boys who can feel this as well. use the right clothes to socialize use the right clothes to socialize with others. This is probably a bigger problem for girls, but there are some boys who can feel this as well. This uncertainty can lead to psychological problems like anxiety and eating disorders.
3. There is stereotyping in our society. It'd easy for some people to think that boys are better than girls in certain subjects (like P.E for instance). If a boy showed up in a dress and makeup in school, we would all have been surprised. Two of us would have loved it, because he got the courage to do it. It's brave to be yourself. The other two of us think that they

would have made assumptions about him without really knowing him or why he is doing what he does.

4. Is a person who usually does not wear a hijab suddenly comes to school wearing one, we would have been happy for her. If she gets in to her religion and does what she wants to show it we wouldn't make it a big deal out of it.

5. So, we think that there are positive and negative ways of stereotyping. However, it should never be used to offend or hurt people. Thinking that a group of people are nice is what we look at as a positive way of stereotyping.

Group 3:

1. I think that she means that we are not the same. You shouldn't judge people because of their religion.

2. In our society, people are afraid of how they dress, but it is according to the community. Everyone doesn't feel pressure in the same way. We, personally don't care. Some people hide who they are because of different skin colour and background.

3. In our society, boys have an opinion which declares that boys should be stronger than girls, and more physical strong. If a girl beats a boy in something, the other boys make fun of him and tells him that he lost against a girl. People also believe that all muslims are terrorists because IS believe that they are muslims and connected to islam even though they aren't. Some also mean that a person that has a mental disorder is weaker and less clever than a person without a disorder. They are seen as less capable of doing everyday things. If a boy came to school in a dress or wearing makeup, we would probably see it as weird.

4. On this theory we have splitted opinions. Some mean that they are weird and that thee something wrong with them. On the other side, the others mean that it would something we need to be accustomed to, but that it is good that they are themselves and express themselves in their way.

5. We would have reacted, but in a positive way. We would only think that it is a part of their religion and who they are. We would have noticed, but not in a bad way. We would think that they still were the same person just with a hijab covering their hair.

Group 4:

1. Amal means that we should treat everyone the same and don't after sex, culture, skin color, hair color or clothes.
2. Yes, we are afraid of what other people think because most people feel the pressure to look good and some feel that they can't be the fully self because of the society.
3. Yes, we stereotype in other ways in our society like sports, countries and religions.  
If there was a new boy that came to school wearing makeup or a dress, at first I would be a little bit shocked, but after a while I would think it was normal for that person to wear makeup or dresses  
an think it was cool that he dared to be him self. But if I would be a person in our class that we knew well, we would take it as a joke and maybe laugh at first, but then when we realized it wasn't a joke we would accept it and see it as something normal.
4. I would say it depends on their background. If I knew the person was a muslim I wouldn't be shocked, but if it was a person that I believed was very norwegian I would be a little bit confused, but of course respect their choice.
5. I don't think it's okay to sterotype, but it has become as a bad habit for many of us so we do it anyway. I can't find any reasons to sterotype.

#### Group 5

1. I think that she means that we are not the same. You shouldn't judge people because of their religion.
2. In our society, people are afraid of how they dress, but it is according to the community. Everyone doesn't feel the pressure in the same way. We, personally dont care. Some people hide who they are because of different skin colour and background.
3. In our society, boys have an opinion which declares that boys should be stronger than girls, and more physical strong. If a girl beats a boy in something, the other boys make fun of him and tells him that he lost against a girl. People also believe that all muslims are terrorists because IS believe that they are muslims and connected to islam even though they aren't. Some also mean that a person that has a mental disorder is weaker and less clever than a person without a disorder. They are seen as less capable of doing everyday things. If a boy came to school in a dress or wearing makeup, we would probably see it as weird.  
On this theory we have splitted opinions. Some mean that they are weird and that there so methings wrong with them. On the other side, the others mean that it would something we

need to be accustomed to, but that it is good that there are themselves and express themselves in their way.

4. We would have reacted, but in a positive way. We would only think that it is a part of their religion and who they are. We would have noticed, but not in a bad way. We would think that they still were the same person just with a hijab covering their hair.

5. We don't think its okay to stereotype, because everyone is good in their way and we should have equal thoughts about everyone.

Group 6:

1)

It means that it is wrong to judge people by their race or gender. You should know the individual person, to know how someone is.

2)

It depends on the person, and if they have a good self-esteem or not. Girls do often have a worse self-esteem then guys. They have more pressure to look and be perfect. Guys are more pressured to be cool.

3)

Gender roles. We would be surprised, but not mad at the person. Some people get afraid when they see Muslims.

Homosexuals guys are often seen as very feminine, and lesbians are often stereotyped as women with short hair, boyish clothes and masculine hobbies.

4)

We would be surprised, but we would not be mad at the person who decided to wear hijab. We would be more surprised if we did not know the person was Muslim.

5)

No, it is not ok to stereotype. It is ok to stereotype if you keep it for yourself. It is ok to stereotype places. If you for example have been told to not go to a specific street. It is ok to be afraid of the people in that street. It is not ok to be afraid of everyone who comes from the country where the street is.

***This is my personal one, Here I tell my own experiences.***

1) She means not to judge a group of people, but the individual. Like with all this terror in the world, too many say "Oh those Muslims are out killing for their god". That kind of stuff. I have a friend who I have known my entire life. She and her family are Muslim. All of them hate people like IS, they are the kindest people I've met. That an example of why what Amal say is right.

2) Yes.

3) I don't really think I would care. It's just clothes.

4) We would be surprised, but not mad.

5) No. There are no occasions that it is acceptable.

## Appendix 12

1) Amal's uncle puts his religion on the side, trying to blend in with the Aussies. It's not that hard for him coping with living in a new country because he doesn't feel like he needs to have his religion, so he thinks it's easier because he wants to be like the Aussies. Amal's mother is the opposite of her brother, she wants to keep her culture and religion. She doesn't care about what everybody else thinks about her. She doesn't force Amal to follow what the religion says, Amal gets to choose herself. She must think it's a challenge adjusting to the new country and how they live because people have prejudice about her. So, it's hard to keep her religion when the other has their own culture. Leila's mother is very religious, and strict against Leila. She wants to marry Leila away, and she's always mumbles about Leila needing to be a good wife. We think she isn't afraid of blending in with the Aussies because she a bit more Muslim so she uses her culture instead of trying to cope with the new country. Mrs. Vaselli seems very strict in the start, and lonely. The more Amal talks with Mrs. Vaselli, the more she opens up towards Amal and settles down. She was very judging with Amal, having prejudice against her and her religion. She was actually very rude and judging to everyone. When Mrs. Vaselli moved to Australia, she had to leave her family. She came to Australia with her husband, only at 16. She thinks it was harder coping with the new country because she was very young, and moving to a new country so young had difficulties. She didn't have an education so she didn't get a real job. So some thinks it difficult and others don't.

2) Mrs. Vasselli do not want to let of her Greek culture and habits.

Amal's mother tries to be Aussie at work, but when she's home she has a balance between Palestinian and Australian culture.

Leila's mother follows her old culture by trying to marry her daughter away in a young age and make her wear the hijab. It doesn't seem like she does want to or tries get into the Australian culture.

When Amal's uncle arrived Australia, he fully turned Australian by changing his name, accent and acting.

3) Amal's mother kind of blends in and becomes like a person from Australia. But still, she keeps her culture and the traditions as a Muslim. Compared to Leila's mother, Amal's is not very strict. She didn't want Amal to wear the hijab in the beginning, because she was concerned about what people would think of her. Leila's mother already wants Leila to quit school and get married. Arriving to a new country didn't affect her way of thinking which role girls are supposed to have. She also says that Leila can't go to Yasmine's house, because her mother converted to Islam, which for her means, that she is not a real Muslim. We don't think that Yasmine's mother had a hard time coping with Australia, because English is quite similar. We don't think that Amal's uncle had a hard time either because he tries to be as much like an Aussie as possible. Mrs. Vaselli seems a little disappointed. She had a hard time communicating with people because of the language. She ended up having a bad life, and at the end losing her child and husband. She is used to be lonely, so when Amal came to her with the biscuits, she didn't know how to behave.

All of us would, if we were arriving to a new country, try to keep our Norwegian traditions. Still, blending in to the people and the society is something we would try to do. Somewhere in between.

4) Mrs. Vaselli isn't very friendly and misleading. She kind of isolated. Amal's uncle is changing his lifestyle and religion, because he wants to fit in. He dresses like an Aussie and tries to talk like one too. Leila's mother doesn't want to change the way she lived in Turkey. She is very religious. Amal's mother more in the middle and let Amal to do what she wants, but they don't want to stick out. They all have different strategies of coping with living in a new country. Amal's uncle and Leila's mother are opposites. Three of us wants to be more like Amal's mother, but one of us wants to be like Amal's uncle.

5) Mrs. Vaselli: She got married away as a 14-year-old, to her cousin who at the time was 26. She wanted to get married so she grew up faster and could start wearing makeup and high heels. She didn't speak English so she isolated herself at home. She later started a fission and chip store. She still doesn't speak good English, around 50

years later. She is still catholic and she is still praying. She is still a little isolated, but she wants to protect others from doing the things she has experienced herself. Therefore, she doesn't want Amal to start smoking.

Amal's mother: She was very open about her own culture, but still adjusted to fit in to the Australian society. She gives Amal the freedom to choose if she wants to wear the hijab or not which means that she is open for both the Palestinian and the Australian culture. She could speak a little English but not enough to understand the context of the society. She was actually shocked that the ate hot dogs, especially not hot.

Leila's mother: She wanted to marry away Leila. She didn't have education so she is just at home. Following her own culture. She is very overprotective and scared. She wants to have control over every single situation.

Amal's uncle: Uncle Joe wanted to be a real Aussie. He tried to put away his own culture and co-op with the Australian. He was very proud of being a Aussie, and therefore kept several things that indicates that he is Australian.

6) Leila's mother is stricter than the others. She wants to marry her daughter away at an early age. She's religious and wants to keep the traditions going. She hasn't coped with the society in Australia very well.

It was more complicated for Mrs. Vaselli to cope with the new society. She was young, afraid and she could not speak the language. She didn't make many friends, which did make her feel lonely. She got insecure, especially when she lost her children and later her husband. She did pretty much lock herself in her house, ignoring the society.

On the other hand, Amal's uncle tried very hard to fit. That's why he was so stereotyping and skeptical about Amal wearing the hijab fulltime. He thinks that they should assimilate and act like Australians. It is very important for him to "fit in" the society.

I think that many people that comes to a new country gets lonely. The reasons for this, can be that they can't speak the language or that they miss their home too much. It is especially hard for adults to make new friends. In my opinion, should everyone who comes to a new country learn something about it. They should get some classes, where they can learn the



language and something about the culture. Remember: 'Sometimes it's easy to lose faith in people, and sometimes one act of kindness is all it takes to give you hope again.'

## Appendix 13

### Week 34

1. Should pupils be allowed to wear hijab in school? Why? Why not?

- I think that you should be able to choose yourself if you want to use hijab in school. We grow up in different religions that those around us have, and all of the religions are different. Some religions do have rules, in this case it's Islam, that tells women to wear hijabs. I understand why the politicians want them to stop wearing hijabs in school, but in their religion it's written in the Koran that women will wear hijabs. So in their eyes they are just doing what they feel they need to do.

2. What expectations do you think the majority has to the minority when arriving to Norway?

- I think that the majority expects the minority to adjust to our beliefs and our religion, even though their religions or beliefs are different. Basically, the majority wants the minority to convert into our living . I also think that the majority expect that they learn our language and speak it.

3. What do you think the minority think is important to do when arriving in a new country?

- For the minority it may be important to get a stable home for their family, and also getting their children in school. Another thing I think that are important to them is not being thrown out of the country that they have escaped or moved to.

## Appendix 14

### Does my head look big in this?

- 1) What do you think of the principal's decision? Explain your opinion.
  - When the principal says that her and Amal will talk about Amal wearing the hijab later, I interpret this as Ms Walsh says no. Ms Walsh has a negative attitude. I believe so, because she asks Amal these questions about why she wanted to wear the hijab and if she were forced to wear it and why she didn't talk her before school started. It didn't seem like Ms Walsh were happy about Amal's choice to wear the hijab.
  
- 2) What do you think of Mr. Pearse's decision to let Amal pray in a storage room? Is it ok for Muslims to pray in school?
  - I think that Mr. Pearse's decision to let Amal pray is very kind and respectful. However, letting her pray in a storage room? Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that she should have gotten a dedicated room to pray. I think that she at least could have gotten an available classroom. I think that Muslims should get to pray in school, if that's what they want to. I also get that the school might not "want" them to pray. I interpret this as if the school haven't had any Muslims to wear the hijabs, so they might not know how to deal with it.

## Appendix 15

### Does my head look big in this?

- Write down some thoughts about stereotyping or discrimination to what you have read.

After reading the last chapters, I have a few thoughts around stereotyping and discrimination. In chapter eight Simone, Amal and Eileen are going to the café, Simone says "shit, everyone's so skinny" and I interpret that as stereotyping. I believe that, because she "judged" the people there, saying they were skinny. It's not a bad type of stereotyping, but those who were "so skinny" may have problems like anorexia or bulimia or even they might feel the same way as Simone, that they're fat.

An example of discrimination in chapter eight, is when Tia told Simone that she probably spends more on Big Macs than Tia spend on her annual gym membership. I think that this was a very mean thing to say., and if I were in Simone's shoes I would be very sad. I interpret this as discrimination, because of the way Tia approached Simone with this. Tia is putting herself in a better position and descends Simone. Tia is basically saying that Simone is fat, which is discrimination, at least in my opinion.

In the start of chapter eleven, I found a situation of discrimination and stereotyping. Amal stood in the girl's bathroom to clean her feet before she prayed, then Tia and Rita came in, and Tia said " you actually wash your feet? Just so you can pray?". This is the sentence I reacted on, because Tia is making fun of Amal's tradition to wash her feet before praying, which is completely right to do in her religion. Tia is not just judging, stereotyping, but she also discriminating Amal and her beliefs/religion.

## Appendix 16

My thoughts on terrorism.

I think that terrorism is stupid, why do people do these horrible things against other. In all the cases I have read, it seems like those who wrote the article, blames the whole religion for the terror. They don't write that the people/group who did the terrorism had done it, they almost every time blame it on the religion. An example, from the book the girl who asked Amal to speak up for what had happened in Bali (the terror) for her "people". So, for me it seems like this girl thinks that all Muslims are alike, and that all are terrorists. I don't understand what makes people do terror. How can they do this to other persons? I don't get it. I don't get how people want to hurt other. How can somebody be so against the humanity, that they blow up a building or drive a car in the streets that hits and kills people. I also don't understand how they mean that what they have done, is the right thing to do. For me, killing is wrong, and I know many thousands of other agrees with me. So, as you may have already noticed, I am against terrorism. I do not think that terrorism is okay, in fact I think it is very horrible.

## Appendix 17

Just because she wears the hijab, she shouldn't be a host?

The twenty-two-year-old woman Faten Madhi Al-Hussaini, has been called a hero and gotten death threats. Now, she is going to be the host for her own program "Faten tar valget".

There are many who has complained to NRK, the Norwegian broadcasting channel, about this new program "Faten tar valget" that Faten is wearing the hijab. This new program has gotten the most complaints in the history of NRK. They, who complained, brought up that earlier in another program the host were not allowed to wear a cross around her neck. So, why is Faten allowed to wear the hijab?

In my opinion, I don't really care about if she is wearing a hijab or not. She is just following what she believes, and I completely understand that. Why is it that we can't watch a host wearing the hijab, when almost everyone sees a person wearing it every day? What is the problem? The program is not about Faten wearing the hijab, it's about what to vote on the Norwegian election. So, we are not going to focus on Faten or her hijab, we are supposed to watch her figure out what the different parties stands for and which party Faten suits the best.

I believe we think too much about cultures and religions. We have all different religions, and different opinions about other religions. Somehow, we think it's okay to hate on other religion. When people hate on our religion, then it's supposed to be wrong? If a person wants to wear the hijab, let them. It's their choice, and their religion.

I think it's brave of Faten, making this program when she knows she has gotten a lot of death threats. She doesn't care about the negative, she cares about the positive. She cares about people looking up to her, calling her a hero. Just because she wears a hijab, she is not allowed to host a program? We are everyone like her, some of us don't wear the hijab, but we can be hosts. Why couldn't she? Just because she wears the hijab?

If you haven't already figured out, for me it's not a big deal that Faten wears the hijab while being a host. In fact, I think it's great. The world is so obsessed with dragging people down

and making them feel bad about their religion. Faten, on the other hand, stands up. She is not afraid to show who she is, including her hijab.

## Appendix 18

### Racism and discrimination.

Today I'm going to have a presentation on three topics, racism, discrimination and stereotyping. I am going to share my thoughts and opinions on these matters.

Racism is not something we have been born with, it's something we have learned while growing up. Just like riding the bike. Racism is a huge problem in the world, and it has been around for many decades. Earlier in the days racism were harsher than now. You had different buses for "black and white" people. "Black" people could only go in public at one specific time. So, there were big differences between these two races. Another example is in the world war 2, the Jews got hunted down by the Germans and were then put in concentration camps. What for? Just because they have a different religion? So, if anyone has a different religion than you, then it's right to do these things? I don't think so, I think it's great how people find who they really are, and that they are brave enough to be that person. No matter what race you are, which sexuality you are and which religion you belong to, shouldn't be a reason to be discriminated.

We have certainly become more aware of racism, and on the damages that it has done. Even though we have gotten more aware, we are not close to where we would like to be. There are people who don't think that racism is a problem, and other's do. I believe that those who don't get discriminated, don't know how it's like or doesn't think it's such a big problem. I think that all of us have a hope that one day there won't be any type of racism or discrimination in this world. Unfortunately, I don't think it will happen in many decades or even years.

Both discrimination and racism could be a result of stereotyping. We have learned by this book that stereotyping is to have an opinion about a person or religion before knowing them. For an example, if someone has a bad day and you see that person, you may think certain things about their personalities. You have to let them get a chance to show who they are. My point is that, there are so much we don't know about people. So, jumping to conclusions about others isn't the best thing to do, especially if you don't know that person.



For an example in chapter eight (page 83), Simone, Eileen and Amal go to the café. Simone then says “shit, everyone here is so skinny” and I interpret that as stereotyping. What Simone didn’t think about is that those who were “so skinny” may have problems which have made them skinny. Maybe they have difficulties with putting on weight? They might have anorexia or bulimia.

Also in chapter thirty (page 250), Amal gets asked by the school captain, Lara, if she would be willing to hold a speech on the topics Islam and terrorism. Prior to this, a nightclub in Bali was bombed by a group of Muslims. I also interpret this as stereotyping, because Lara connected Amal to this terror just because she has the same religion as the terrorists. It doesn’t mean that Amal supports this. In fact, she throws Lara a huge speech on how people can have the same religion but they don’t support each other in their actions.

In chapter eleven (page 114), I found a situation both of discrimination and stereotyping. Amal stood in the girl’s bathroom to clean her feet before praying. Suddenly Tia and her friends came in, then Tia said “you actually wash your feet? Just so you can pray?”. This was the sentence that I reacted on, because Tia is making fun of Amal’s tradition to wash her feet before praying, which in her religion is the right thing to do.

Somehow, we think it’s okay to have prejudice and be discriminating towards others? But as soon as we are the ones getting discriminated it’s supposed to not be okay? Why is it that we feel the need to descend others just so we look better? It doesn’t help you in any way shape or form, because all you do is hurting people. The golden rule says “Don’t do against others what you don’t want others doing to you”. I think this rule fits perfectly with what I just said, because if you are the one discriminating, why should you get treated better when you deserve just the same?

This book taught me that being yourself and standing up for your beliefs isn’t always easy. It requires courage and support from those around you. I have also learned more on how strong my opinions were on certain topics, like racism. I am very happy that we got the opportunity to read this book.

So, I have now spoken about racism, discrimination and stereotyping. These three topics are shown very clearly in the book, and I feel that they were a part of the theme in the book. That is why I chose to have a presentation on these three topics. I hope my presentation showed you how my opinions about racism, discrimination and stereotyping.

Sources:

Does my head look big in this? Chapter 8, 11 and 30. (20.10.2017)

## Appendix 19

### 1. Should pupils be allowed to wear hijab in school? Why? Why not?

Yes, I think that pupils should be allowed to wear hijab while they are at school.

The reasons why they should be allowed is that they are not disturbing anybody while they're learning and receiving information from the teacher. Also in school the christians are celebrating their religious holidays like christmas and easter, so everyone else should be allowed to show which religion they are from.

### 2. What expectations do you think the majority has to the minority when arriving to Norway?

I think that the majority expect that the minority is going to bring a lot of their own culture, and use their language while they are in Norway. Obviously, the minority doesn't have norwegian as there first language so they will be bad at it, but i think the majority expect that.

### 3. What do you think the minority think is important to do when arriving in a new country?

I think that the minority are probably going to stick together and firstly find some shelter and other essentials when they arrive in a new country. After that they will focus on finding schools and jobs in order to make a stable living.

## Appendix 20

### 1. What do you think of the principal's decision? Tuan

I think that the principal's decision towards Amal wearing the hijab was unfair. She didn't wear it to rebel against the school uniform or something like that. Even though the school had a long history with students wearing the school uniform without anything more or less than it, they still live in a modern society where it should be allowed. She didn't directly say that she couldn't wear it, but her attitude signalled that she didn't want her to wear it.

### 2. What do you think of Mr. Pearse's decision to let Amal pray in a Storage room? Is it ok for muslims to pray in School?

I think that it was nice of Mr. Pearse to let Amal pray in the storage room. He obviously respects her religion, and her decision to wear the hijab at McCleans. The thing is though she used to pray at home after school before she started at McCleans, so I just think it's a bit much to ask for when she is at school where she is supposed to learn, but she was allowed so it is fine.

## Appendix 21

-Write down some thoughts about stereotyping or discrimination according to what you have read.

My thoughts on stereotyping and discrimination is that it's wrong, but some people seem to believe it's true and good. I don't think it's good that people are being stereotypical, because it's like they're walk around judging and having expectation for a group of people who seems related. You see examples like this both in public and sometimes in media, and it's just annoying and offensive.

Discrimination is just something that shouldn't exist when it comes to how you treat people. You shouldn't treat someone differently just because of how they are, how they look or what they believe in. You shouldn't think that you are better than someone based on these factors, because every human being should be treated equally.

## **Should the hijab be allowed on TV?**

Faten Mahdi Al-Hussaini is a muslim girl who is going to be the program leader of the NRK show "Faten tar valget". She has grown a lot of attention around herself and the show, but a lot of the attention doesn't seem to be much positivity. A lot of the attention she has stirred up is controversial, and it's all because she is wearing a hijab on live TV.

This is not the first time Faten has gotten in to controversial issues surrounding religious thought. Earlier in august 2014 she stood up in front of the Norwegian Parliament and expressed her thought about the terrorist group IS. This was both impressive and brave of her, because she and I probably both know that a lot of people thinks that IS and Islam is the same thing, or that they believe in the same thing. I think that it is absolutely absurd that people are mixing up and blaming muslims for what a terrorist group are doing.

I think that it is nice to see that she has been able to a lead her own program on NRK, but not everybody shares my opinion. NRK and Faten has been getting a lot of hate and complaint, but a most it isn't even because of what the show is about. It is mostly because people brought up an old matter about a program leader who wasn't allowed to wear the Christian cross on TV. It's not fair that Faten is getting this much hate because of it, but I still do understand why. Some argue that it is not fair that she is allowed to wear the hijab when the other person wasn't allowed to wear the cross, but I do think that people need to reflect more about it instead of making conclusions. This show that Faten is leading is not a program where she is going to go to every political party to talk about how amazing and how much better her religion is compared to others. This is a program where she is learning about the different political parties in order to make up her mind about what to vote for,

and I believe that a lot of youths in Norway will find the show useful when it's their time to vote.

I believe that Faten is being brave for standing up to what she believes in after all the controversy, and that she is being helpful by showing what all the big political party in Norway thinks about different topics, but not everybody agrees with me and I do understand why. The arguments about her wearing the hijab on TV are strong and supported by a lot of people, but the discrimination and criticism should be about the show. At the end of the day I believe that Faten isn't trying to express her religious thoughts. She is simply just trying to understand the politicians thought and opinions.

## Appendix 23

In this presentation I will be talking about stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination. I'll explain what each of these things are, how they relate to each other and then I will talk about moments when these things appeared in the book.

Stereotyping are thoughts, set ideas or generalization of a particular group.

Stereotyping are based upon almost any type of characteristics, and can be about things like race, ethnicity, gender, age or even about what you eat. Stereotypes can be either positive or negative, and not necessary always wrong, but in all cases, it

is usually an exaggeration of beliefs of what a group is like. A

lot of stereotypes are linked to largely negativity towards a group, but positive

stereotypes can also be harmful. For instance, if you think that someone is really good at

a certain attribute, then you may limit your thoughts to think that that person

is only good at that specific attribute and nothing else. Stereotyping still has its advantages.

It's a tool to categorize large amounts of information and

make quick decisions. When someone takes it further and applies the stereotypes to

a specific person, then it could lead to prejudice.

Prejudice is a "pre-judgement" which means to have opinions, thoughts, feelings

or attitudes about people who are linked to certain types of groups. A prejudice is

not based on any experience, but it is to make up an

opinion about someone and prejudge someone usually with lack of knowledge about them.

Prejudice can be related to lots of different reason, and the most

know one is racism. Prejudice can influence a person's behaviour and lead

to discrimination

Discrimination refers to differential treatment and actions towards a group of people due to their membership in

a group. Stereotypical belief combined with prejudicial attitudes and emotions can result in discrimination. There are different types of discrimination,

and they can be both intentional and unintentional. Two examples are individual and institu

tional discrimination. Individual discrimination is discrimination between at



two individuals or one individual against a group of people.

Institutional discrimination is discrimination which happens by an entire institution or organisation against certain groups in the society.

The three terms

stereotype, prejudice and discrimination have its differences, but they are usually related to each other. By that I mean that by stereotyping you could develop emotions which leads to prejudice, and those emotions could change your behaviour which could result in discrimination.

For instance, if I thought that people who lived in cities were being very rude, then I would probably not like them, and if I didn't like them then I would probably avoid them. The stereotype is a thought process (cognition) that leads to prejudice, which is to attach an emotion or opinion towards the stereotype (affective). These emotions and opinions could influence my behaviour and make me discriminate.

All of these things could also lead to the reason for them to think I am being rude by avoiding them. They will probably not like me and then avoid me as well.

Both stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination were all things which appeared in the book "Does my head look big in this", and sometimes one thing led to the other.

Most of the stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination were based on racial and religious reasons, and all of these things took part

in developing Amal throughout the book. At the start Amal was quite scared and self-conscious about beginning at McCleans and to make the decision about wearing the hijab full-time. She expected that people would bring up prejudices and discriminate her. Although throughout the book she grew more confident about herself and her religion. She wanted to represent her religion regardless of what people thought.

Some of the people who either stereotyped, came with prejudices or discriminated were Tia and her friends, aunt Mandy, Leila's mother, Ms Walsh (Principal) and Lara (a fellow student).

Tia prejudiced and discriminated against a lot of people in the book. She did it towards Amal, Simone, Eileen, and some of the other students.

Ms Walsh was led to believe in the stereotype that Amal was forced to wear the hijab. Aunt Mandy was also led to believe that Amal's parents forced Amal to wear the hijab and wasn't really supportive about it.

Lara asked Amal to talk about the bombing in Bali, because she thought Amal knew about it and supported the terrorist attack. A lot of the kids in the classroom also generalized muslims as terrorist. Some of them shouted "Those bloody Islamic terrorists! Has to be them!"

Leila's mom thought that the traditions she learned while growing up were the only right way to live as a muslim, and that anyone who disagreed were "bad" muslims. She thought all muslim girls were destined to get married and be housewives, but the thing is that Leila's mom hasn't even read the Koran.

In conclusion,

stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination are things which happens both in our world and in the book. Prejudice and discrimination are things which caused negativity in Amal's life, and even though Amal got used to it and it helped develop her character, it is something we should avoid. We can use stereotyping in a smart way without causing controversy, and we also have the ability to prevent prejudice and discrimination. Lastly, I wanted to show a quote which says, "Judging a person does not define who they are, it defines who You are". I think most of you understands the meaning behind it and why it is important. Thanks for listening.

## Appendix 24

Amal doesn't want to be stereotyped, that has been specified a lot in this book, but I personally think that she is in return stereotyping everyone else. She keeps thinking that almost everyone will be upset because of her wearing a hijab, but almost no one seems to care. I think this shows a bit how she put some sort of stereotype over the people at her school, that they would be disgusted or angry or negative, maybe even bully her, just because of her choice to wear a hijab.

I also think Amal is a bit aggressive in her way of thinking. She seems to be this normal girl, but she always thinks that everyone means things negatively, as seen when Adam told Amal about how Tia was brought up, Amal didn't even care to listen to it! Of course, she might have had it bad because of it, but that doesn't mean that the person suddenly gets the knowledge. She could have tackled the situation more maturely, she could have given the knowledge that Tia needs to understand her. She could have been calm instead of blowing up at Adam. She also gets easily angry when people misunderstand her religion or her people, which is unnecessary. She could have just stayed calm and tackled the misunderstanding with respect for the person and given knowledge.

Her attitude towards her mom is also a bit over the top. The mom not having been born there doesn't mean that she is any less wise than her about the ways of the people, she has decades of experience, while Amal only has about 17 years. She could be a bit less aggressive at her mom, and her saying that she should have the chance to at least 5 times say that "your mom ruins your life", is nonsense, that is not because of a problem with her, it's because a problem with you. Had she seen her mom's advice as something more than just "nagging" she wouldn't have said that. She would see her mom as someone that its ok to seek for help, instead of saying that she ruins your life.

I haven't finished the book by the time I'm finished writing this, but I can't really see myself changing my opinion about this book. It might just not be my type, but the way plot was written just destroyed it, because I thought the plot was interesting, still not my type, but interesting. The way the plot was written was so terrible, in my opinion, that I almost immediately lost my interest in it. Amal is way too aggressive in her thinking and actions, in my opinion.

Appendix 25

Appendix 26